Methodical Recommendations on the Maintenance of Fur Animals

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Ministry of Agrarian Policy of Ukraine
Ukrainian Academy of Agrarian Sciences
State Scientific-Production Concern "Selection"
Cherkasy Research Station of Animal Breeding and Hunting Science of Cherkasy Institute of Agro-Industrial Production

Methodical Recommendations on the Maintenance of Fur Animals
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Contents

	Page
Introduction	5
General provisions	6
Biological characteristics of the fur animals	7
Care for and breeding of the fur animals	12
Fencing, dwelling and equipment	16
Maintenance	17
Changes of phenotype and/or genotype	18
Slaughter of fur animals	18
Scientific researches	19
Appendixes	20
Special provisions for mink	20
Special provisions for polecat	21
Special provisions for fox	22
Special provisions for raccoon dog	23
Special provisions for nutria	24
Special provisions for chinchilla	24
Methods of fur animal slaughter	25

Development of industry of fur animal breeding and increasing of fur raw materials require measures directed to protection of the fur animals contained with the purpose of growing on fur farms against death and suffering.

Recommendations on the maintenance of fur animals to the Law of Ukraine "About protection of animals against cruel treatment" № 3447-15 of 21.02.2006 are adapted to Recommendations concerning fur animals approved by the Permanent Committee of European Convention on defense of animals kept with the purpose of growing (T-AP) of June 22,1999.

While fur animals kept at the farms unlike other domesticated agricultural animals, preserve the characteristics of wild animals, the Recommendations contain main biological characteristics of such species as American mink, polecat, red fox, Arctic fox, raccoon dog, nutria and chinchilla. Places of residence in wild nature, periods of daily activity and movement behavior, feed base, public organization and adaptive ability to environment condition changes are described.

Taking into account that breeding and maintaining conditions must satisfy the biological needs of animals, given in Recommendations are main principles concerning the system of their breeding; main requirements concerning different animal species health protection measures are also defined.

The above measures are directed to prevention of stress and any form of physical pain during slaughter. The basic methods of slaughter that should be taken onto account are also determined.

The requirements for making of cages and nest-boxes and minimal sizes of cage space for each of fur animal species are determined in special Appendixes. The system of young animal maintenance, conditions of separation of puppies from the mother, sizes of groups and family density, that allows peaceful coexistence of animals between each other are also defined.

Introduction

Recommendations on the maintenance of fur animals to the Law of Ukraine № 3447-15 of 21.02.2006 are directed to protect the fur animals that are held in conditions of their industrial growing on the animal farms prevent their cruel treatment, strengthening of morality and humanity of the society.

The necessity of the present recommendations is stipulated by the following:

1. Unlike the animals that for thousands of generations were held like plow cattle or for manufacture of products, the animals used for fur production belong to the species that relatively recently became the objects of cage farming and are less adapted to these circumstances.

2. Taking into account the principles of animals' well-being, stated in the Articles 4-7 of the Law of Ukraine "About protection of animals against cruel treatment".

3. Taking care that the development of the industry in the matters of growing and biotechnologies would have no negative effect on the health and life activity of fur animals.

Previous experience, existing recommendations about biological needs of each fur animal species, system of breeding, that exist for today in commercial use do not comply with the needs that are essential for life activity of fur animals.

Taking into account that the maintenance conditions should satisfy those needs, and not adapt the animals to the certain conditions, the actual problem is improvement of the existing and development of new technologies of maintenance for satisfaction of fur animals' needs.

The goal and main task of the recommendations are provision of the main conditions for preserving of health and well-being of retained fur animals on the basis of:

- qualified animal maintenance;
- creation of conditions analogous to natural, namely corresponding freedom of movement, physical comfort and adequate opportunities for maintenance, feeding, drinking;
- protection from harmful climate conditions, inquiries, infectious and non infectious deceases or behavior disorders;
- other requirements, that can be consecutively determined by experience or scientific researches.

Taking into account the limited science-based data as for fur animals' well-being improvement which are insufficient for development of detailed resolutions to execute all the principles, stated in the Article 1 of the Law of Ukraine "About protection of animals against cruel treatment" in is necessary to:

- Organize further scientific researches concerning improvement of well-being and conformity of fur animal breeding;
- Finish corresponding positions of the present Recommendations according to the new scientific data.

General provisions

The main task of Methodical recommendations on the maintenance of fur animals (further - Recommendations) is provision of the main conditions for preserving of health and well-being of retained fur animals on the basis of:

- qualified animal maintenance;
- creation of conditions analogous to natural, namely corresponding freedom of movement, physical comfort and adequate opportunities for maintenance, feeding, drinking;
- protection from harmful climate conditions, inquiries, infectious and non infectious deceases or behavior disorders;
- other requirements, that can be consecutively determined by experience or scientific researches.

