

Czech Republic

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In 2006, Freedom for Animals, with the support of WSPA (World Society for the Protection of Animals, UK) carried out an investigation of the main welfare problems related to the farming of animals for their fur. The objective was to assess the current situation in the Czech Republic. The investigation included remote visual observation of some farms and obtained footage from inside some farms and the examination of date obtained from the State Veterinary Authority.

This report sums up the main findings and is published in Czech and in English.

Abstract

Freedom for animals (FA) has been dealing with the problem of fur farms for many years, specifically on farm conditions and the welfare of animals bred there.

The history of fur farming in the Czech Republic goes back to the 1920s and the organization of the farming has changed throughout the years. At present, mainly mink, arctic fox and red fox are bred in the Czech Republic as well as a fair number of chinchilla although the exact situation is unclear. Ferret and nutria are also bred. FA was unable to find out whether the other species of animals are farmed for their fur.

The methods for breeding are similar to other EU countries and are described in this report. It seems that problems concerning welfare do not differ widely although there are differences among particular breeding farms.

Fur animals are classified as livestock in the Czech Republic and it is also possible to breed them in small-scale private farms, so called "hobby breeds". Setting up a fur farm does not require any licence or verification of expertise.

Conditions at the farms are specified by a regulation based on the recommendations of the European Convention for the Protection of Animals Kept for Farming Purposes. The authorities can control the farms by physical inspections but the "hobby breeders" are entitled to deny the entry of inspectors.

Export and import of fur has declined in the last couple of years and the types of fur mainly exported and imported have also changed.

One specific problem is cat and dog fur. According to some sources, these animals are bred for fur on farms in the Czech Republic. According to findings of FA this information is probably untrue, however dog and cat fur is purchased from individuals (who either sell their pets or pet animals they have killed) and this may happen on a large scale. These furs are also processed in the Czech Republic. Several companies that deal with production and sale of products made from cat and dog fur operate in the Czech Republic.

In our view, public opinion is turning against the production of fur and farming of animals for their fur. According to the public opinion poll carried out at the end of 2006, 67% of those questioned supported a total ban of fur farms in the Czech Republic and 76% believed that modern society could manage without the use of fur for fashion altogether.

Freedom for Animals will continue to focus on informing the public about the problems caused by fur farming and will campaign for a total ban or restriction of fur farming in the Czech Republic.

I. HISTORY AND GENERAL INFORMATION

The history of breeding animals for fur in the Czech Republic goes back to the 1920s when the first large--scale farm was founded.

Just ten years later there were more than 50 smaller farms on the territory of the former Czechoslovakia and further expansion followed after WWII. In the 1950s large state run and co-operative breeding farms of mink and fox began to operate, chinchilla farms appeared in 1980s /5/. After the political changes in 1989 the farms gradually became private again.

Nowadays, there are only a small number of farms breeding mink, fox (both arctic and red fox), chinchilla and, on a smaller scale, ferret in the Czech Republic.

Breeding of other animals cannot be ruled out, however Freedom for Animals (FA) does not have any information as to the scale of this at present.

Nutria which used to be commonly farmed are now bred rarely and mostly for their meat.

The situation regarding rabbit farming is not well recorded and any exact data is unavailable, however rabbit fur is being sold in the Czech Republic in great quantity.

It is not easy to obtain data about fur farms in the Czech Republic. There is neither an overall database nor a register. The situation is further complicated by the fact that although the animals are included among livestock they can also be bred in small, so called "hobby breeds". These breeds are not required to keep records and the farmer is entitled to deny the entry of inspectors.

In 2006, the State Veterinary Administration provided a summary of inspections which were carried out, however it was not possible to ascertain the exact numbers of animals from this summary.

Inspections take place at different times of the year and therefore these report on different stages of "production". These inspections are not carried out on every farm so some farmers inevitably avoid inspections for a year or more.

For this reason FA has carried out a visual survey of some large-scale fur farms from the surroundings, where it was possible. In some cases, FA was able to study footage from the year 2006 provided by the Reality project (www.realita.tv).

