



Ministry of Economic Affairs

> P.O. Box 20401 2500 EK The Hague The Netherlands

Animals Friends Croatia
Vedrana Pavlak

E-mailadres: prijatelji-zivotinja@inet.hr

Date - 9 JUN 2016
Re Fur Farming Ban

Dear Vedrana Pavlak,

Firstly, I would like to sincerely apologise for the delay in my response to your email. In this letter, I would like to explain how and why the ban on mink breeding came about in the Netherlands. I will also send a copy of this letter to the Permanent Representation of the Netherlands to the EU, with a request to discuss this letter with the Permanent Representation of Croatia to the EU. In this way, we would like to inform your government on the grounds for the Fur Farming Ban (*Wet Verbod Pelsdierhouderij*).

It should be taken into consideration that the Fur Farming Ban currently applies in the Netherlands. However, legal action has been taken against the Dutch government, and we are awaiting the verdicts of the court. In the Netherlands, fur is only produced on mink farms. The production of fur from foxes and chinchillas in the Netherlands was banned a number of years ago.

The Fur Farming Ban came into force on 15 January 2013. This law bans the keeping and killing of animals for their pelts in general. The law is not restricted to mink farming, but its broader scope covers fur production in the Netherlands. The legislation has a transition period until 1 January 2024 for existing fur farmers. The problem with mink farming is mainly based in ethical and moral views with regard to this form of agriculture. Keeping mink with the aim of using their pelts is no longer considered acceptable in the Netherlands. Although one could argue that fur is beautiful, fashionable and warm, to many people these products cannot reasonably be described as essential goods nowadays. It is a luxury product for which there are many acceptable alternatives available that are just as beautiful, fashionable and warm. Causing suffering and taking the life of an animal for a non-essential and even trivial reason cannot be morally justified. It contravenes public morality in the Netherlands.

In the Netherlands, we recognise the intrinsic value of animals. The principal of the intrinsic values of animals forms the foundation of the Dutch animal welfare legislation. This important principal entails that animals are autonomous beings

Directorate-General Agro and Nature

Animal Supply Chain and Animal Welfare Department

Visit address

Bezuidenhoutseweg 73
2594 AC The Hague
The Netherlands

Postal address

P.O. Box 20401
2500 EK The Hague
The Netherlands

Billing address

P.O. Box 16180
2500 BD The Hague
The Netherlands

Organisation Code

00000001003214369000

T +31 (0)70 379 8911
www.rijksoverheid.nl/ez

Dealt with by

drs. J.M. van Wissen

T +31 (0)70 378 5316
F +31 (0)70 378 6153
j.m.vanwissen@minez.nl

Our ref.

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whose value cannot be reduced to their economic value to humans. As a result of this principal, animals should be treated with respect as beings with feelings, consciousness and integrity. The recognition of the intrinsic value of animals by society and its enshrinement in law is considered to be a progressive step in the process of civilisation. In the past decades, philosophers, ethicists and sociologists have increasingly concluded that society has a clear interest in protecting the welfare of animals. People benefit from living in a society where unacceptable actions towards animals are discouraged and unlawful.

I hope the explanation above clearly sets the main grounds for introducing the Fur Farming Ban in the Netherlands.

Yours sincerely,

Henri Kool,

Director of Animal Supply Chains and Animal Welfare,
Ministry of Economic Affairs
The Netherlands

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cc. The Permanent Representation of the Netherlands to the EU