



KINSHIP CIRCLE

FOR ANIMALS → ADVOCACY ▲ EDUCATION ▲ DISASTER AID  
www.KinshipCircle.org ▼ info@kinshipcircle.org

# FACTS THE FUR TRADE



## ANIMAL CRUELTY

▼ **FUR FARMS:** Fur is the annual slaughter of some 40 million animals...chinchillas, foxes, minks, sables, beavers, rabbits... Over 80% of foxes become decorative trim.

Fur farms are low-budget operations where animals live stacked in cages in open sheds. Intensively confined their entire lives, they pace in feces, urine, rusty cans. Some die from dehydration, starvation or self-mutilation. Photos from Matt Rossell, an undercover investigator who worked inside an Illinois fur farm for six months, show cannibalized cagemates and a fox who'd chewed through his entangled leg to reach food.

Wild animals travel miles each day, raise their young, burrow, dig and express other traits. On fur farms, they're denied natural behaviors. Most display severe psychological distress: Constant pacing, head bobbing, self-mutilation, infanticide, cannibalism.

Animals are inbred for specific colors, causing abnormalities such as deafness, crippling, deformed sex organs, screw-necks, anemia, sterility, nervous system disorders.

18 foxes, 40 mink or 40 rabbits = The sum of dead animals to craft one full-length fur coat. At least 60 chinchillas — timid, bright animals who can live 15 years in the wild — are needed to construct a single coat.

▼ **SLAUGHTER METHODS:** Fur bearing animals are not protected under the U.S. Humane Slaughter Act. Processors are free harvest pelts cheaply and crudely.

- **GENITAL ELECTROCUTION:** To ensure undamaged pelts: An alligator clamp attaches to an animal's ear or a metal conductor is lodged in the throat. A second clamp grips the animal's labia or an electric prod is pushed inside the rectum. The killer delivers a 240-volt blast of electricity through the alert animal's body. The animal jerks, stiffens. Teeth may fall out; he/she convulses, trembles, cries. The electrical current is a paralyzing agent. The animal remains conscious for 2 or more minutes to during a massive heart attack. *"In an unsuccessful electrocution, they are left convulsing until [killer] can pick up the probe to shove it back inside this poor animal writhing in pain. And then it has to be done again and again,"* says undercover investigator Matt Rossell, whose "job" was to hold animals during electrocutions at a fur farm.
- **NECK SNAPPING:** Easy, cheap cervical dislocation is a preferred method for smaller animals. The killer wraps one hand around an animal's neck, grasps the lower body with the other, and yanks the animal's vertebra out of the socket. One worker at a California chinchilla farm told PETA investigators an animal typically spasms and kicks up to 5 minutes after the neck is broken. To preserve the fur of rabbits (a smaller type rabbit than those bred for meat) killers break necks and bludgeon skulls. Rabbits are strung up by their legs and beheaded.
- **GASSING:** Some animals are gassed with carbon monoxide derived from unfiltered engine exhaust. Minks, agile swimmers able to hold their breath for long periods, often awoken to be skinned alive.



**I live in a small wire box.** I have never run or burrowed in the grass. I haven't played under the sun or trees. No one has touched me, not even my mother. I barely have room to turn around in a cage encrusted with dirt, clumps of fur and feces. I am surrounded by the half-skinned corpses.

**I know I will leave my cage one day, when the farmer decides it is time to sell my fur to make coats, cuffs, collars and trim.** I am afraid. Like you, I have a central nervous system. I know pain and comfort. Like you, I cry in the face of violence. Like you, I would do anything to live.

**I will not die by lethal injection.** Our farmer cannot afford the 30-cents-per-animal barbiturate injection. My death will begin when human hands strap a metal noose around my neck and wrench me from my cage. The hands will shove an electric prod into my rectum. They will yank my mouth open to force a metal conductor down my throat.

**I'll panic just before they shoot the electricity through my body.** My eyes will close and my body will grow rigid. I'll emit a crackling sound as my teeth fall out. The force of the shock will knock out the anal probe. I'll convulse and cry out as they electrocute me over and over.

**The pain will be unbearable.** The electric current won't stun my brain, so I'll remain awake, maybe two or more minutes, during my heart attack.



