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# Wildlife charity uncovers wolf, bobcat, and lynx fur farms in Canada

*Canadian government must step in to end inherently inhumane industry, protect the environment and public health*

**VICTORIA** – Wildlife protection charity The Fur-Bearers has uncovered government documents showing for the first time that iconic wolves, bobcats, and lynx are kept captive and commercially farmed in Canada’s fur farm industry.

The recent discoveries via freedom of information requests centre on two provinces not typically known for having fur farm sectors: Alberta and Saskatchewan. According to the fur farming licenses issued by provincial agencies and obtained by The Fur-Bearers, there is one lynx fur farm operating in Alberta (housing four lynx), and five fur farms operating in Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan fur farms range in size, the smallest has three animals while the largest has 59, according to the province’s most recent inventories. The breakdown of species farmed on the five Saskatchewan fur farms are the following:

- Farm #1: Wolf
- Farm #2: Lynx, bobcat
- Farm #3: Lynx, wolf, fox
- Farm #4: Lynx, wolf, fox
- Farm #5: Lynx

“It is beyond unethical to confine wild animals like wolves on fur farms. These animals belong in their natural habitats and their fur belongs to them, not the fashion industry. The fur industry’s continued exploitation of Canadian wildlife to make unnecessary fashion fur products needs to come to an end,” says Aaron Hofman, Director of Advocacy and Policy at The Fur-Bearers. “There is a regulatory abyss when it comes to fur farming in Canada, an irrelevant practice with a track record of animal cruelty, environmental pollution, and posing a danger to public health.”

This disturbing discovery casts light on Canada’s secretive fur farming sector, previously known to farm three animal species: minks, foxes, and chinchillas. Fur farming is the practice of breeding and farming animals for their fur, their pelts sold in the commercial fur trade to make luxury fashion fur products. While many countries have prohibited the practice of farming animals for their fur, fur farming is still legal in Canada, with British Columbia the only province to ban mink farming.

“Fur farming has no place in Canada,” says Hofman. “While fur farming bans have been sweeping across Europe in recent years, Canadians are learning that iconic wildlife species like wolves are being commercially farmed in their own country. This archaic and inhumane practice needs to end.”

Canada will be known as one of the only (if not the only) country that is known to actively farm wolves, bobcats, and lynx for their fur. An October 2023 [review article](#) published in the journal, *Frontiers in Animal Science*, examined the global fur farm sector and identified 15 different animal species being farmed for their fur in at least 19 countries; wolves, bobcats, and lynx were not identified in this review.

The Fur-Bearers is urging Canadians to speak with their elected representatives and call on the federal government to prohibit fur farming. More information and the documents can be viewed at <https://bit.ly/47d1pK1>. A backgrounder follows below.

-30-

The Fur-Bearers is a non-partisan, charitable organization founded in 1953 to protect fur-bearing animals through conservation, advocacy, research, and education.

**CONTACT:**

Aaron Hofman  
Director of Advocacy and Policy, The Fur-Bearers  
604-435-1850  
[Aaron@TheFurBearers.com](mailto:Aaron@TheFurBearers.com)

**Backgrounder**

- Fur farming is an agricultural practice where fur-bearing animals are intensively farmed for their fur pelts. Mink farms are large industrial facilities where tens of thousands of minks can be farmed on a single operation.
- Fur pelts from Canadian fur farms are sold at fur auction houses in Canada, US, and Europe, and used in fashion fur products.
- According to the 2021 Census of Agriculture, there are fewer than 100 fur farms left in Canada. Nova Scotia and Ontario are the country’s largest fur producing provinces. Note: Census data does not capture species farmed other than minks and foxes. <https://thefurbearers.com/blog/2021-census-fewer-than-100-fur-farms-left-in-canada/>
- British Columbia banned mink farming in 2021 over the sector’s public health risks associated with COVID-19. <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021AFF0066-002112>
- A national public opinion survey commissioned by The Fur-Bearers and conducted by independent polling firm Research Co. found that 3/4 of Canadians support a national ban on fur farming. <https://thefurbearers.com/blog/3-4-of-canadians-support-a-ban-on-fur-farming/>
- Nearly 20 countries have banned fur farming including the United Kingdom, Austria, The Netherlands, Italy, Norway, Belgium, and Ireland. <https://www.furfreealliance.com/fur-bans/>
- A recent review article about the global fur farm sector published October 2023 in the journal, *Frontiers of Animal Science*, found 15 species of animals farmed for their fur in 19 countries; 16 categories of animal

welfare concerns; 18 reported pathogens and diseases with zoonotic and cross-species implications associated with fur farmed animals; and 4 primary categories of concern related to the environment and fur farming: greenhouse gas emissions, invasive species, toxic chemicals used in fur processing, and eutrophication. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fanim.2023.1249901/full>

- In 2023, The Fur-Bearers published a comprehensive report on Canada's fur farming sector, *Fur Farming in Canada: Towards a Post-Fur Future*. This report recommends that Canada transition away from fur farming. It highlights examples of other jurisdictions that have banned the practice and fur farmers who have successfully transitioned to other economic opportunities. <https://thefurbearers.com/wp-content/uploads/The-Fur-Bearers-Fur-Farming-in-Canada-Towards-a-Post-Fur-Future.pdf>