The data obtained by FA were compared with the data from the State Veterinary Administration. There was only one significant difference found.

II. FARMS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Farms - mink and fox

The following list of fur farms /table 1/ shows that there are ten large-scale farms (more than 200 animals) in the Czech Republic at present - mink are bred on five farms, fox are bred on two farms and both mink and fox are bred on three farms. On the Pustějov farm



Ferrets on mink farm Pustějov

breeding of ferret was also found and in some cases ferrets were kept in one cage together with minks.

The largest mink farm in the Czech Republic (Velký Ratmírov) is owned by the former owner of the last closed fur farm in Austria.

In 2004, a fox farm with about 800 foxes – Milevsko, was closed down with the help of FA due to very bad conditions.

Table 1: Farms and Numbers of Animals - Mink and Fox

Farms	mink	fox
Bukvice	0	300*
Dolní Cerekev	2000	0
Klopotovice	2050*	0
Křižanovice	150	150
Lejšovka	5200	950
Pustějov	1200	0
Souměř	0	5300*
Syrovice	200	0
Velký Ratmírov	6400*	0
Vítějeves	800**	150**

* - impossible to check data provided by the State Veterinary Administration

** - numbers (provided by the State Veterinary Administration) before releasing of animals by unknown person(s) symphatizing with ALF (Animal Liberation Front)

Farms - chinchilla

 $\it Table\ 2$ summarizes farms breeding chinchilla.

The situation is much less transparent as chinchilla are often bred by small-scale farmers although there are also some big producers.

It is much more difficult to check the data provided by the State Veterinary Administration as the farms are enclosed and therefore it is not possible to investigate them visually from their surroundings.

For this reason the only solution was to use the data issued by the State Veterinary Administration and by the farmers themselves.

Table 2: Farms and Numbers of Animals - Chinchilla

Farms	chinchilla
Lukov	1908
Úpice	1200
Louka u Litvínova	1100
Chacholice	650
Zbýšov	525
Most	520
Otradice	310
Děčín - Bělá	100

One of the largest producers (Farm Chinchilla) sells the animals not only as pets but also to smalle-scale fur farms. Farm Chinchilla offers full assistance, starting from help with setting up a farm to the supply of material and feed. The farm provides a database of agents who help to kill and skin animals if the small-scale farmer "is unable to do it himself after a demonstration" (a direct quotation), farmers have to pay for this service /4/. The purchase of fur is also organised through these agents. It is possible that other large-scale producers in the Czech Republic work in the same way.

III. TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT OF FARMS

Equipment of Farms and Technology

It seems that Czech farms are equipped in a similar way as farms in other EU countries, however some differences probably exist.

The low requirements defined by an obligatory ordinance /10/ are probably met by large-scale farmers.

Mink farms

Management: Cages of different quality are used; they are placed in open-sided sheds. Each wire mesh cage includes a nest box.

Mink are usually kept in twos or threes, sometimes up to four in one cage. On one of the farms (Pustějov) minks were housed together with ferrets in the same cage.

In the Czech Republic an obligatory ordinance /10/ requires a minimum space of $2550~{\rm cm}^2$ and a minimum height of $45~{\rm cm}$ for one or two adult animals (for a female with a male mink after weaning as well as for two growing minks after weaning).

Farms have to meet these requirements by 2013. Farms can continue to operate after the year 2004 if the space is larger than 1600 cm² and the height of a cage is more than 35 cm.

On large-scale farms the water is distributed centrally whereas on small farms drinkers were observed.



Mink farm, Velký Ratmírov

Killing: Methods of killing are specified by an ordinance /11/ and by Act No. 246/1992 Coll., on the Protection of Animals Against Cruelty: by a device that perforates the brain, by an application of a deadly dose of an approved anesthetic, by an electrical killing device, by a device using CO or CO₂ or chloroform.

Fox farms

Management: Fox are kept one or two animals per a cage. Nest boxes are not a standard part of the cage, they are available only for females with litters until weaning.