- **LETHAL INJECTION OF JUNK CHEMICALS:** Fur farmers cannot use sodium pentobarbital, the drug recommended for euthanasia of companion animals, because it's a legally controlled substance available to veterinarians or licensed professionals. It's also costly. Fur-bearing animals are injected with chloral hydrate, magnesium sulfate and nicotine sulfate (often in the form of a pesticide) diluted with rubbing alcohol.

▼ **LEGHOLD TRAPS & SNARES:** Raccoons, coyotes, nutria, muskrats, foxes, bobcats, lynxes... If an animal is not crushed by the trap, 1 of 4 gnaw their teeth to the jawbone or chew off their feet to escape. They later die of blood loss or infection. Those who survive mutilation, exposure and starvation in the traps are clubbed, crushed (a trapper stomps them to death), shot or drowned after languishing on trap lines for days.

- **STEEL-JAW LEGHOLD TRAPS:** Any spring-powered pan or sear-activated device with two opposing steel jaws built to clamp down upon an animal.
- **SNARE TRAPS:** The cheap steel-cable loop designed to strangle an animal in minutes usually fails. Necropsies of coyotes reveal that 63% endure hemorrhaging (evidenced by grossly swollen heads), bloodied eyes, and broken teeth.
- **BODY-GRIPPING (CONIBEAR) TRAPS:** So brutal they are banned or restricted in at least 11 states. Crafted to instantaneously crush an animal's neck or torso, the traps often misfire. If an animal faces the wrong direction when caught, he is partially crushed and left to endure pain, dehydration, hypothermia, and predation.

For aquatic animals like muskrats, failed "quick-kill" traps result in death by drowning. Because beavers are excellent swimmers with ample lung capacity, a drowning may last up to 20 minutes.

▼ **NON-TARGET SPECIES:** Indiscriminate trapping devices snap shut on dogs, cats, deer, livestock and 2 to 10 times as many non-target animals. Endangered species are among the millions of "trash animals" dumped by trappers every year.

Trappers claim they isolate a species with no harm to other animals or people. Incident reports indicate otherwise. *The Animal Protection Institute, a national nonprofit organization*, charts non-target trapping incidents through publicly submitted forms. Their well-documented database includes Oreo Cookie, a 15-month-old Lab and border collie mix whose neck was crushed inside a spring-loaded Conibear. Olie, a Jack Russell Terrier, could not cry or bark by the time his guardian found his neck in the clutches of a Conibear. Within five minutes, he was dead.

In Virginia Beach, a fox trapper wound up with dead cats instead. A child, 13, suffered bruising, pincer marks and abraded skin on his ankle from a Conibear for beavers. In Pennsylvania, a 9-year-old nearly lost his thumb to a Conibear set for muskrats.

## DOG/CAT FUR TRADE

Every year millions of dogs and cats face death at the hands of the **Asian fur and skin trade**. Since the U.S. enacted a ban in 2000, European markets have seen a rise in items deceptively labeled Gae-wolf, Sobaki, Asian Jackal, Wildcat, Goyangi and Katzenfelle.

Still, dog and cat furs creep into the U.S. disguised as "faux." In early 2007, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) unveiled hidden dog/cat hides in "fake fur" products from China — the world's leading supplier of finished fur garments exporting over half of all furs sold in the U.S. "We went to warehouses with stacks and stacks of pelts from golden retrievers and other dogs. Millions of dogs and cats are killed for their fur, with that fur finding its way into fur trim sold in Western markets," *Wayne Pacelle, HSUS, in Faux Fur Found To Come From Dogs, Cats, 2/8/07, By Brad Woodard, 11 KHOU News*

U.S. retailers aren't required to identify species or country of origin in furs valued under \$150. Legislation to close this loophole is pending in Congress. In the meantime, HSUS bought fur trim items from 17 retailers, including Neiman Marcus and JC Penney, that

tested positive for domesticated dog. Merchants sell unmarked, dyed and misleadingly labeled boots, coats, linings, toys and homeopathic remedies to unsuspecting consumers.

