



On preventing world pandemics
like the COVID-19

Description

Pandemics are likely to reoccur until we face their root causes

By **Georges R. Dupras**

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As I wait patiently in self-imposed quarantine, I find myself becoming increasingly depressed by the growing number of deaths attributed to the spread of the Coronavirus.

What depresses me is not so much the confinement but the endless speculation about the Coronavirus itself and virtually no in-depth discussion about the origins. Our experiences with SARS (2004) and the bird flu should have been warning enough. As with COVID-19, they all originated from infected meat, possibly from outdoor live animal markets such as the one in Wuhan, China, or from other countries that allow those practices.

The days of the family farm are disappearing. More fruits and vegetables are being imported from countries using pesticides banned in this country. Genetically modified foods have taken over shelves at our grocers and exotic “delicacies”, such as bat wings, are finding their way to restaurants close to you. On this occasion, I won't even mention the vile dog trade in Korea and elsewhere. Our Covert Rural (Liberal) and Outdoor (Conservative) caucuses in Ottawa ensure little transparency in our agricultural practices as well.

Canadians deserve to know where and how COVID-19 originated and what measures have been put into place to prevent future pandemics of this nature.

When officials were asked if the government would put pressure on China (and other countries) to ban such markets, the reply was that the issue would be put on the table after the pandemic. Once again our elected officials are reacting to a serious health threat, one they knew was likely to occur, and that will certainly happen again.



It's time our leaders stop talking about the virus itself. Canadians deserve to know where and how COVID-19 originated and what measures have been put into place to prevent future pandemics of this nature. Intensive animal producers, unclean, overcrowded and un-hygienic backyard facilities, where dead, injured and sick animals are housed together in crowded cages, must be stopped – regardless of where they are located. We must expect that our elected representatives work in the interest of everyone's health rather than that of trade agreements. Vaccines, and quarantines, though necessary and pressing, will not stop the next pandemic.

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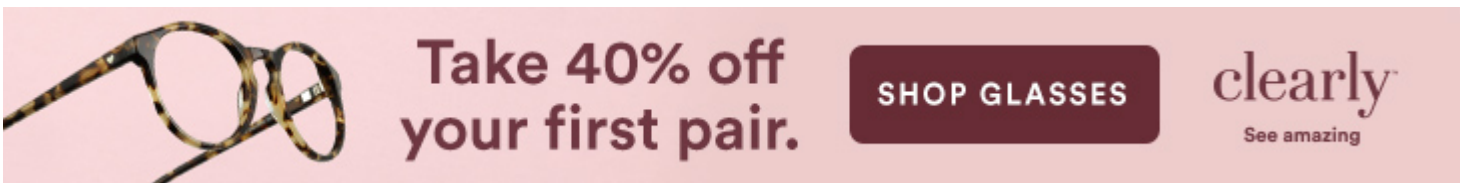
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Georges R. Dupras has advocated for animals for over fifty years. A member of the International Association for Bear Research and Management (IBA), a Director of the Animal Alliance of Canada (AAC), Quebec Representative of Zoocheck Canada and past Board member of the Canadian SPCA, he worked on the original Save the Seal campaign in 1966 that culminated in the founding of the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) in 1969. Georges Dupras has published two books, *Values in Conflict* and the eBook *Ethics, a Human Condition*, and currently lives in Montreal, Canada.



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