

# Furgotten?



Out of public view there are over 1.6 million animals suffering on Canadian fur farms. The most common animals being farmed are mink and foxes. Calling it farming is an attempt to create an idyllic image of happy animals running around the pasture. But the reality is that the animals are inhumanely confined to tiny cages and exhibit abnormal, neurotic behaviors.

Good breeders will be kept for several years then they are painfully killed and skinned for fur clothing and products. Buyers may not know if it is a product of the abusive fur industry because it is easily mistaken for fake fur.

The tons of animal, food and operating wastes cause pollution that contribute to Global Warming. Diseases on fur farms are often fatal and can affect other animals. The large numbers of wild animals that escape can wreak havoc on ecosystems.

## Help Stop Fur Cruelty! Boycott Fur!

**It's Time to End All Fur Killings!**

**Learn more - see the Lifeforce "Furgotten?" video:**

**[www.lifeforcefoundation.org](http://www.lifeforcefoundation.org)**

In 2007 Lifeforce investigated fur farm operations in Canada. We found that the conditions for tens of thousands of mink on fur farms in British Columbia were absolutely appalling. In addition, there were no emergency plans in the event of fire - thousands of animals would perish. The Fur Farm Act in BC basically covers licensing requirements - not the health and well-being of the animals. Ministry inspections are not routine and are only related to risks and complaints.

### The Victims

In Canada there are over 1.6 million animals on fur farms. In 2006 there were 1,643,400 "pelted" mink (an increase from 1,129,600 since 2002) and 8,830 "pelted" fox (a decrease from 10,850 in 2002). There were 106 reporting fox farms (down from 145 in 2001) and 221 mink farms (up from 218 in 2001)

Public awareness of the cruelty is putting some operators out of business. In 2007, the BC government advised Lifeforce that there were 21 fur farms. Their records showed 3 - Chincilla, 3- Fox and 15 - mink.

One operator told Lifeforce that there has been a decrease since the sixties when there were 365 in BC alone. This operator thought that mink farming would end because of the cost and difficulty in getting food such as chicken, fish and horse meat. One BC owner operated the Churchill whaling plant where 900 belugas were killed annually for fur farms.

During Lifeforce's investigation, an operator told us that five Fraser Valley farms near him produced about 360,000 mink pelts a year.

Recent statistics were not available for farmed chinchillas and rabbits.

### Cruel Confinement

Good "breeders" are kept for years in tiny cages. Their young will be killed and skinned or will replace those who are no longer "productive".

The cages have wire mesh bottoms making it difficult to walk. Mink cages are only approx 1' x 3' while fox cages are only approx 3' x 3'. Their space significantly decreases when they are raising young. Lifeforce found filthy cages and water containers. Dirty water can result in serious infections and health problems such as bladder infections and kidney stones.

Mink and fox exhibit abnormal, neurotic behaviours such as restless pacing, mutilations and cannibalism. They suffer from ulcers because of the stress. During one brief visit Lifeforce found mink with a bloodied noses and dead mink.

In the wild a mink's natural habitat is estimated at 2500 acres of wetland. They love to swim but are denied it in captivity. Foxes also live in vast, diverse ecosystems.

### Global Warming and Environmental Pollution

Animal, food and operating wastes pollute air, land and water. Fur garments consume 20 times more energy to produce as compared to fake fur. Chemicals used to prepare fur are dangerous to humans and animals.

One mink produces approx. 44 pounds of feces annually. Tens of thousands of tons of untreated manure enter the waterways.

Aleutian Disease is a parvo virus that can be spread directly with contact or indirectly through contaminated water, fleas and flies. Foxes get Yellow Fat Disease that can be caused by eating rancid fats from seals.

Escaped mink and fox have killed chickens, ducks, rabbits and others. In 2006, 590 fox died or escaped while 82,600 mink died or escaped. Introduced species can deplete natural species and wreak havoc with ecosystems.

### Killing

The killing methods can cause excruciating pain and suffering. Foxes are electrocuted by inserting a rod in the anal/vaginal cavity while they clamp on a piece of metal inserted into their mouths.

Methods to kill mink, rabbits and chinchillas include gassing (putting them into a box and exposing them to car exhaust), lethal injection of poison into the stomach, neck breaking and clubbing the heads.

The skinned bodies are used for crab bait and aquarium/zoo animal feed. However, most of them are rendered down for pet food/shampoo, cosmetic products, soaps, leather creams and other byproducts.

## It's Time to End All Fur Killings!

1. **Boycott fur products.**
2. **Contact your MLA to stop fur farm licensing and trapping.**
3. **Contact your MP to ban all fur imports that includes Persian lamb, fox, mink, muskrat, racoon and "other" such as dogs and cats.**

**Distribute this Fur Farm Fact Sheet to Friends and Politicians.  
Urge them to watch the Lifeforce video "Furgotten?"**

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