According to investigation of FA, both water and feed are distributed manually on both large and small-scale farms.

The ordinance /10/ requires a space of 8000 cm for one adult animal, for a female with cubs after weaning 20 000 cm², for two cubs after weaning 12 000 cm². The minimum height of a cage has to be 70 cm.

All farms that do not meet these requirements by 2013 will be closed down.

Killing: As well as in the case of mink, the ordinance /11/ and the Act No. 246/1992 Coll., on the Protection of Animals Against Cruelty, permits the same methods, with the exception of the device using CO_2 .



Fox farm, Křižanovice

Chinchilla farms

Management: Chinchilla are bred in wire mesh cages in buildings or halls. Small-scale or "hobby breeders" keep chinchilla in garages, cellars and such spaces.

According to farmers, each breeding consists of one male and four females. The male lives in the corridor which is connected to females' cages. Concerning the management, the Farm Chinchilla recommends that small-scale breeders animals a dry feed (produced by this farm), supply clean water either manually or automatically, allow chinchillas to bathe in a sand-bath three times sieve the sand-bath every second week, gnawing /4/. month and supply wood for It is not possible to confirm whether breeders in the Czech Republic adhere to these recommendations or not.

The ordinance /10/ requires the following size of cages: for one adult animal and one female with young after weaning a space of $5000~\rm cm^2$, for one animal after weaning a space of $3300~\rm cm^2$.

The minimum cage height should be 100 cm. Farms that do not meet these requirements by 2013 will be closed down.

Killing: As well as in the case of mink, the ordinance /11/ and the Act No. 246/1992 Coll., on the Protection of Animals Against Cruelty, permits the same methods.



Chinchilla farm, Zbýšov

Cost of farming

Concerning mink and fox farming, it was not possible to get exact information relating to the cost per animal. One of the large-scale chinchilla breeders says that it costs approximately 250 CZK (9 EUR) to breed one animal for a year. The purchase price of one breeding animal is about 1500 – 2000 CZK (54 – 72 EUR). The purchase price of one breeding group that

consists of one male and four females, including all equipment (cage, sand for bathing, wood shavings and feed for at least three months) is $50\ 400\ CZK$ (1 $800\ EUR$) /4/.

IV. WELFARE OF ANIMALS

Welfare of mink

Biology: In the wild, mink are very active, solitary and territorial animals – each day they cover long distances. They hunt both on land and in water. They can live up to 10 years.

Welfare: The welfare of mink living on farms is related to good health and fulfilment of their natural needs. According to experts, fulfilment of such needs can be affected by cage size, lack of stimuli, early weaning and social stress caused by housing on fur farms /8/.

The small cage sizes do not allow mink to express their natural active behaviour, the same can be said about the lack of stimuli and absence of water for swimming. Early weaning probably causes later a higher incidence of stereotyped behaviour which is considered also a sign of poor welfare. Group housing (mink would live alone under natural conditions) results in stress that can cause agressive behaviour leading to fighting and subsequent injuries. According to experts, the consequences are: **high mortality of kits** (about 30%), some serious health problems, stereotyped behaviour (some animals spend up to 25% of their time performing repetitive, meaningless movements), fur chewing, self-mutilation or aggressive behaviour. Experts agree that these problems are caused by poor husbandry /8/. Most of them also agree that there is considerable evidence of poor welfare in mink kept in the most widely used cages /7/.

Investigated farms: Particular farms differed in the standard of equipment and care of animals. On one of the farms (Pustějov) a dead mink was seen lying on the top of a cage and the animal had likely been there overnight. This farm seemed to be poorly kept and sanitary standards were low.

Some of the other investigated farms seemed to have a low standard of hygiene and poor animal care. According to the findings of FA, it is possible to assume that some farms had a lack of staff which resulted in excrements not being cleared for a couple of weeks, poor cage maintenance endangering the health of animals,



Dead mink on the top of a cage, Pustějov

drinkers not being refilled and so on. Mutilated animals and stereotyped behaviour were seen on all the farms investigated.

