#MAKEFUR HISTORY

ANIMAL WELFARE PROBLEMS ON FUR FARMS

Mink and foxes, the main species of animals reared in fur factory farms, are active wide-ranging carnivores and inherently unsuitable to be kept in wire mesh battery cages.

THE BEHAVIOURAL NEEDS OF ANIMALS KEPT FOR FUR CANNOT BE MET ON FUR FARMS:

- Animals kept for fur have been subjected to relatively little active selection for tameness and adaptability to captive environments.[1]
- Mink and foxes are highly inquisitive and wide-roaming predatory animals.
- The battery cage system deprives animals from the opportunity to express their species-specific behaviour.

IN NATURE:

- Mink daily cover wide territories between 1 and 3 km^2.[2,2]
- Solitary animals
- Semi-aquatic. Swimming and diving are highly significant aspect of their lifestyle[3]
- Stereotypies such as fur chewing and circling, do not occur in nature[4]

ON FUR FARMS:

- Mink spend their entire life in a wire mesh battery cage typically measuring 90x30x45 cm
- Live extremely near other mink unable to avoid social contact
- Cannot run, swim nor hunt
- Deprivation of swimming water results in the same stress level as deprivation of food[5]

IN NATURE:

- Foxes have complex social lives: they form pairs and live in family groups[6]
- Dig dens with many tunnels
- The red fox (with a territory of 0.5-10km^2) covers 10 km daily and the arctic fox (with a home range of 20-30 km^2) migrates around 100 km in one season[7]

ON FUR FARMS:

- Foxes are kept solitary in battery cages preventing natural social interaction
- Denied the opportunity to run, dig, play and explore[8]
- Kept in wire mesh battery cages measuring 0.8-1.2m^2.[2,9]

The cramped and monotonous battery cage system causes severe welfare problems.

Stereotypies (repetitive movements such as circling and pacing), fur chewing, self-injury, biting injuries, are caused by frustration of highly-motivated ranging and foraging behaviours and are a sign of extremely poor animal welfare.[10,11,12]

Other physical or behavioural abnormalities exhibited by animals on fur farms are bent feet, reproductive failure, obesity and infanticide.[13,14,15]

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WelFur™, the industry-led animal welfare assessment scheme, fails to adequately address the significant welfare problems caused by the confinement of animals to battery cage systems on fur farms.

The WelFur protocols do not address the small cage sizes nor the inhumane handling and killing methods.

THE BATTERY CAGE SYSTEM ON FUR FARMS HAS REMAINED LARGELY UNCHANGED OVER THE YEARS.

2001

"Current husbandry systems cause serious problems for all species of animals reared for fur."

European Commission's Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare

2015

"The animal welfare in fur farming has shown little improvement over the last 15 years, despite the use of disproportionately large official resources both on research and inspection."

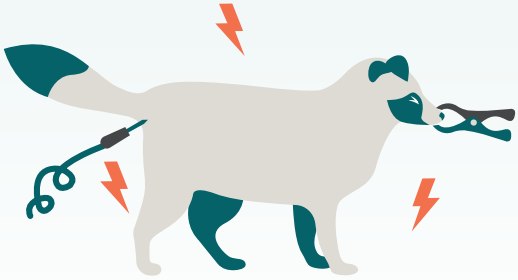
Norwegian Veterinary Association

AN INHUMANE DEATH

Scientific reviews have condemned the commonly used killing methods, such as gassing and head-to tail electrocution, as inhumane.

Mink are semi-aquatic and highly evolved physiologically to hold their breath. They are therefore highly tolerant to hypoxia (low levels of oxygen), which means they can suffer significantly during gassing.

Fox and raccoon dogs are generally electrocuted through the mouth and anus, a method with potential for severe pain and distress for the animal.



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