Recommendations are developed according to the Laws of Ukraine "About livestock breeding", "About protection of animals against cruel treatment", "Recommendations concerning fur animals", approved by permanent Committee of European Convection for the Protection of Animals kept with the purpose of growing (T-AP), according to the protocol decision № 6 of December 20, 2007 of Scientific-Technical Board of section of Production and Processing of animal breeding and poultry products of the Ministry of Agrarian Policy of Ukraine.

The necessity of the present recommendations is stipulated by the fact that unlike the animals that for thousands of generations were held like plow cattle or for manufacture of products, the animals used for fur production belong to the species that relatively recently became the objects of cage farming and are less adapted to these circumstances, and also so that the development of the industry in the matters of growing and biotechnologies would have no negative effect on the health and life activity of fur animals, taking into account the principles of animals' protection against cruel treatment, stated in the Articles 4-7 of the Law of Ukraine "About protection of animals against cruel treatment".

Previous experience, existing recommendations about biological needs of each fur animal species, system of breeding, that exist for today in commercial use do not comply with the needs that are essential for life activity of fur animals.

The actual problem is improvement of the existing and development of new technologies of maintenance for satisfaction of fur animals' needs, considering that the maintenance conditions should satisfy those needs, and not adapt the animals to the certain conditions.

Taking into account the limited science-based data as for fur animals' well-being improvement which are insufficient for development of detailed resolutions to execute all the principles, stated in the Article 1 of the Law of Ukraine "About protection of animals against cruel treatment" in is necessary to:

- Organize further scientific researches concerning improvement of well-being and conformity of fur animal breeding;
- Finish corresponding positions of the present Recommendations according to the new scientific data.

With these Recommendations the main provisions as for animal breeding in intensive and also extensive economy systems are determined, especially with the goal of obtaining of the quality fur.

The animals born in the wild nature should not be kept within conditions of the fur farms. No animal should be kept for fur production if it belongs to the species that in spite of satisfactory maintenance conditions, cannot adapt to captivity.

Special provisions in the Appendixes 1-7 of Recommendations make an integral part of Recommendations.

Biological characteristics of the fur animals

While considering the practical activities of the animal farms it is necessary to take into account following biological characteristics of the species, since fur animals, kept at the farm, preserve the characteristics of wild animals.

Mink (*Mustela vison* Br.)

Mink grown for its fur is North American species that is in no close relations with European mink. However, wild populations of American mink, that ran away or originate from the animals from fur farms, live in many European countries, including Ukraine.

In natural settings mink lives near streams and rivers, near lakes and coasts and is universal as for geographic range. In typical river settings mink has hunting range of about 2 km along the river and several hundred meters from each side of the river. When the water is frozen and there is lack of food, the hunting range considerably increases. Most periods of activity belong to night, morning or evening.

Mink survives well in cold conditions. It spends part of the time in the water hunting, and part of the time on the land showing considerable movement activity. Anatomically they are adapted to this kind of life. Thick fur provides good isolation on the land and in the water. The pads are partially with webbing and are used for swimming and diving.

Mink is a predator with great needs in protein, but it is able to find alternate decisions in food. They live by means of water or land prey depending on the food availability. 50-80 % of mink's diet in Europe is made from water animals; the biggest part is fish, and also spineless animals and amphibians. To the common land prey belong such species as hares, rats, house and wild mice. In winter during freezing in North America the main food of many minks is muskrat.

The grown minks lead single way of life, meeting other monks only during rutting season, and extremely connected to the territory, the borders of which they constantly protect and keep by marking and aggressive behavior. If the border is crossed then it is only by the animal of the opposite sex. The grown male animals leave their territories in spring and cover big distances looking for female animals. In autumn young minks run up looking for free territories.

Polecat (*Putorius putorius* L.)

Polecat is widespread European species the lives on open forest territories and hills.

The territory of the polecat can be from 100 ha to 2500 ha in case of not sufficient feed base. It is a night animal and it spends the day in the hole. In summer most part of the time it spends on open air but remains inactive for a long time. There exists a domesticated form of polecat that is used for wild rabbit hunting for several hundred years in some countries of Europe. Anatomically they are somehow different from wild polecats, especially by smaller head size. A lot of polecats are albinos.

Polecat is a land animal, during hunting period it shows great movement activity. Under stress it relives a secretion from pre-anal gland with strong unpleasant smell that is also used for the territory marking and due to it those animals seem to people smelly. In the calm state polecat has no strong smell.