Welfare of fox

Biology: The natural behaviour of the arctic fox and the red fox differ. While the arctic fox is solitary and



Poor hygienic state of cages, Křižanovice

migrates for long distances in search for food, red fox can live in family groups and inhabit a territory of different sizes. Red fox express complex social behaviour and social hierarchy within groups.

Welfare: Fox welfare also depends on good health and on fulfilment of their natural needs. Specific welfare problems in fox include infanticide and exaggerated fear of humans.

Small sized cages and none or just minimal cage equipment do not allow species specific behaviour, such as digging.

Essential social needs are also not fulfiled. For solitary living arctic fox, social stress can be caused by housing in twos or more. On the other hand, the need of red fox for group housing is not fulfiled. The present form of farming does not respect the complex social relations and hierarchy observed in red fox in the wild. This can cause reproduction problems /8/.

As well as diseaes that can break out on farms, there are other less studied welfare problems caused by early weaning and restrictive feeding and also dental problems and overgrown claws may occur.

Infanticide occurs in 18 – 45% of foxes /8/. Causes for this have not been explained so far, but there is a correlation between infanticide and other forms of abnormal behavior such as tail biting. Infanticide is a serious problem as cubs are considered to be more sensitive to pain.

Fox are also very shy and express a high level of fear of humans that is evident by a sudden decrease of activity, attempts to escape or to hide in the corner of the cage, trembling, defecating and having a lower motivation to feed /8/. This is also a very serious welfare concern. Also in the case of fox, experts agree that most of the problems related to their welfare are caused by farming methods and farm management. It results in abnormal forms of behavior such as **stereotyped behaviour**, **fur chewing**, **infanticide**, **extreme fear of humans** or in **reproductive problems**. Some experts agree that the required standard of welfare for fox will be difficult to achieve on farms in their present form /6/.

Observed farms: Differences were found both in the standard of equipment and care taken of animals on investigated farms.

On some of the farms cages were well maintained, however on a number of farms the cages were damaged. That can lead to injuries that were seen in some animals.

In 2004, FA obtained a footage from the Souměř farm with a fox caught in a damaged cage by its head. There were also some visible eye injuries that can be seen among animals and in one case the eyes of a fox were poked out; there were visible signs of stress and self-mutilation. Animals bred on this farm were apparently in a bad condition and hygiene was very poor.

Subsequently, several administrative procedures were

Report on Farms and Welfare of Fur Animals in the Czech Republic (2006)



Poor cage maintenance, Souměř

initiated by FA that resulted in at least a slight improvement in the care of the animals. In 2006, the breeder declared his farm no longer profitable.

Sanitary standards were also very poor on some



Eye injury, Souměř

other farms. Cages were dirty and there were piles of excrements. Some animals even had very polluted water for drinking.

FA has obtained infomation that some farmers also neglect basic veterinary care of animals as well as the hygienic disposal of waste and carcasses of skinned animals.

In 1999 - 2003, FA initiated an administrative procedure against the Milevsko farm. The situation there was very bad especially due to the insanitary conditions of cages, the system of water supply, roofing of the sheds and general poor management of the farm.

According to the information of FA botulism was widespread on the Milevsko farm. Dozens of cubs even died



Skinned foxes, Souměř

because of the disease.

As a result of all these facts, the farm was closed down. On the farms FA observed, stereotyped behaviour in fox was seen and almost all of the animals showed extreme fear.

Welfare of chinchilla

Biology: Wild chinchilla were once prolific but now their numbers are estimated in thousands. Efforts to reintroduce these animals has not been very successful so far. Chinchilla are not a very well studied species, they are considered to be nocturnal animals however they can be seen also during daytime. They are social animals that live in big groups/colonies. Their fur is kept clean by regular sand baths. In the wild and in captivity they can live up to 20 years.

Welfare: Also the welfare of chinchilla is related to good health and the fulfilment of natural needs, but little study to determine their exact basic needs has been done so far.

