higher returns have encouraged trappers to work their traplines to full advantage, resulting in increased production of many species, especially fox and raccoon.

Table 10.19 shows the number of pelts taken of various species, and their average and total values. Table 10.20 gives a breakdown of value by province and territory.

The seal hunt. Harvesting harp seals is a traditional spring occupation of Canada's Atlantic coastal communities, particularly along the shores of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Magdalen Islands and the Quebec North Shore and on ice floes off northeastern Newfoundland (known as the front) and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

The hunt is conducted from large and small vessels and by landsmen operating on foot from coastal areas. The seals are harvested for their pelts as well as for meat and oil.

Canada and Norway participate in the Atlantic seal hunt. Annual quotas, based on scientific studies, are set by international agreement. The quota in 1979 was 170,000 seals, including 150,000 allocated to Canada. The hunt is conducted under supervision of officials of the fisheries and oceans department. Management policy is aimed at increasing the estimated 1.4 million seals to a target population of 1.6 million by 1990.

The economic value of the Atlantic seal hunt is estimated in excess of $6.5 million. Earnings received by the sealers supplement annual incomes gained for the most part through employment in other fishing activities during the summer.

Fur farming. Mink are raised in all provinces except Newfoundland. In 1978 the principal producers were Ontario, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Quebec and Manitoba (Table 10.20).

With minor fluctuations, mink pelt production in Canada declined since the peak year of 1967 when the output was 1,967,323 pelts. Lower returns in the face of higher production costs were responsible for this decline. Many mink farmers ceased operations and the number of mink farms decreased from 1,359 in 1967 to 402 in 1977, but increased to 452 in 1978. In earlier years a mink business was started by acquiring a small number of breeding animals and building up from that point. Entry into the business on a scale that would hold the promise of some return on investment within a reasonable time now involves a high outlay of capital; this is a limiting factor in attracting newcomers to the industry.

In 1978, there were 3,148 fox pelts produced on 193 farms across the country; the 1977 output was 2,981 pelts from 108 farms. The increase in production was attributed to the improved market for all long-haired furs; values for ranched fox pelts have risen sharply in the past decade. The 1978 average price of $364.42 a pelt showed a large increase over the 1977 price of $226.50. Encouraged by the general upturn, producers are expanding their operations and the demand for breeding animals is strong.

Fur marketing. The bulk of Canada's fur production is sold at public auction through five fur auction firms in Montreal, North Bay, Winnipeg, Regina and Vancouver. Furs are purchased through competitive bidding by buyers who may be purchasing for their own account or for firms in Canada or abroad. Canadian furs are usually sold in the raw or undressed state, facilitating entry into the many countries which maintain tariffs on imports of dressed furs.

In 1977-78 exports of raw furs amounted to $82.3 million, 20% above 1976-77 exports valued at $68.5 million. Imports for 1977-78 totalled $74.7 million, 9% below the $82.4 million of furs imported in the previous year. The increase in imports was due not only to a healthy fur retail business in Canada, but also to requirements occasioned through growing exports of fur garments. In 1977 exports of fur garments amounted to $48.0 million, the highest value on record for this class of export.

The export of fur fashion garments on an important scale is a fairly new development on the Canadian fur scene. Historically, Canadian exports of furs have consisted mainly of undressed pelts from fur farms and the trapline. There are fairly definite limits to which this type of export can be developed. The production of wildlife pelts is relatively limited but showed an increase during 1977-78.

In the fur manufacturing industry no such limits apply. Other factors, however, are present, principally import tariffs and competition from fur manufacturers in the importing countries. A high degree of efficiency in design and manufacture is required