Polecat is a predator with great needs in protein. They eat birds, mammals and insects, using their smell, sight and hearing in the search of the feed. It leads single way of life, and energetically defends own territory.

A cross-breed of polecat and steppe polecat is sometimes called fitch or fitchet.

Red fox (*Vulpes vulpes* L.)

Red fox may have different coloring from the standard (red) to silver. The latter is very rare in the wild nature.

Red fox lives on vast territories of Eurasia, North America and Australia, in such different environments as northern forest, open agricultural lands, mixed forests and city regions. Apart from some islands, the species is absent only on very dry, very cold areas and in tropical regions.

In natural environment red foxes are active during night, in the morning and in the evening, and spend the days hiding in the thicket or in the hole. They can travel for long distances; in average they cover 6 km daily. Foxes dig own holes or occupy holes dug by other animals. They can run fast, good in jumping, have good smell, sight and hearing.

Fox trophic base is made of mainly rodents and hares. In some regions the main part of the diet are earthworms and carrion, insects and birds. Foxes can also eat fruits, berries and vegetables, but the greater part of their diet make products of animal origin.

Red fox has diverse public organization, as it can live alone or in groups. Single individuals or groups protect their territory or have living plot that in some places can cross the plot of the others. The territories are marked with the help of one or several sources: glands and excrements with individual smell.

In wild nature female foxes sometimes give birth and grow young foxes close to one another, but more often they born separately and keep off other foxes from younglings. Pubertal female foxes without posterity can help dominating female foxes to take care of younglings.

Arctic fox (*Alopex lagopus* L.)

Blue fox is the common name that is used for the Arctic fox that is grown on fur farms. Arctic fox lives in Northern Polar Regions and is specially adapted to live in cold climate. Usual geographic range of living is tundra and interflood-tide area of sea shore.

In natural environment Arctic fox is active mostly at night. For living Arctic foxes can use holes dug by them, but they do not have permanent place of living, even during growing of their youth. They can cover great distances, often up to 10-20 km daily, they can run fast, good in swimming, bear low temperatures well, and have good smell, sight and hearing.

Arctic fox's diet is made for the most part by the products of animal origin, but can also eat fruit. They hunt alone on rodents, birds, spineless animals, baby seals, fish and eat carrion. They often follow Polar bears, wolves and men to dig in their wastes.

Arctic foxes can be monogamous; sometimes they live together for the whole life, but have flexible social system. Separate male animals can couple with several female animals. Animals of the previous year of birth sometimes can be a part of one family, both parents care after younglings. In tundra geographic range of family groups are more common than in coastal regions. The territory is marked by means of smell.

The birth happens once a year and brooks can be big, if there is enough feed. Female animals often born in the hole but soon leave it. Places for birth are usually quite far away from one another. Young Arctic foxes leave the place of living of their parents, when there is insufficient feed, can disperse on long distances.

Raccoon dog (*Nyctereutes procionoides* G.)

Raccoon dog is an inhabitant of Eastern Asia; it was brought to Northern-Western Russia in the period from 1927 to 1953. From first 9100 brought animals the population extended to Eastern and Northern Europe. The highest death rate exists among the young animals. The maximum length of life is 8 years.

Raccoon dog in its size and general form looks like Arctic fox with small eyes and short tale and pads.

The length of its head and body is from 55 to 65 cm, the length of the tale is from 15 to 17,5 cm. The weight of the body differs in different seasons from 3-5 kg in June to 8-12 kg in November, analogous in the nature and on the farms, even with excessive feeding. In the body size there is no gender differences.

Raccoon dog is omnivorous. He eats plants, including grain, berries and fruit during the year as well as smaller mammals, namely field-mouse and shrew, birds, carrion and different wastes. The rest of diet is made by insects, reptiles, amphibian and fish.

Raccoon dog is mostly night and twilight animal. Din daytime it can lie in the hole or under cover like bulrush, tree hollows or bushes. In the season of birth or during winter inactivity it can occupy the abandoned fox or badger hole, or gig its own hole. Search and obtaining of the feed includes use of smell, sight and hearing.

Raccoon dog does not have winter dormancy, but the animal becomes inactive and spends a lot of time in the hole during severe winters. Animals live holes in mild winters. Their omnivorous diet, ability to accumulate big fat stores, and inactivity in winter allow female animals be in good shape during rutting season. Researches conducted in Finland and Russia allow to claim that the number of raccoon dog puppies is 50 % more than those of red foxes. Climate conditions and feed base influence the density of the population. The male animals take care of the puppies while the mother searches for feeding. The family can sleep together in the same hole. Lactation lasts 45-60 days. The puppies not necessarily leave mother after birth and can spend winter with their mother.