▼ **PROFOUND CRUELTY:** *Swiss Animals Protection East/International* spent a year [2005] documenting fur farms in China's Hebei Province. They videotaped workers carving off skin from alert dogs, foxes and other animals. Some fully de-skinned animals continued to breathe and blink sluggishly as their hearts pulsed another 5-10 minutes.

**DOCUMENTED IN CHINA:** Up to 8,000 caged dogs and cats are stacked into a single truck for cross-country transport without food or water. At an animal market in Southern China, investigators see 20 cats smashed inside one wire cage and dead cats draped over cages. Live dogs and cats flattened inside filing-drawer sized cages are tossed from truck beds on to hard pavement. Animals scream as their paws are crushed. Workers pull them out with long metal tongs and fling them over a 7 ft. fence. Some still wear collars and ID tags, indicating they are stolen companion animals.

Chinese fur markets violently bludgeon, hang, electrocute and strangle fur-bearing animals, including millions of cats and dogs. Cats are choked in their cages alongside live cats. Dogs are hung from wire nooses and slashed across the groin. It takes 24 cats to make one coat. [www.furkills.org/dog\\_fur\\_horror.shtml](http://www.furkills.org/dog_fur_horror.shtml) • [www.animalsasia.org](http://www.animalsasia.org)

## CANADIAN SEAL HUNT

Packaged as couture, seal fur and skin have a wretched origin. Design houses that use seal remains in coats, tunics, dresses, shoes, vests, jackets...provide commercial incentive for the Canadian seal hunt — the world's largest marine wildlife hunt, off Canada's East Coast. 2011 KILL QUOTA: **Nearly 400,000 harp and grey seals** • 2009 QUOTA: **294,000 harp seals; 8,200 hooded** • 2008: **275,000 seals** • 2007: **270,000 seals**

▼ **RECKLESS & VIOLENT:** Scientists worldwide renounce Canada's hunt policy, citing insufficient proof to link harp seals with depleted fish stocks. Harp seals actually consume other species that prey on cod. Eliminating harp seals could provoke a rise in cod predators. Scientists worry killing seals may hinder recovery of ground fish stocks.

In recent years, 98% of seals killed ranged from 2 weeks to 3 months in age. During the ambush on whelping grounds, pups are gunned down, bludgeoned, kicked, and thrashed with hakapiks. Some are left to rot on ice floes (and not counted in death tally). Videos depict sealers hauling alert animals over the ice with boathooks. A team of impartial veterinarians once determined 42% of examined seals fail to become insensible from cranial injury. They concluded seals are awake when skinned.

In Newfoundland, where 90% of sealers reside, the hunt has little financial relevance. Sealers fish the rest of the year. Sealing generates a minute portion of their livelihoods.

## SHIFTING VALUES

- **12/18/10: President Obama signs Truth In Fur Labeling Act** to legally require all fur labels show animals used and country of origin.
- **5/5/09: European Parliament bans seal items from import-export across European Union's 27 nations.** Canadian sealers lose biggest customer: EUROPE!
- **From 2004-2009, U.S. fur retail sales steadily drop from \$1.81 billion in 2004 to \$1.26 billion in 2009.** *Fur Information Council of America*
- **3/27/09: Int'l Fur Trade Federation** notes global fur sales fall to 2005/2006 levels. **Fur Commission USA** shows loss of approx. \$2 billion from 2006/2007 to 2007/2008.
- **1/1/09: EU Dog/Cat Fur Ban** on import, export and sale of cat and dog fur begins.
- **74% of Americans want traps banned nationwide.** *Gallup Poll.*
- **80% of Americans and Europeans disapprove of Canada's seal hunt** [*Penn, Schoen & Berland, 2002 and MORI, 2002*].
- **Fur farming is banned in the UK.**



- **Conscientious couture:** Calvin Klein, J. Crew, Ann Taylor, Polo Ralph Lauren, Stella McCartney, Tommy Hilfiger, Vivienne Westwood, Kenneth Cole, Todd Oldham, Marc Bouwer, Donna Karan, Jucy Couture...
- **Progressive Retailers:** Urban Outfitters, Forever 21, Jucy Couture, Gap, American Eagle, Zappos, Abercrombie & Fitch, Zara, JC Penney ...140 names as of March 2009.