Using Local Legislation to Protect Animals: Fur Bans

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Using Local Legislation to Protect Animals – Previous Webinars

aldf.org/circusban

aldf.org/retailban
Webinar Roadmap

• Local Legislation Matters
• Where Do Fur Products Come From?
  • Animals Exploited
  • Fur Farms versus Animals Trapped in the Wild
• Policy Issues
  • Animal Cruelty
  • Environmental Protection
  • Public Health
• Fur in Fashion
• Existing Laws
• Starting a Grassroots Fur Ban Campaign
  • Working with Legislators
  • Engaging the Community
POLL TIME
Local Legislation Matters

Priming the pump for legislative action at higher levels of government

California Is the First State to Ban Fur Sales

By Jordan Davidson  |  Oct. 15, 2019 10:47AM EST

©: EcoWatch
https://www.ecowatch.com/california-fur-ban-2640974298.html
Why Focus on Animals Exploited for Their Fur?

- Animals killed for their fur suffer terribly – intensive confinement, neglect, painfully killed
- Public sentiment is on our side
- Momentum!

📷: The Humane Society of the United States
Your City Could Be Next

“I hope that [this] inspires other cities and the country to take action. Certainly we need better federal regulations on fur farming. There’s no humane way to raise an animal to peel [his] skin off.”

– San Francisco Supervisor Katy Tang

https://www.thebaycitybeacon.com/politics/supervisor-s-fur-ban-pits-high-fashion-against-modern-animal/article_18787ec2-0593-11e8-a105-578646850a.html.html
The Fur Industry

📷: DutchNews.nl

Who Are the Animals Exploited by the Fur Industry?

- Minks
- Beavers
- Chinchillas
- Foxes
- Raccoons
- Rabbits
- Raccoon Dogs
- Seals
- Dogs and Cats
Meet the Mink

• Part of the family Mustelidae, which also includes weasels, badgers, and otters
• Solitary
• Highly territorial
• Aquatic
• Lives in dens or hollow logs
Fur Farms Versus Animals Trapped in the Wild

Animals killed for their fur come from two sources:

- Fur farms where they are intentionally bred and confined
  - Wisconsin – nation’s largest producer of mink pelts with 67 fur farms/1.5 million pelts produced annually
- Animals trapped in the wild

📷: Sentient Media, Jo-Anne McArthur/We Animals
Animals Trapped in the Wild

• Largely regulated at the state level
  • California is the only state to have banned commercial and recreational trapping
• In some states, legal to set a trap and not check it for days
• Trappers shoot, strangle, drown, and bludgeon trapped animals

© Los Angeles Times
Animals in Fur Farms

• Minks
• Rabbits
• Chinchillas
• Raccoon dogs (Asiatic Raccoons)
• Foxes

~100 million animals killed annually

📷: Fur Free Alliance
https://www.furfreealliance.com/croatian-meps-fur-farming/
Policy Issues in Fur Farming

• Animal Cruelty
• Public Health
• Environmental Protection
Animal Cruelty – Life on a Fur Farm

- Tiny, filthy wire-mesh cages
- No protection from heat, cold, or rain
- Sometimes held in barns/sheds where ammonia builds up and burns their eyes and throats

📷: Sentient Media, Jo-Anne McArthur/We Animals
https://sentientmedia.org/fur-farming/
Animal Cruelty – Life on a Fur Farm

Animals are deprived of the ability to engage in any of their natural behaviors.

As a result, self-mutilation, repetitive behavior, cannibalism, and infanticide are common.

📷: Oikeutta Elaimille
https://www.flickr.com/photos/oikeuttaelaimille/
Animal Cruelty – Death on a Fur Farm

• Killed via suffocation, electrocution, gassing, or poisoning

• Frequently skinned alive while still conscious and without any painkillers
Fur farms are breeding grounds for zoonotic disease — a disease caused by a pathogen that has jumped from animals to humans.

Poor sanitation + intensive confinement + stressed animals = disease.
Public Health: Fur Farming and COVID-19

Coronavirus is killing the Dutch mink industry

A million mink culled in Netherlands and Spain amid Covid-19 fur farming havoc

Spain orders cull of nearly 100,000 farmed mink after animals test positive for Covid-19

... outbreak at a farm, where the animals are bred for fur, after a number ... mink after seven workers on the farm tested positive for Covid-19 and ...
Public Health: Fur Farming and COVID-19

**Science Magazine**

**COVID-19 hits U.S. mink farms after ripping through Europe**

The nearly 250 mink farms in the United States produce some 2.5 million pelts annually. BirdImages/iStock.com. COVID-19 hits U.S. mink farms ... 1 day ago

**Deseret News**

**Coronavirus detected at Utah mink farms**

SALT LAKE CITY — At least five mink at two Utah mink farms have tested positive with SARS-CoV-2, the animal virus linked to COVID-19 in ... 55 mins ago

**Ars Technica**

**Coronavirus creeps into US mink farms, “unusually large numbers” dead**

The pandemic coronavirus has made its way onto two mink farms in Utah, leading to “unusually large numbers” of dead animals, according to a ... 19 hours ago
Public Health: Fur Farming and Zoonotic Disease

“[And] there’s fur farming, usually raccoon dogs. If you see people with fur trim around these nice ski jackets, it’s probably come from a Chinese fur farm. There's a sort of irony to it – you see wealthy people in the West, with a bit of fur trim, saying: ‘It’s disgusting, these wet markets in China.’