Chinchilla have a large range of movement and keeping them in small cages has a negative effect on their welfare. For example, they jump to great heights when disturbed so the cages should be high enough to prevent injuries.

Specific problems of the welfare of chinchilla occur if there is no opportunity to sand bathe and gnow.



Chinchilla is unable to jump in the cage

As Chinchilla are also often exhibited they can suffer in small cages during transport and by stress of a new environment /8/.

These welfare problems result in **abnormal behaviour** such as stereotypical behaviour (in one study animals spent up to 21% of their active time perfoming stereotypies) and **self-mutilation** such as fur chewing (10 – 30% of chinchillas in farms have their fur chewed as a result of self-mutilation or by other animals) /8/.

As little data concerning their welfare requirements exist, it is possible that the consequences of the farm conditions are much more serious and that chinchilla also suffer in ways that have yet to be determined.

Observed farms: FA was unable to investigate the conditions on any of the chinchilla fur farms.

However FA found out that there are many small-scale breeders and some of them benefit from the support of large-scale breeders.

As small breeders are not required to hold a licence for breeding animals and therefore they do not have to prove any expert knowledge nor professional skills in the care of the animals it is likely that many farms might have serious welfare problems. Problems may occur because of inappropriate handling, poor nutrition or killing by illegal or painful methods.

V. LEGISLATION

Situation in some countries

Restrictions on fur farming

Switzerland: Fur animals are classified as "wild living animals" with high standards for farming specified in 1981 making any commercial farming impossible (for example, the size of a cage for two mink is 10 m²; for two common fox 60 m² plus a nest box and a special shelter for hiding).

Sweden: Since 2001, conditions for farming of fox have been made more restrictive – e.g. breeding in groups, possibility to move and dig.

Italy: Since 2006, the cages have been generally enriched; from 2008 mink must have access to small water basins.

Germany: In November 2006, a regulation was approved that makes conditions for the farming of fur animals stricter; within 10 years animals will have to have considerably larger cages equipped according to their biological needs – e.g. possibility to dig; mink must have a water basin and other special equipment available.

Bans on breeding

Great Britain: In 2003, a ban on the farming of all animals, primarily or solely for the value of their fur came into force (approved in 2000).

Austria: Since 2004, the farming of animals for fur has been prohibited. Due to the restrictions accepted by particular regions no farm in Austria has been registered since 2004.

The Netherlands: From 2008 the farming of fox (approved in 1995) and chinchilla (approved in 1997) will be forbidden

Croatia: In 2006, a ban on the farming of animals for fur was approved. The ban will come into force in 2017.

Legislation in the Czech Republic

Fur animals are classified as livestock in the Czech Republic. Setting up a fur farm does not require any licence nor verification of expertise.

Farms established prior to 13th September 1999 are not required to report their activities nor to keep a register. /2/ . "Hobby breeders" are entitled to deny the entry of inspectors. Farm inspections are organised according to the Act No. 246/1992 Coll. on the Protection of Animals Against Cruelty and according to obligatory ordinance No. 208/2004 on the Minimum Standards for Protection of Livestock. The Act No. 166/1999 Coll. on Veterinary Care further specifies conditions for establishment of a farm.

The part relating to fur animals of ordinance No. 208/2004 on the Minimum Standards for Protection of Livestock, covers general requirements stated in the European Convention for the Protection of Animals Kept for Farming Purposes, including cage sizes. These requirements must be met by the end of 2013 (in contrast to the Recommendation of Council of Europe - 2010). The majority of farms in the Czech Republic already comply to these low requirements. The killing of fur animals is specified by the Act No. 246/1992 Coll. and by a special regulation No. 382/2004 Coll. from 15th June 2004 on Protection of Livestock during Slaughter, Destruction or Other Killing in accordance with 93/119/EC.

VI. TRADE

Export and import in 2006

In 2006, 343 tons of fur were exported out of the

Czech Republic which is 40 tons more than in 2005, however the export has been declining in the long term /9/. Out of the total amount exported in 2006, 64% was raw furs, 25% was processed furs and 11% was products or clothing accessories. Most raw furs were exported to the USA, further to China and Portugal, processed furs were exported mainly to Slovakia and Portugal.

