

DIRECT ACTION *DxE* EVERYWHERE

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Animal Activists Expose Site of COVID-19 Oregon Mink Outbreak, Defying State Officials' Secrecy

Citing mink-to-human transmission in Denmark, advocates say the public deserves transparency about the nature of the threat



An Oregon state veterinarian's vehicle is observed at Western Star Fur Farm Monday morning (Credit: Direct Action Everywhere)

DECEMBER 8, ASTORIA, OREGON - Activists with the group [Direct Action Everywhere \(DxE\)](#) have revealed Western Star Fur Farm in Astoria as the site of Oregon's recent COVID-19 mink farm outbreak. The Center for Biological Diversity recently sent a pair of scathing letters demanding that the Oregon Department of Agriculture and Governor Kate Brown release the location and other pertinent information related to the outbreak, to no avail, prompting DxE to step in.

DxE investigators used drones and hidden cameras to surveil the state's 11 licensed mink farms, and confirmed Western Star Fur Farm in Astoria as the outbreak site when a state veterinarian arrived on site for follow-up testing. Authorities say a worker transmitted the virus to the minks, who are uniquely vulnerable to infection. The group cites a [veterinary opinion](#) decrying officials' lack of transparency as a risk to public health and a violation of public trust.

After leading the grassroots effort to [ban fur in California](#) last year, DxE is calling on state and federal legislators to ban fur sales and farming in Oregon and nationwide. They claim the fur industry has harmful animal welfare, environmental, and public health impacts.

“The mink fur industry is not only cruel, it also poses a grave public health risk due to the bidirectional transmission potential of COVID-19 between humans and mink and the real possibility that the virus mutated in mink could [circumvent](#) a vaccine,” said investigator Jon Frohnmayer, former Editor in Chief of the *Oregon Law Review* and son of former Oregon Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer. “Giving the public the right to know the latest developments is merely the first step. Oregon should follow California’s lead in eliminating this industry entirely.”

Investigators with [Direct Action Everywhere \(DxE\)](#) enter farms, slaughterhouses, and other agricultural facilities to document abuses and rescue sick and injured animals. DxE’s investigatory work has been featured in [The New York Times](#), [ABC Nightline](#), and a [gruesome Glenn Greenwald exposé](#). DxE activists led the 2019 grassroots effort to [ban fur products in California](#). Activists have been [subjected to FBI raids](#) and [felony prosecutions](#) for these investigations and rescues. Visit Direct Action Everywhere on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and at [directactioneverywhere.com](#).

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