

Wisconsin Fur Buyers Report 2008-09

By Brian Dhuey

Abstract

The average price paid for furbearer pelts fell for all of the 13 species on the 2008-09 fur buyer survey. The total pelt value for 2008-09 was estimated at 3.2 million dollars, this was down 1.2 million from the 2007-08 value. Over 318,000 furs were purchased from Wisconsin fur harvesters this season. Fifty-nine percent of all furs purchased were from out of state.

Methods

In order to document harvest totals, interstate fur sales, and total pelt value of the 2008-09 furbearer harvest season, survey forms were mailed to all licensed Wisconsin fur buyers. Fur buyers were asked to report the number of furs purchased from Wisconsin hunters, trappers, other fur dealers, and the number purchased from outside the state. Fur buyers were also questioned on the average prices paid to Wisconsin fur harvesters for furbearer pelts. Lastly, fur buyers were asked to estimate the percentage of furs purchased from Wisconsin fur hunters. A second and third mailing were sent to all non-respondents. Data from all returned questionnaires were entered into the DNR UNIX computer and summarized using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS).

Results

Responses were received from 50 of the 56 (89%) licensed fur buyers that were surveyed. Since some of the returned surveys covered more than one buyer the corrected response rate was 100% (56 of 56). Sixty-six percent of the respondents purchased furs during the 2008-09 season.

Of the 858,968 furs purchased by licensed Wisconsin fur buyers during the 2008-09 season, 37% were purchased from Wisconsin fur harvesters, 4% were purchased from Wisconsin dealers, and 59% were purchased from outside Wisconsin (Table 1).

The 318,722 furs purchased from licensed Wisconsin hunters and trappers yielded a total pelt value of \$2,101,065. This was lower than the 2007-08 season total of \$3,299,995. This is the tenth highest total pelt value in the last twenty years, and the sixth in the last ten.

The mean price paid to Wisconsin hunters/trappers in 2008-09 decreased for all of the 13 species surveyed. The lowest price paid for a furbearer pelt in the 2008-09 season was \$0.63, weasel. The highest price paid for a furbearer pelt in the 2008-09 season was \$75.00, bobcat. The mean percentage of coyote, gray fox, raccoon, and red fox pelts purchase that were taken via hunting during the 2008-09 season is 61%, 38%, 46%, and 46% respectively.

Table 1. *Fur harvest data as reported by licensed Wisconsin fur buyers, 2008-09 trapping season.*

Species	# Purchased from Wisconsin Fur Harvesters	Average Price (\$)	Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	# Purchased from Wisconsin Dealers	# Purchased from Outside Wisconsin	Total Pelt Value (\$)
Muskrat	162,130	\$2.94	\$1.50	\$4.00	13,328	194,052	\$476,662.20
Raccoon	118,847	\$9.92	\$3.80	\$13.09	13,792	242,675	\$1,178,962.24
Mink	7,592	\$8.98	\$1.75	\$10.33	1,083	26,068	\$68,176.16
Red Fox	2,671	\$13.44	\$6.00	\$25.00	422	6,822	\$35,898.24
Beaver	16,218	\$12.94	\$5.00	\$20.00	4,015	9,377	\$209,860.92
Gray Fox	893	\$16.17	\$6.00	\$21.00	392	1,565	\$14,439.81
Otter	404	\$33.04	\$20.00	\$51.00	95	1,297	\$13,348.16
Coyote	4,142	\$11.70	\$3.00	\$35.00	792	11,502	\$48,461.40
Bobcat	64	\$38.55	\$15.00	\$75.00	15	1,822	\$2,467.20
Fisher	1,135	\$35.71	\$20.00	\$50.00	233	520	\$40,530.85
Opossum	2,123	\$1.30	\$0.92	\$3.00	353	6,728	\$2,759.90
Skunk	1,351	\$4.95	\$2.00	\$10.00	512	2,173	\$6,687.45
Weasel	1,152	\$2.44	\$0.63	\$6.00	5	608	\$2,810.88
Total	318,722				35,037	505,209	\$2,101,065.41

Species	Furs Purchased From WISCONSIN HUNTERS AND TRAPPERS	Average Price Per Pelt	Furs Purchased From WISCONSIN FUR DEALERS	Furs Purchased From OUTSIDE OF WISCONSIN	Percent of Furs Purchased From Wisconsin Fur Hunters <i>(Best Estimate)</i>
		\$ \$. ¢ ¢			
Muskrat	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Raccoon	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	% of raccoons hunted <input type="text"/>
Mink	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Red Fox	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	% of red fox hunted <input type="text"/>
Beaver	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Gray Fox	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	% of gray fox hunted <input type="text"/>
Otter	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Coyote	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	% of coyote hunted <input type="text"/>
Bobcat	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Fisher	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Opossum	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Skunk	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Weasel	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	

Mail To:
Surveys and Databases
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
2801 Progress Rd.
Madison, WI 53716

Figure 1. The 2008-09 furbuyer questionnaire.