

# Wisconsin Fur Buyers Report 2015-16

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## **Abstract**

The average price paid for furbearer pelts fell for 12 of the 13 species on the 2015-16 fur buyer survey. The total pelt value for 2015-16 was estimated at 1.3 million dollars, this was down 0.7 million dollars from the 2014-15 value. Over 284,000 furs were purchased from Wisconsin fur harvesters this season. Sixty-six 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 2015-16 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 production server and summarized using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS).

## **Results**

Responses were received from 42 of the 56 (75%) licensed fur buyers that were surveyed. Since some of the returned surveys covered more than one buyer's activities, the corrected response rate was 86% (48 of 56). Forty-five percent of the respondents purchased furs during the 2015-16 season.

Of the 877,698 furs purchased by licensed Wisconsin fur buyers during the 2015-16 season, 32% were purchased from Wisconsin fur harvesters, 2% were purchased from Wisconsin dealers, and 66% were purchased from outside Wisconsin (Table 1).

The 284,395 furs purchased from licensed Wisconsin hunters and trappers yielded a total pelt value of \$1,258,651. This was lower than the 2014-15 season total of \$2,048,248. This is the 23<sup>rd</sup> highest total pelt value in the last twenty-seven years, and the 10th highest in the last ten.

The mean price paid to Wisconsin hunters/trappers in 2015-16 decreased for 12 of the 13 species surveyed yet the number purchased from Wisconsin fur harvesters increased for 6 of the 13 species. The lowest price paid for a furbearer pelt in the 2015-16 season was \$0.71 for opossum. The highest price paid for a furbearer pelt in the 2015-16 season was \$75.00 for bobcat. The mean percentage of coyote, gray fox, raccoon, and red fox pelts purchase that were taken via hunting during the 2015-16 season is 66%, 38%, 50% and 42% respectively.

**Table 1.** *Fur harvest data as reported by licensed Wisconsin fur buyers, 2015-16 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	192,955	\$2.59	\$1.75	\$17.00	7,435	245,118	\$499,753.45
Raccoon	51,403	\$4.74	\$1.00	\$12.00	2,130	162,745	\$243,650.22
Mink	3,868	\$5.24	\$2.00	\$15.00	106	10,335	\$20,268.32
Red Fox	2,776	\$12.27	\$5.00	\$30.00	154	12,781	\$34,061.52
Beaver	15,231	\$9.48	\$3.00	\$23.00	1,672	82,580	\$144,389.88
Gray Fox	475	\$9.30	\$4.00	\$12.00	15	2,011	\$4,417.50
Otter	586	\$19.98	\$10.00	\$40.00	18	2,185	\$11,708.28
Coyote	13,665	\$19.69	\$9.50	\$35.00	1,867	55,266	\$269,063.85
Bobcat	76	\$48.67	\$25.00	\$75.00	0	993	\$3,698.92
Fisher	621	\$29.89	\$20.00	\$43.75	18	293	\$18,561.69
Opossum	518	\$1.29	\$0.71	\$3.00	0	3,229	\$668.22
Skunk	965	\$6.15	\$2.00	\$10.00	457	1,622	\$5,934.75
Weasel	1,256	\$1.97	\$0.75	\$2.35	0	273	\$2,474.32
<b>Total</b>	<b>284,395</b>				<b>13,872</b>	<b>579,431</b>	<b>\$1,258,650.92</b>

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"/>	% of raccoons hunted <input type="text"/>
Raccoon.....	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Mink.....	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	% of red fox hunted <input type="text"/>
Red Fox.....	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Beaver.....	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	% of gray fox hunted <input type="text"/>
Gray Fox.....	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Otter.....	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	% of coyote hunted <input type="text"/>
Coyote.....	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<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"/>	Mail to:
Opossum.....	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Surveys and Databases
Skunk.....	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Weasel.....	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	2801 Progress Rd.
					Madison, WI 53716

**Figure 1.** The 2015-16 furbuyer questionnaire.