Author's response to reviews

Title: Screening of post-mortem tissue donors for Coxiella burnetii infection after large outbreaks of Q fever in The Netherlands.

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dr. Paget,
Editor at BioMed Central

Dear Dr. Paget,

Below you will find our reply to the last point raised by the reviewers of our manuscript “Screening of post-mortem tissue donors for Coxiella burnetii infection after large outbreaks of Q fever in The Netherlands” (1733175573103833). The revised manuscript has been uploaded into the system.

We hope the manuscript now fulfills the requirements for publication in BioMed Central Infectious Disease.

Kind regards,

Marja J. van Wijk

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**Replies to the comments of Reviewer Wim van der Hoek:**

I have one remaining comment. The authors have now elaborated that “The 5 kilometer radius from infected farms to the residence of each donor was determined by measuring the distance between both postal codes” and that “the data on bulk tank milk positive farms and farms with abortion waves were obtained from the Dutch Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority”. Could the authors confirm that they obtained postal code information on farms with abortion waves from the Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority? To my knowledge, unlike postal codes of bulk tank milk positive farms, the information on farms with abortion waves is not available in the public domain but only from the Animal Health Service. I assume that the authors have only used the data that are available on the website of the Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority, which pertains to bulk tank milk positive farms only. If this is true then please change the text accordingly.

Wim van der Hoek is indeed correct that the information that was used to identify infected farms was the information on the bulk tank milk positive farms, as it has been available on the website of the Dutch Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority. The text has been changed accordingly to “The data on bulk tank milk positive farms were obtained from the Dutch Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority.”