Footage: Minks throttled on Polish fur farm owned by global industry leader

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Disturbing footage captured at a mink farm in Poland has unveiled multiple instances of animal abuse, including the throwing and striking of animals against wooden and metal components of cages. The farm is owned by the Dutch Van Ansem family who oversee one of Poland's largest mink farms, with additional operations in Latvia, Romania, and the USA.

The investigation was conducted by Anima International who worked with an undercover investigator employed at the farm for five weeks. The collected footage shows workers engaging in brutal treatment of the animals: **minks being struck on their heads and bodies with bare hands, fists, and clubs, as well as being forcibly hit against metal and wooden parts of the cages, and even trampled upon.** Additionally, workers were observed grabbing the animals by their tails, sometimes twisting them, before forcibly hurling the minks into cages or transport carts. The cages were frequently found to be filthy and covered in fur, with **many minks exhibiting severe bleeding**.

"The brutal treatment of animals on fur farms is not an isolated incident, but rather a systemic issue. Time and time again, undercover footage has brought this fact to light," stated Bogna Wiltowska, Director of Investigations at Anima International. "This time, we have documented violence against animals on a farm belonging to the influential Van Ansem family, which purportedly upholds high standards of animal welfare, as evidenced by certifications like WelFur. However, the reality depicted in numerous recordings from the farm speaks otherwise," Wiltowska added.

The Van Ansems, a Dutch family with a history in mink farming dating back to the 1960s, established their first farm in Poland as early as 1991. Since then, they have expanded their operations to include farms in Romania, the USA, and Latvia. The farms owned by the Van Ansems are among the largest in Poland, with each farm housing tens of thousands to several hundred thousand minks on average.

"The animal abuse exposed by our activist should be the final push for the Polish government to proceed with the work on the fur farming ban proposal. Similar images have been published countless times over the last 12 years," said Marta Korzeniak, Campaign Manager at Anima International. The animals cannot wait any longer – the fur industry is socially unaccepted and harmful. We urge our Prime Minister Donald Tusk to start working on the fur ban bill proposal immediately," Korzeniak added.

Poland is currently the biggest fur producer in Europe and the second-largest in the world – after China. Despite overwhelming support from the majority of Poles for a fur ban, previous efforts to abolish fur farming in the country have been thwarted by the fur lobby. However, a new proposal for a fur ban bill is set to be introduced in the coming weeks, which includes a transitional period of five years and provisions for compensation to farmers. Anima International anticipates that the findings of this investigation will serve as a decisive catalyst for the implementation of a fur farming ban in Poland.

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Footage, photos, graphics:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/18hRnw2KIG4usdN4xdyqia1js8XdLvh_a?usp=drive_link

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