The living plot determined by radio monitoring in Finland was 9, 5 m2. It does not change in different seasons or years. The territories of separate individuals do not intercross in the period of growing of puppies, but there is intercrossing in autumn. Raccoon dogs are monogamous animals. Long term relations of the pairs or families are the main social unit, but this species is characterized by weak hierarchic domination among family members. All the members move together along definite paths, rest together in the close body contact. In conditions of industrial breeding polygamous coupling is successfully practiced.

Coypu, Nutria (*Myocastos coypus* Molina)

It is a South American rodent. Populations that originate from animals that ran away from the fur farms naturalized in several European countries with mild climate. These animals live on moors and banks of fresh water lakes and rivers with slow current. All nutrias are water animals; they spent most of the time of their active period in the water. Usually they make platforms from the plants, where they sit and clean themselves or feed between the periods of swimming.

They dig holes near the water that can make the system up to 15 m or longer with rooms with nests made of plants. Population density depends on the feed base, it is 2, 7-16, 0 per ha. Late in winter young nutrias are absent in population. Brood synchronization in spring leads to the young animals highest at the beginning of the summer. In November there is the highest population density with significantly greater number of female animals (1 male animal to 1, 6 female animals). The female animals live longer than the male animals. Nutria is often can be seen during days, but its periods of highest activity are at twilight and at night.

Nutria is well adapted to the water life, having pads with webbing; the nostrils are high on the head to make the breathing during rest in the water easy; long hair around nose helps in finding feed and other objects. Nutrias have thick fur on the belly and nipples high on their sides; they move on the land rather slowly.

Nutrias' diet is made mostly of vegetables, among which root crops make the biggest part. Nutrias dig the feed out, and also dig the hole where they are hiding, they pasture along the bank.

Nutrias become pubertal at 4 months age, but puberty depends mostly on the size of the animal, and not the age. Due to the lack of feed, nutrias born in winter need more time to grow up and become pubertal. Nutrias have polygamous system of reproduction. Female animals have rutting period every 24-26 days, it lasts 1-4 days. Leaders and alpha-female animals dominate in social groups, male animals usually obey female animals except for the period of coupling. The female animals have estrus during the year, sometimes they show it on the 2^{nd} – 3^{rd} day of lying-in period. The gestation is around 130 days; the average size of the brood is 5-6 puppies. In average only 60% of germs survive till birth. Young animals are born able to see, they can survive after 5 days of feeding though the lactation period lasts around 7 days.

Chinchilla (*Chinchilla chinchilla, Ch. Caudata* and *Ch. lanigera*)

Chinchilla belongs to the class of rodents (Rodenitae). Chinchilla family (Chinchilladea) is made of two species: short-tailed chinchilla (Chinchilla chinchilla) and long-tailed chinchilla. The smaller, short-tailed chinchilla (C. Chinchilla brevicaudata) and bigger long-tailed chinchilla or royal chinchilla (C. Chinchilla chinchilla) are considered subspecies.

Both species differ in size, weight, length and in period of baby-bearing.

Chinchilla lives in Southern Andes in the climate zone where there are great temperature variations in different periods of year and time of day and low humidity. Natural geographic range is dry zones with rocky hills and rare thickets; high humidity is harmful for them.

Chinchillas are active in twilight and night. At daytime the animal hides in the splits in rocks or in holes. In general chinchillas are considered herbivore animals, but sometimes they eat also insect slugs. Like all the rodents they belong to coprophags, which supports their need in vitamins B and D. They have ability to use moisture from dew and plant juice, for example from cactuses. Animals clean their fur by bathing in the dry sand of mountain hills and plains.

Chinchillas have big eyes that are well adapted to the night life. Their hearing is well developed. Big active outer ears also serve as thermo regulators. Smell and touch feelings are very important in life of theses animals.

Chinchillas have well-developed hind limbs, that allow them to move with great speed, jump more than one meter high and two meters long. Forepaws are weaker and mainly have supporting and sufficing functions. Cutting teeth grow constantly and they have to gnaw a lot to preserve them short.

Fur grows in buns: from one root up to 60 hairs. If you suddenly take chinchilla a part of the fur can fall out. This prominent phenomenon gives the animals an opportunity to run away from their natural enemies, such as predatory birds. The fur grows again in several months. Chinchillas do not have sweat glands.

