

NASS Survey Training

Mink Survey – May (MINK PROD)



**United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service**

Workforce Performance and Staff Development Section



Mink Survey Overview

- Collecting information on previous year pelts and current year live mink production
- Survey is the *only* source of industry information
- **All respondent data is confidential AND cannot be released to the public**

Survey Details

- Project Code: **197-Mink Survey**
- Questionnaires:
 - Mail out around the 20th of April
 - Online reporting option available
- Release:
 - *Mink*
 - Typically, around July 12th - 15th at 3PM (EST)



NASS website: www.nass.usda.gov/

Mink Production (2022)

- Produced 1.33 million pelts (down 15% from 2021)
 - WI largest producer
- Average value of \$29.40/pelt
- Pelts classified by color:
 - Black (57%), Mahogany (12%), White (12%), Sapphire (6%)
- 245,160 breeding females for 2023 (down 31% from 2021)
 - Babies are called “kits”



Survey Questions

- Screening question:
 - During (previous year) did this operation own or raise mink?
 - **Yes:** Continue with survey
 - **No:** “Do you plan to own or raise mink in the future?”
 - **Yes/No/Don’t Know:** “Has the operation been sold?”
 - » **Yes:** Record new operator’s information
 - » **No:** Please list the name and address of any person or farm in your area that started raising mink in (previous year) or (current year)

Pelts and Breeding by Color Class

- How many (**previous year**) pelts in each color class:
 - Black, Demi/Wild, Pastel, Sapphire, Blue Iris, Mahogany, Pearl, Lavender, Violet, White, Palomino, Other
- How many females bred (and to be bred) to produce (**current year**) kits in each color class:
 - Black, Demi/Wild, Pastel, Sapphire, Blue Iris, Mahogany, Pearl, Lavender, Violet, White, Palomino, Other



Mink Production Timeline:

JAN.	FEB.	MAR.	APR.
	BREEDING		
			WHELPING
MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.
		WEANING & SEPARATING	
WHELPING			GROWTH & FURRING
SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.
		GRADING	
GROWTH & FURRING			PELTING

Pelt Value

- For the previous year, what was the Total Value of Sales for the pelts OR Average Price per pelt?
 - Remember, The 2022 average was \$29.40.
 - Leave notes if operator reports an amount well above or below this

Watch for:

- Previous year total pelts compared to current year females bred
 - Average litter size is 4-6 kits per female
 - Does this relationship seem reasonable?
 - Leave notes for any large differences
- Large changes in pelts/females bred by color class
 - Current pelts and females
 - AND any previous data
- Sum of pelts and females by color class do not equal total

Reluctant Response

“It’s none of the government’s business about my mink production/this information will be used against me.”

- You’re right to be concerned about your privacy. That’s why facts about your operation are strictly confidential and are used only in combination with similar reports from other producers like yourself. No one outside of this office has access to the individual reports, and information is never shared with other agencies.

In conclusion:

- Very important source of data for the fur industry
 - Which strongly supports *your* efforts
(Example: Fur Commission USA)
- Watch out for the different color classes
 - Subclasses, trade/alternative names, etc. can be tricky
 - Work with the respondent, leave notes
- May be hesitant to discuss production
 - Stress confidentiality, statistical purposes only, you are who you say you are, etc
- Work through some practices on your iPad