Out of the declining total amount of 149 tons imported in 2006, 39 % was raw furs, 42 % was processed furs and 19 % was products or clothing accessories. Most furs – mainly raw – were imported from Slovakia, Germany and China and these were mostly processed sheep and lamb furs. Mainly raw furs from the category others (as stated by the Czech Statistical Office /9/), sheep and lamb furs processed into clothing accessories were imported.

FA was unable to get data related to particular farms. Only the Farm Chinchilla presents itself as "one of the major producers of chinchilla fur in Europe and in the world" /4/. If this information is true, the success of this farm is probably caused by the development of a network of small-scale farmers. The Chinchilla Farm assists with breeding, killing and fur processing and then purchases the furs from these small-scale farmers.

Recent trend

There were certain changes in export and import from 2001 to 2006.

In 2001, mainly rabbit, hare, sheep, lamb furs and clothing accessories (mainly to Germany) were exported. In 2002 and 2003, hundreds of tons of sheep and lamb furs were exported to various European countries. From 2001 to 2006, mostly raw and processed furs were exported out of the Czech Republic. Generally, the main exporters were Belgium (21%) and Germany (19%), followed by Poland, Portugal, Slovakia and the Russian Federation.

In 2001, the import of rabbit and hare fur stands out (especially from Belgium and Slovakia), however in 2002 sheep and lamb fur from Saudi Arabia and Germany as well as processed clothing accessories from Germany started to be imported. In 2003, China significantly enters the Czech market with its products, (clothing accessories and also sheep, lamb, rabbit and hare fur). From 2004 to 2006, mainly miscellaneous raw fur and rabbit and hare fur were imported.

During 2001 - 2006, fur was imported to the Czech Republic mainly from Germany (17%), Saudi Arabia (15%) and also from Belgium, Slovakia, Poland. Import from China was increasing every year.

V. CAT AND DOG FURS

Information about cat and dog fur breeds and further processing of their fur appeared in the Czech media last year. According to findings of FA there are probably no large-scale farms breeding cat nor dog in the Czech Republic, however, such fur is processed here.

Cat and dog furs are purchased at collecting points, often mobile ones. Advertisements for companies that



Kidney belt, cat fur

purchase cat and dog furs can be found on the internet. In one case an ad for purchase was

posted on the internet with a rather cynical text encouraging shooting of domestic cats, however it was removed following media attention. It is therefore likely that purchase of cat furs has gone underground as a result of the negative attitude of the Czech public in this matter.

There are fur processing companies in the country, one of the biggest and well established is for example Snaha Brtnice. They use cat fur for making belts to relieve kidney problems as well as similar products

The EU ban that will prohibit the import, export and internal trade in cat and dog fur in the EU, which is about to be adopted, should help to solve the problem.

VI. PUBLIC OPINION

In 2006, an extensive opinion poll was carried out by the Centre for Public Opinion Research (CVVM) for Freedom for Animals /1/.

A sample of 1002 respondents from all over the Czech Republic (areas NUTS 2) was chosen by a quota selection and interviewed by a standardised questionnaire. As well as other topics, the production of fur was one of the main areas of the questionnaire.

FA noticed a certain level of similarity between attitudes shown in the graphs on the right and attitudes noticed throughout its information and educational activities.

It is likely that attitudes will continue to develop in this direction, as in other countries.

Well designed information campaigns run by FA over the last two years (Publicis 2006, 2007) have probably influenced this development.

VII. ACTIVITIES OF FREEDOM FOR ANIMALS

FA has been leading a campaign Against Fur since 2000, although the campaign was originally launched by the Foundation for Protection of Animals in 1999. Since 2003, FA has also been a member of Fur Free Alliance – a coalition of 40 member organisations with over 4 million members in different countries all over the world. The main objectives of the campaign are both informing the public and banning or restricting the operation of fur farms.