Representatives of this species live in colonies of 100 and more animals, but lately in nature it became so rare, that such colonies are almost absent. Remaining animal groups live mostly in families made of pairs with grown babies. Probably pubertal young female animals stay in colony while the young male animals are expelled.

They become pubertal at the age of 4-6 months. At the age of 1-12 months they are physically and physiologically mature. In captivity they can live to the age of 18-22 years. Estrual cycle of the female animals varies from 22 to 90 days depending on the season, presence of the male animal or other female animals in rutting period. Rutting period lasts for 3-5 days,

during which the female animal is receptive for 10-15 hours. The female animal gives birth to 1-3 babies in brood. Form on to three days after the birth a female animal has new rutting period, and it can successfully conceive again. Chinchillas do not build nests for birth. Young animals are born able to see, with fur and can leave the birth place in several hours after birth without help.

The female animal has three pairs of nipples, but only two pairs are functional. Approximately in seven weeks the lactation ends.

Chinchillas threaten the rivals standing on the hinder legs, which is often accompanied by the head swinging. Barking is their warning signal. The first reaction to such signal is tailing off. Warning, barking and running away are accompanied by secretion of strong smell from the anal bag. The exhibition of aggressive character is jumping and sprinkling with urine, pushing with hinder legs and biting is usual reaction of female animals.

Care for and breeding of the fur animals

Any individual or legal person that owns fur animals, or has fur animals under control at present time, and every person involved in maintaining, breeding and slaughtering of fur animals according to own obligations, guarantees that all the necessary measures are taken for protection of health and well-being of fur animals under consideration .

Sufficient number of personnel with the corresponding knowledge of kept fur animal species should care about fur animals; they should also know technologies of their breeding and slaughtering. Namely the person caring for fur animals should be able to: define the health condition of the animals, understand significant changes in their behavior, to evaluate suitability of total environment for health and well-being of fur animals.

The person caring for fur animals should understand the role of fur animals well-being in everyday work with fur animal species under consideration, this person should be able to determine if the total environment is adequate for fur animals to be healthy and their biological needs, including special behaviors, are satisfied.

Careful attitude and other contact fro the early age is necessary for development of harmonious relations between human being and animal.

All animals should be closely examines at least once a day in the way that would not disturb individual species, and would not disturb the nest without necessity. If it is necessary arises, the light sources are used. Examinations should be held irrespectively of the technologies used and automatic observation equipment.

During close examination of animals special attention should be paid to physical state, state of fur, skin, eyes, ears, tale, pads and feet. Healthy animals make corresponding sounds, show movement activity and have posture according to own species, age, sex, breed or physiological state.

The signs of good health are clean bright eyes, good posture, clean and depending on the species and season bright fur, healthy pads and feet, usual eating, drinking and sucking behavior. It is appropriate to pay attention to animal behavior during waking up, falling asleep and resting, and other usual moves.

Individual examination is made for only those animals regarding which during general examination the necessity arose.

During examination it should be kept in mind that apathy, lose of appetite, secretions from nostrils and eyes, excessive salivation, constant coughing, swollen joints, lameness, diarrhea and changes in behavior belong to the signs of illness. Ii is also necessary to pay attention to the presence of outer parasites, to the state of droppings and to consumption of feed and water.

If it is obvious that the animals are ill or they show obvious signs of behavior changes, the responsible person take immediate measures to determine the reason and organize treatment or veterinarian or other specialist help.

Injured, ill and exhausted fur animals should be immediately treated, and if necessary, isolated to the fitted area or slaughtered.

Fur animals bred for growth are not used for any other purpose including public performances and demonstrations if such use may be harmful for the health and well-being of the animals.

Photos:

Photo 1. Raccoon dog

Photo 2. Polecat

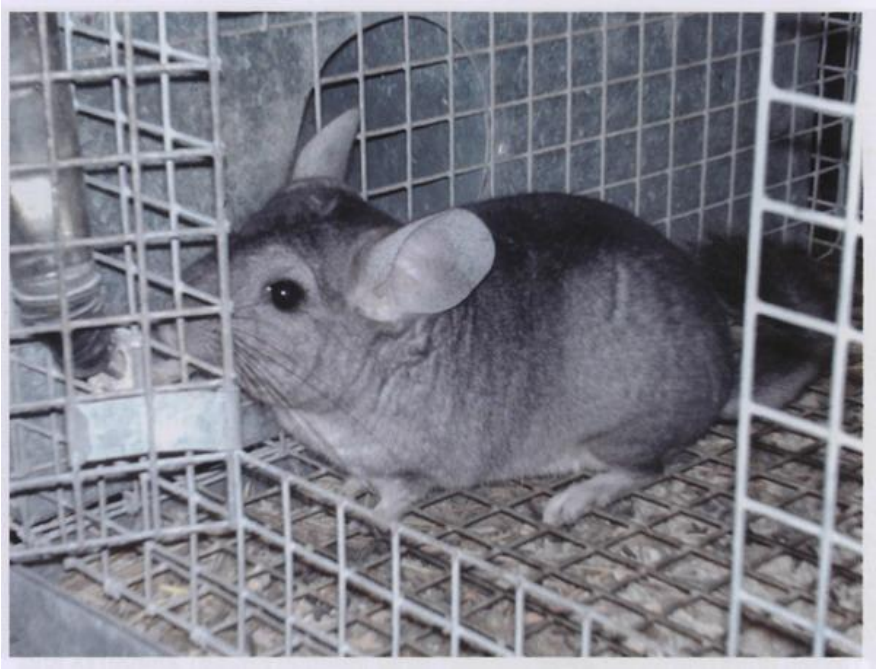

Photo3 Chinchilla

Photo 4 Silver Arctic fox

Photo 5. Mink (pearl)

Photo 6 Mink (pastel)

Fencing, Dwelling and Equipment

While constructing new fences, dwellings and equipment or modifying the existing ones it is necessary to observe the cage maintenance norms as for health and well-being of the animals.

New methods of maintenance and new equipment or dwelling design for fur animals should be examined taking into account health and well-being of animals, and their commercial use is allowed only after meeting all the requirements of the acting legislation.

While planning new premises for fur animals the appropriate place is chosen considering negative influence of the environment, such as noise, vibration and atmospheric pollution, and also complexes for meeting needs of each particular species, such as water for swimming for some species, temperature, speed of air circulation etc.

It is appropriate to use the advantages of natural opportunities for protection from harmful climate conditions to the full extend.

It is necessary to create for the animals such environments where their biological need are maximally met, taking onto account norms and experience, considering natural climate conditions.

Design, building and maintenance of fences, premises and equipment for fur animals should provide protection from unfavorable climate conditions, meet biological needs of the animals, including realization of specific behaviors, support good hygienic conditions and restrict the risks of deceases, disturbances that result in behavior changes, injuries to animals or injuries to each other and follow the safety requirements that are necessary to avoid the fire and for protection from natural phenomena. The cages in use should contain such opening that allows taking off the fur animals easily. Sharp corners and brows should be avoided.

Fences and premises should be constructed and built in such a way that minimizes the access for rats, mice and birds.

During designing, building and maintaining of fences, dwellings and equipment for fur animals it is also appropriate to conduct light examination of all animals.

Design and building of fences and dwellings for fur animals should be adapted to corresponding needs of each species, contain enough space for usual mobile behavior: cleaning, lying, resting, settling for sleep, etc.

Animal species for which jumping is usual mobile behavior or reaction is state of alert, and also species that ramp during search behavior should have enough space to spend there all time, except for places intended specially for sleep.

Animals must have opportunity to see similar animals and be able to show social behavior, connected with support of social structure if it is a part of usual species behavior and improves the animals' well-being.

The floor must have good drainage for cleaning of secretions and spilled water to avoid discomfort, exhaustion and injuries among animals. Materials used for floors should meet the requirements of particular species. The perforated floors should meet requirements for certain size, age and weight of animals living there and form hard, straight and stable surface.

For correct conduct with animals during examination, treatment and checks correct equipment should be provided.

The premises should be accessible to separate animals in case of isolation in order to carefully examine and treat ill and injured animals.

Every animal must have available territory where it can hide from men or from animals in other cages or fences.

It is essential to locate premises used to skinning far enough from other premises so that not to disturb other animals.

The equipment for slaughter must be in good working state to slaughter the animals using methods, listed in Appendix 7 for the correspondent species.

Maintenance of fur animals

The necessary for fur animals space is counted accordingly to the needs of every particular species as for the environment, age, sex, body weight, and biological needs of animals, considering the size of the group. The lack of space (overload) that leads to behavior or other disturbances should be avoided.

The necessary materials should be available to use for particular animal species comfort.

Cages and open-air cage must be equipped with appropriate stimulating materials, for example straw serve as not only a bedding but also as a material that stimulates the searching behaviors and other natural needs of the fur animals.

Animals should be kept clean.

It is advisable that parts of premises with which animals have contact, be carefully cleaned and disinfected annually. Premises occupied by animals, inner spaces and all equipment should be kept in satisfactory state.

Fences and premises should be kept in such a way to control or delete parasites, flies, rats or mice.

