

completely. In the northern regions, however, trapping still plays an important part in the lives of the native Indians and Eskimos, providing an independent means of livelihood in these remote areas.

Fur Farming.—Fox.—Fur farming originated in Canada around 1890 with the raising of black and silver foxes on farms in Prince Edward Island. Subsequent years saw these fox furs gain world-wide prominence and then gradually fall again from favour until, by around 1950, the prices realized were less than breeders' production costs. In 1962, 1,647 fox pelts were produced on Canadian farms, the average value being estimated at \$10 per pelt. Although fox furs of all types have been used extensively for coat collars and garment trimming in recent years, no major swing is evident toward the use of silver fox in the formerly fashionable capes, jackets or full-length garments.

Mink.—Mink farming had its beginnings in Canada around 1910 and has since grown to be by far the most important branch of fur farming. In 1962 the production of 1,308,281 mink pelts from 1,503 Canadian farms accounted for 99.1 p.c. of the value of fur farm production. This industry is carried on in all the provinces, the principal producers, in order of importance, being Ontario, British Columbia, Manitoba and Alberta. The following figures indicate the growth of the industry since 1935:—

Year	Pelt Production	Average Realization	Year	Pelt Production	Average Realization
	No.	\$		No.	\$
1935.....	30,558	10.58	1955.....	786,760	20.07
1940.....	229,202	9.64	1960.....	1,204,077	14.03
1945.....	255,968	21.51	1961.....	1,269,050	14.50
1950.....	589,352	17.08	1962.....	1,308,281	15.12

As the industry developed, improved ranching practices enabled producers to increase the size of their operations without additional help and also to improve the quality of their product. On early mink farms the mink were raised in cages which were ranged in rows in the open. Feed and water had to be carried to the mink and this limited to around 300 the number of animals that could be cared for by one operator. By the mid-1950's most of the old-style cages had disappeared and mink were being raised in roofed structures with more or less open sides, housing up to several thousand animals each. Most of the modern operations make use of automatic watering systems and other labour-saving devices, including electric powered feeding carts which roll through the sheds, with an operator controlling the delivery of the semi-liquid feed to each mink through a hose backed by a pressure system.

Through selective breeding, mink farmers have made marked improvement in the quality of their animals. Of prime importance also in this improvement are the Live Mink Shows at which experienced judges place the animals and the Field Days where expert fur graders discuss the fine points of the animals exhibited before mink farmer audiences. The diseases of mink have been the subject of considerable research at universities and at the Canada Department of Agriculture Experimental Fur Farm, Summerside, P.E.I. As a result of findings, most mink farmers now carry out programs of preventive vaccination for control of the major diseases.

Mink has remained the dominant fur in the world fur industry since the late 1940's. This continuing popularity is undoubtedly due in part to the many natural advantages of mink and to the resourcefulness of the industry in developing a large number of natural coloured mutations. However, some credit must also be given to the effective promotional campaigns waged by public relations firms on behalf of mink breeder associations in Canada and other countries. Members of Canada Mink Breeders' Association, the national association of Canadian mink farmers, voluntarily contribute 1.5 p.c. of the gross selling price of their mink pelts to the Association, the amount realized being used largely for promotional purposes. Similar fund-raising plans are in effect in other major mink producing countries such as the United States and Scandinavia.