



# Canada's Fur Trade at a Glance

It is often said that Canada was built on the fur trade. Though furs had been traded long before European settlers arrived, the **dramatic expansion of Canada's fur trade** is traced to 1608, when Frenchman Samuel de Champlain founded what would become Quebec City. In the following centuries, it was fur that provided the incentive to explore the continent's vast interior.

Until the late 19th century, all Canadian fur was wild, but today about two-thirds of its pelts **come from small, family-run farms**. Most fur farms raise mink, followed by fox. The most-trapped furbearers are muskrat, then beaver, marten,



squirrel and raccoon.

Today, about **60,000 Canadians are employed in the fur trade** as farmers, trappers, traders, processors, designers, craftspeople and retailers.

## Animal Welfare

The welfare of animals is important to the fur trade both for **moral and ethical reasons**, and also because **healthy animals produce the best furs**.

Standards of care for fur farms have been developed by vets, biologists, welfare experts,