All animals must have free daily access to according nutritious, hygienic and balanced feed and if possible with regular intervals and constant access to unlimited quantity of adequate quality water to support their health and powers and satisfy biological needs of particular species.

No animal should be given feed or liquid that can provoke suffering or injury.

No other substances apart from those given with therapeutically or preventive purpose should be given to animals if it is not proved by medical research or practical experience that these substances are not harmful to health or well-being of the animals.

The premises for fur animals should be kept in such a way that temperature of the environment: the speed of air circulation, relative humidity, level of toxic gases and dust and other atmospheric conditions would not have negative effect on the health and well-being of the animals.

Storage and processing unit for excrements inside or outside of the premises are constructed and maintained so that to prevent the unhealthy influence of the gases on animals. Excrements are removed often enough to prevent harmful influence on the animals.

If animals' health depends on the artificial ventilation systems, the supply of the fresh air should be organized in cases of system failures.

It is necessary to avoid the influence of constant r sudden noises on the animals. Ventilators, feed distribution machines and other equipment should be built, mounted, placed, used and served in a way that they make the least noise in the premises.

It is necessary to avoid direct sunlight on the animals, but they are should not be also kept in complete darkness. If the artificial illumination is necessary, its sources should be places in a way so that it would not disturb the animals, and the illumination level, natural or artificial should be sufficient to allow the common species behavior.

All automatic and mechanical equipment on which depends health and well-being of animals should be checked once a day. It is important tot take measures to prevent ventilation system failures that could be harmful for health and well-being of animals, if the failure happens it should be immediately determined and repaired. If the immediate repair is impossible, the measures should be taken to protect health and well-being of the animals until the defect is eliminated.

Separation of younglings from female animals should be conducted in the most favorable for both mother and babies period.

In case it is necessary to catch or to move the anima, it should be done with minimum alarm or other disturbance for particular animal or other animals and also take all measures to prevent the animals from running away.

Runaway animals should be caught without any physical pain to them. If the traps are used, they should be checked at least twice a day.

Electroejaculation is used only in case of veterinary diagnostics when other methods are unavailable.

Changes of phenotype and/or genotype

Breeding programs that cause or may cause suffering or harm any of the animals involved should not be practiced. Namely, animals, which genotype was modified for production purposes should not be kept at commercial farms, unless the well-being of the animals is not proved by the scientific research, and unless it is scientifically proved that the animals can be kept in such conditions without harm to their health and well-being. Very timid and aggressive animals are excluded from the breeding program.

In breeding programs special attention should be paid to criteria that promote improvement of animals' health and well-being, and also their productivity. Thus, it is necessary to promote saving and development of animal species or lines, which do not cause animal well-being problems.

Slaughter of fur animals

Slaughter is executed by experiences person without making special alarm or causing other forms of physical pain.

The chosen method should:

- cause immediate loss of consciousness and death;
- quickly cause deep general anesthesia, that ends in death;
- Cause death of animal which was given pain-relieving means or which is stunned without any physical pains.

Appendix 7 contains main methods that should be used according to the requirements of legislation.

Person responsible for the slaughtering must make sure that the animal is dead before continuing further procedures.

During slaughter it is necessary to make the least disturbance to other animals.

Scientific research

For encouraging and promoting of fur animal breeding branch according to provisions of the present Recommendations, the farms should conduct the researches according to the animal species kept on their territory in the area of:

- biology and animal well-being , including their health;
- development of effective production technologies, including group maintenance in order to improve the animals well-being, as well as their health;
- Humane methods of animal slaughter.

To such researches belong needs of appropriate freedom of movement and opportunity to observe other animals and surroundings, access to water, balanced and nutritious feed, natural activities and other needs.

It is essential to make research and use technologies that with modern scientific data are useful for meeting of biological needs of the animals, including their need of certain behavior realization during working out, constructing or reconstructing of the premises for fur animals.

Such technologies must maximally reduce the risks of deceases and injuries among animals, provide stimulating environment to give the animal an opportunity to satisfy biological needs and to make animal farm conditions close to the natural conditions.

Appendixes

These Recommendations will be revised in 5 years after approval. Considering scientific research in this area, special provisions for other fur animal species are suggested.

Appendixes 1

Special provisions for mink

1. Mink should be kept in a nest-box, made of heat-isolating material safe for the health of the animal with enough space on the floor. The opening design in the nest-box must keep newly-borne puppies and at the same time give free access to the female animal. Material which is appropriate for the bedding and activities like straw should be given regularly and its correspondence should be checked especially during birth season and cold season of the year.

