

# # MAKE FUR HISTORY



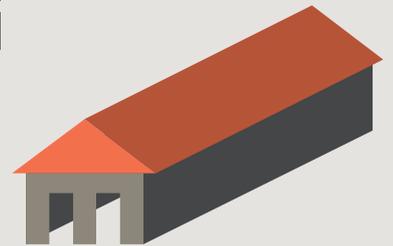
## EMPLOYMENT AND RETRAINING OF FUR FARM WORKERS

Fur farming is a minor agricultural sector with limited employment opportunities that are mostly seasonal and part-time by nature. Support for retraining and education can ensure a transition towards a more ethical and sustainable industry.

Studies show that fur production is only a part-time business for many fur farmers, alongside other agricultural enterprises.<sup>1,2</sup> In Finland, Europe's country with the highest number of fur farms, a 2008 survey showed that fur farming is a part-time activity for 60% of fur farmers.<sup>3</sup>

### EMPLOYMENT PER FUR FARM:

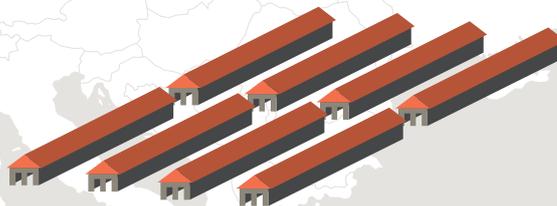
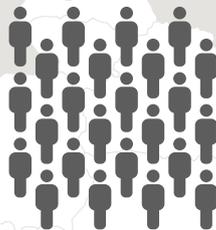
▶ **ON AVERAGE LESS THAN 3 WORKERS<sup>4</sup>**



### EMPLOYMENT ON EU FUR FARMS:

▶ **LESS THAN 4000 WORKERS<sup>5</sup>**

▶ **LESS THAN 0.002% OF THE TOTAL EU WORKFORCE<sup>6</sup>**



**“Today, virtually no one who was a mink farmer does not have a job of some kind or has set up another business”<sup>7</sup>**

**BENT MIKKELSEN (2022)  
DENMARK'S JOB TRANSITION SCHEME  
MANAGER FOR FORMER MINK FARMERS  
AFTER COVID CULL**

**There is little evidence that the closure of fur farms has led to significant unemployment.<sup>8,9</sup>**

# # MAKE FUR HISTORY



Retraining programs can successfully transition fur farm workers into careers in humane and sustainable businesses.

Support measures can help fur farms to be repurposed into operations that benefit the environment and local communities.



SOLAR ENERGY OPPORTUNITIES FALL UNDER THE PRIORITY OF THE EU'S 2023-27 COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

## RENEWABLE ENERGY

The infrastructure of fur farms can be used to shift to new sectors such as solar energy. In 2022, following the surge of energy prices after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, a Swedish fur farmer decided to convert his fur farm into a solar farm by installing solar panels to the roofs of his former fur farm sheds.<sup>10</sup> This type of conversion allows for a hybrid use of agricultural land for non-intensive crop farming and solar power, to produce electricity from renewable sources.<sup>11</sup>

## CIRCULAR AGRICULTURE

Examples from Denmark and Canada show that fur farm workers can successfully transition to careers in sustainable agricultural industries other than animal production, such as horticulture.<sup>12</sup> After announcing a mink farming phase-out, the government of British Columbia, CA, offered transition support for workers to gain skills in the greenhouse sector, including a 16-week occupational training and hands-on experience to gain the skills needed to seek opportunities in the new industry.<sup>13</sup>

CIRCULAR AGRICULTURE IS SUPPORTED BY THE EU GREEN DEAL AND IS ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING THROUGH THE EUROPEAN AGRICULTURAL FUND FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE LIFE PROGRAMME<sup>14</sup>



1. Hovland & Boe (2012) Pelsdyrhold i Norge- avvikling, arbeidsforbruk og selskapsform. Norwegian Institute for Agricultural Research.
2. Kamne, U. & Franzén, A. (2014) Efter pälsfarmen – Undersökning av alternativa sysselsättningar. Environmental agency Ecoplan.
3. Karhula et al. (2008). Turkistilojen talous ja alan merkitys sekä tulevaisuuden näkymät Suomessa. <http://www.mtt.fi/mtts/pdf/mtts160.pdf>
4. Direct full-time equivalent (FTE) employment based on national data from Danmark Statistik, Finnish Fur Breeders Association, TELEMACO Business Register Italy, Norwegian Department of Agriculture and Food, Swedish Agency for Agriculture.
5. Based on 1294 remaining EU fur farms in 2021, a number that is steadily declining. <https://yle.fi/a/3-12374503>
6. Total employment in the EU is approx. 213 million. Eurostat. [ec.europa.eu/eurostat](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat)
7. From mink to drink, December 2022. <https://www.euronews.com/2022/12/28/from-mink-to-drink-the-danish-farmers-who-are-moving-into-brewing>
8. Hovland & Boe.
9. Kamne & Franzén.
10. Jan Käcko moved from foxes to solar panels, September 2022. <https://svenska.yle.fi/a/7-10020182>
11. HSI Europe. L'allevamento di visoni in Italia, 2021. <https://shorturl.at/dloIY>
12. Mink breeder Peter made Mette Frederiksen cry, June 2023. <https://www.zetland.dk/historie/sem4EQq6-aOXABlkK-ce1c0>
13. British Columbia Government. Training support transition for agriculture workers. April 2020. <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022SDPR0019-000604>
14. European Commission. A European Green Deal. [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en)