Consumption in the West drives a lot of the problems behind infectious diseases.”

– Dr. Peter Daszak, president of EcoHealth Alliance and the “world’s most famous virus hunter”
Environmental Impacts of Fur

Fur production involves numerous toxic chemicals + heavy metals including carcinogens like chromium and formaldehyde...

...which leach into the environment, harm workers, and may be absorbed through the skin of people who wear fur

Photo: Eco Warrior Princess
Environmental Impacts of Fur

Farms create tremendous amounts of waste that contaminate the soil and waterways and contribute to climate change.

📷: PETA UK
https://www.peta.org.uk/blog/one-more-reason-to-ditch-fur-the-environment/
Environmental Impacts of Fur

'Eco-friendly' fur ad banned

Fur breeders' campaign ruled misleading by ASA

An ad campaign claiming that it is "eco-friendly to wear fur" has been banned, after the advertising watchdog dismissed assertions that choosing fur is good because it "lasts a lifetime" and "helps conservation".

The European Fur Breeders' Association ran a magazine campaign with the headline "Why it's eco-friendly to wear fur".

https://www.theguardian.com/media/2012/mar/21/eco-friendly-fur-ad-banned
“Fur? I’m out of that. I don’t want to kill animals to make fashion. It doesn’t feel right.”

– Donatella Versace

📷: Vogue
https://www.vogue.com/article/donatella-versace-fur
Fur in Fashion

Approximately 300 brands and retailers have adopted fur-free policies including: Macy’s, Coach, Chanel, Burberry, Michael Kors, Armani, Bloomingdale’s, Gucci, and Prada.

[Image: Luxury Fashion Brands That Are Anti-Fur](https://people.com/style/fur-free-luxury-fashion-brands/)
Existing Laws

Which cities, states, and countries have laws regarding fur sales or fur farming?

• International
• Local
• State
POLL TIME
Fur Farming Internationally

Mink Pelts Produced Annually

- China – 35 million
- Denmark – 17.8 million
- Poland – 8.5 million
- Netherlands – 5.5 million
- USA – 2.7 million
  - Wisconsin, Utah, Idaho, Oregon, Minnesota
- Finland – 2.5 million
Countries with Fur Farming Bans
Include:
- The U.K.
- Serbia
- Luxembourg
- Germany
- Czech Republic
- Croatia
- Belgium (2023)
- Norway (2025)
- Slovakia (2025)
International Laws

Additionally:
- Switzerland and Sweden have such strict welfare regulations that fur farming is essentially outlawed
- India banned the importation of fur in 2017
- São Paolo, Brazil banned the import and sale of fur in 2015
Fur Sale Bans – What Are They?

• Fur sale bans concern the sale of fur, **NOT** the use of fur
  • Typically prohibit the sale of new fur products like coats and hats. These bans often extend to accessories that have fur adornments like pom poms or collars, as well as home décor.
What Cities Have Fur Sale Bans?

West Hollywood – 2011

Berkeley – 2017

San Francisco – 2018

Los Angeles – 2019

CALIFORNIA 2019
San Francisco Fur Ban Challenged in Court...And Upheld

Press Release

San Francisco Fur Ban Upheld as Challenge is Dismissed
Court dismisses International Fur Trade Federation's complaint in victory for animals

July 14, 2020
California Bans the Sale of Fur!

The law:

- Bans the sale of new clothing and accessories (like bags and key chains) that are made of fur or have fur pieces (like a fur pom pom)
- Fur is defined as “animal skin or part thereof with hair, fleece, or fur fibers attached thereto.” Essentially this means animals like chinchillas and mink, the animals we traditionally associate with fur products. It does not apply to items like cowhide or sheepskin.
Exceptions to the California Law

There are exceptions for:

1. Used fur products
2. Fur products used for religious purposes (an example would be the fur hats worn by Hasidic Jews)
3. Fur products used for cultural purposes by a Native American tribe
How to Pass an Ordinance – Fur Bans

Hope  +  Realism  +  Determination
POLL TIME
How to Pass an Ordinance – Fur Bans

• Coalition Building
• Working with Legislators
• Engaging the Community
Coalition Building

A group of individuals and organizations with an agreed-upon purpose, working to influence a specific target

Who could be in your coalition?
- State and national animal protection groups
- Animal rescues and shelters
- Faith-based groups
- Environmental protection groups
- Local fashion groups
Working with Legislators - Meetings

• Email the councilmember to set up a meeting with them or a staff member

• Bring supporting documents, including your FAQs + factsheet, as well as a copy of the California and San Francisco laws
Working with Legislators – FAQs + Factsheets

aldf.org/furban
Engaging the Community – Action Alerts

• Make it as short as possible
  • Explain the issue in two sentences
  • Tell people what to do (call or email their city legislators)

• Make it easy
  • Include contact information for legislators + sample language for people to use

• Residents Only
Engaging the Community - Testimony

- 2 to 3 minutes
- Introduce yourself
- Be concise and use your strongest arguments
- Encourage other community members and community leaders to testify
Thank You!

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