

INFORMATION ABOUT FINNISH FUR FARMING/ by ANIMALIA - Finnish Federation for Animal Protection (21.1.1993)

Auctions

The biggest fur auction in Finland on this season takes place on 30 Jan to 4 Feb. The next fur auctions will take place in March and May.

The most fur skins that will be sold in the Finnish auctions come from Finnish fur farms. However, there are fur skins from Russia, Danmark, Canada and USA, too, but much less than from Finland. The Russian speciality is wolf furs got from hunted animals.

There "an 10 % opposity" of Finnish fur farmers who sell their furs in the fur auctions abroad.

What to do?

We can make some suggestions on points that could be useful to set up in campaign. Reading forward you will find exact information about the points.

- **environmental problems:** Green is IN today and it is important to make a lot of noise of environmental problems caused by fur farming in Finland. Environment around farms is badly polluted. Many farmers have been prosecuted for polluting waters. Finnish legislation demands practically no efforts for nature conservation at all.
- **complaints against fur advertisement:** Two complaints have been made: one by Finnish Union for Conservation of Nature, one by ANIMALIA - Finnish Federation for Protection of Animals. Complaint is likely to be confirmed by advertisement authorities because the list of environmental crimes in farms is long.
- **animal welfare in farms:** Animals in Finnish fur farms suffer constantly from many diseases. For example most minks are all the time sick by plasmacytosis (= Aleutian disease). Cages are as small as everywhere else.
- **feed of animals:** every year tens of millions of kilos of protein-rich feed that would be suitable as human food is given to fur animals. One fifth of feed is imported from abroad. Feeding of fur animals needs a huge amount of energy.

Exporting of Finnish furs

This is shown in "Information of Finnish Fur Farming" on p. 5. As it is said only less than 5 % of furs produced in Finnish fur farms will stay in Finland. So, if we really want to do something to Finnish fur farming, it is very important that anti-fur movement function actively in Italy, Switzerland, USA, Japan, Germany and other countries, and spreads the word about the countless problems in Finnish fur farming.

Environmental problems

Environmental pollution has decreased with economic recession in fur business. Problems were at their greatest in mid 1980s when there were about 10 million animals on Finnish fur farms. Now, the number of animals is roughly one third of that and, consequently, acute pollution has clearly diminished.

Today the amount of fur animal droppings is about 70 million kilos, which is very little compared to animals raised for meat (cow, pig). However, in Vaasa county percentage of fur animal droppings is one fifth of all farm animal droppings, and locally it is even bigger.

Droppings keep a huge amount of nutrients inside: 70 tons of phosphorus and 700 tons of nitrogen. Total amount of nutrient in fur animal droppings is as big as in uncleaned sewage water of one million people!

The nutrient causing main problems in water environment is phosphorus. It is practically always a critical nutrient in Finnish nutrient-poor waters, and high levels