

and, if necessary, quotas are established when a particular species of fur-bearing animal is being overtrapped. A wolf-poisoning program is carried out in areas where these animals have become detrimental to desirable wildlife.

Game law enforcement is the responsibility of wardens stationed at the principal settlements in the Mackenzie District; elsewhere in the Territories it is handled by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Section 3.—Fur Farming

Fur-bearing animals were first raised in Canada on farms in Prince Edward Island about 1887 and in Quebec in 1898; today fur farming is carried on in all the provinces. Foxes were the first fur-bearers to be raised in captivity on a commercial scale but mink, chinchilla, raccoon, marten, fisher, fitch, nutria and others are now being reared. Mink are the most numerous, accounting for 93 p.c. of the total fur-bearing animals on farms in 1955; chinchilla followed with 6 p.c.

There was a slow and steady increase in the number of fur farms until 1920 when 587 were reported, followed by a period of more rapid growth from 1920 to 1938 when the number reached 10,454 with a production value of \$6,500,000. In 1939, when the London and other European markets were lost to the fur industry, prices declined and many fur farms went out of production. Though prices rose considerably after World War II, operating costs increased and the number of fur farms, particularly those conducted in conjunction with other farming operations, continued to decrease. By 1955 only 2,706 farms reported but the value of production had reached \$17,000,000.

Though the earliest and most intensive fur-farming operations were concerned with fox raising in the Maritime Provinces and Quebec, the sharp decline in the popularity of fox furs and the steady rise in mink resulted in Ontario and Western Canada taking predominant positions in the raising of fur animals. A distribution of the 433,266 animals on fur farms at Dec. 31, 1955, showed 18 p.c. in British Columbia, 41 p.c. in the Prairie Provinces, 26 p.c. in Ontario, 7 p.c. in Quebec and 8 p.c. in the Atlantic Provinces.

Furs have for centuries been used for clothing and adornment and the demands of fashion, encouraging the development of new colour phases in fox and mink, have been an important incentive to the fur-farming industry. There have always been mink mutations in the wild state but these unusual animals stood little chance of survival and such pelts were exceedingly rare. Starting with wild-caught mink, breeders have, by cross-breeding, produced mink furs in a variety of colours. Among the earliest mutations to appear was an attractive bluish gray mink which became known as platinum mink. Then mutations were crossbred and a still greater profusion of colour combinations appeared, notably the sapphire mink, a cross of the steel blue Aleutian with the blue gray platinum. Other unusual colour patterns are the royal pastel, a beautiful brown mink with a bluish cast, and an exquisite snow white mink.

In 1937 some chinchillas were imported into Saskatchewan and later into other provinces. These valuable little animals have a rich, soft fur. Although the original cost of chinchillas is high, the outlay for raising them is small. By 1955 there were 669 fur farms reporting 26,913 chinchillas valued at \$3,031,107.

Section 4.—Statistics of Fur Production*

Total Fur Production Statistics.—Early records of raw fur production were confined to the decennial censuses when account was taken of the number and value of pelts obtained by trappers. In 1920 the Dominion Bureau of Statistics commenced an annual survey of raw fur production. For a number of years the statistics were based on information supplied by the licensed fur trappers. More recently annual statements based on royalties, export tax, etc., have been made available by the provincial game departments (except Prince Edward Island), and these statements are used in the preparation of the statistics issued annually by the Bureau. Figures for Prince Edward Island are based on returns supplied to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics by fur dealers in that Province.

* Revised in the Agriculture Division, Dominion Bureau of Statistics.