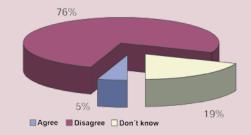
Informing the public started with distributing promotional materials such as leaflets, stickers, posters, videos or DVDs. In recent years, FA has been also focusing on professional advertising projects, using large-area flyposting, billboards or using new trends in advertising such as guerilla campaigns.

FA has organized a lot of of information campaigns

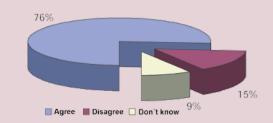


FA has focused on professional advertising projects - for visual part of the campaign for the years 2006 and 2007 the Fashion Victims title was chosen.

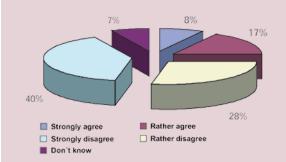
According to three quarters (76%) of respondents the life of animals on farms is not comparable to the life of the same animals living in nature.



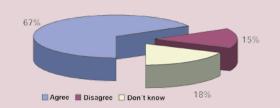
The same number of respondents also believe that contemporary society does not need fur fashion at all



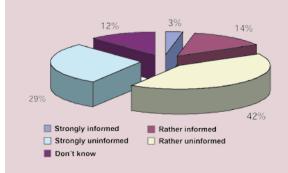
68% of respondents were against killing of animals for fur.



A similar number of respondents (67%) said that fur farms should be closed down on the territory of the Czech Republic.



A high number of respondents (71%) agreed that they didn't have enough information about conditions on fur farms.



which focused mainly on shoppers and people wearing fur items.

In 2002, FA also organized an international conference "Welfare of Fur Animals on Farms" /3/.



Conference Welfare of Fur Animals on Farms, 2002

As a part of this campaign this issue appeared in newspapers and magazines, on TV and the radio.

Design Against Fur /DAF/ is an international competition open to students of design to create a piece of anti-fur advertising.

An overall winner and winners in regional categories are chosen and rewarded with interesting prizes every year. In 2006, FA chose a winner from Czech students for the first time.

Fur Free Retailer /FFR/ is an international programme launched in 2006, FA has been a member from the very beginning. Retailers, designers and producers of clothing and accessories are approached to join this programme that aims to create an international network of companies supporting fashion without fur.

A list of these companies is published in all member countries and thanks to the FFR logo customers can



FFR logo in Czech

immediately find out if their favorite shop supports or rejects the fur trade.

Banning or restricting the operation of fur farms is an objective which is being achieved in two ways: by monitoring of farms and by changes in legislation.

FA has been monitoring large-scale breeders of fur animals in the Czech Republic since 1999. In some cases, FA initiates administrative procedures.

In 2003, FA initiated the closing of Milevsko fox farm after informing the authorities of serious, long-term welfare problems.

In the years 2004 – 2006, FA initiated several administrative procedures concerning protection of animals and veterinary care on the biggest fox farm in Souměř near Tachov.



Closed fox farm, Milevsko

In 2006, an administrative procedure was also brought against the breeder for breaching regulations on the protection of the environment. FA calls for closing



Poor farm conditions, dead fox, Souměř

down of this farm. Up-to-date information can be found on the campaign website (www.svobodazvirat.cz/protisrsti/index.htm).

In 2003, when the Amendment of the Act for Protection of Animals was being updated, FA with the help of some MPs, submitted a proposal that would forbid farming of wild animals for fur. Although a number of MPs supported the proposal it was not accepted (16% voted for it, these were mainly left centrists, 66% voted against, these were mainly right wing and communists).

Following the example of other countries Freedom for Animals will continue to push forward restrictive legislative regulations against fur farms.

VIII. FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

It is not easy to predict what the further development of fur farms in the Czech Republic is going to be like. With regard to the growing oppositon to fur farming and the use of fur in fashion (see the research of the Centre for Public Opinion Research /1/), we can expect that the majority of society will support efforts to improve standards on fur farms or a ban on all fur farming.

It is possible to assume that this trend would occur also when further legislation disussions regarding changes will take place.

Sources:

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