2. Young animals should not be kept isolated. It is the easiest way to have stable relations in animal groups where animals are grown together. Group sizes and family density should allow peaceful coexistence. The separation of puppies from the mother happens at the age most favorable for the mother and baby, and should not happen before 8 weeks after birth. Earlier separations might happen only in case of exceptional circumstances if there is a threat to well-being of the mother or child. A separated young animal does stay near mother.

3. If the injury level among minks at the farm is high, maintaining system should be changed correspondingly as for improving of the well-being of the animals. If these measures are not enough the production should be temporally suspended.

4. If separated youngsters and their mothers are in one premise, corresponding attention should be paid.

5. Cages should be kept at the sufficient height; an area below the cage should be covered with sand, gravel, ashes or other material for easy deletion of droppings. Cages are not placed one above other.

6. The height should allow animals to stand on the hind legs.

7. The minimal space for a mink (free m2, except for box-nests):

Single adult mink – 0.25

Adult mink with yield – 0.25

Young minks after separation, to 2 animals – 0.25

Minimal height for any cage – 45 cm.

Cage should not be less than 30 sm. in width and 70 sm. at length without box-nest. 850 cm2 should be provided for every additional animal.

All above parameters concern new maintaining technologies and change of existing maintaining systems.

All cages with free space less than 0.16 m2 or with the height less than 35 cm should be replaced by new systems according to standards, mentioned in the Recommendation for fur animals maintaining till the 31 of December 2010.

8. Special technologies should be used in constructing, building or reconstructing of premises for fur animals according to the scientifically proved norms that will satisfy animals' biological needs. It is essential to foresee the researches to determine the standards and development of maintaining technology systems that allow reducing the risks of deceases and providing the stimulating environment that will allow animals to satisfy their biological needs. By such technologies the need of free movement and observation of other animals, access to water and other social and search behavior is realized. Systems of common space including tunnels and removable walls between cages must be observed, and scientific researches should be implemented that will help to reduce fear of people, unusual behavior and stress among animals.

Appendix 2

Special provisions for polecat

1. Polecats should be kept in the heat- isolating box-nest, safe for animal's health with enough space on the floor. The opening design in the nest-box must keep newly-borne puppies. Appropriate beddings and materials for activities like straw should be given regularly and its correspondence should be checked especially during birth season and cold season of the year.

2. Young animals cannot be kept isolated. It is the easiest way to have stable relations in animal groups where animals are grown together. Group sizes and family density should allow peaceful coexistence. Separated puppies should be kept away from their mother.

3. If the injury level among polecats at the farm is high, maintaining system should be changed correspondingly as for improving of the well-being of the animals. If these measures are not enough the production should be temporally suspended.

4. Cages should be kept at the sufficient height, an area below the cage should be covered with sand, gravel, ashes or other material for easy deletion of droppings.

Cages are not placed one above other.

5. The cage's height should allow animals to stand on the hind legs.

6. The minimal space for a polecat (free m2, except box-nests):

Single adult polecat – 0.25
Adult polecat with yield – 0.25
Young animals after separation to 2 animals – 0.25
Minimal height for any cage – 45 cm.

Cage should not be less than 30 cm wide and 70 cm long without box-nest. 850 cm2 should be provided for every additional animal.

All above parameters concern new maintaining technologies and change of existing maintaining systems.

All cages with free space less than 0.16 m2 or with the height less than 35 cm should be replaced by new systems according to standards, mentioned in the Recommendation for fur animals maintaining till the 31 of December 2010.

7. Special technologies should be used in constructing, building or reconstructing of premises for fur animals according to the scientifically proved norms that will satisfy animals' biological needs.

It is essential to foresee the researches to determine the standards and development of maintaining technology systems that allow reducing the risks of deceases and providing the stimulating environment that will allow animals to satisfy their biological needs. By such technologies the need of free movement and observation of other animals, access to water and other social and search behavior is realized.

Systems of common space including tunnels and removable walls between cages must be observed, and scientific researches should be implemented that will help to reduce fear of people, unusual behavior and stress among animals.

Appendix 3

Special provisions for fox

1. Since existing technologies do not satisfy all biological needs of foxes living in cages they should be replaced by new technologies which are better fitted for biological characteristics of animals and will comply with the requirements of the Recommendation.

2. Environment for foxes should be equipped with objects satisfying searching needs and with other materials, such as a straw.

3. Animals should get to use to the contact with a humans since their birth.

4. Clutches of the foxes should be kept in a good condition.

5. If the injury level among foxes at the farm is high, maintaining system should be changed correspondingly as for improving of the well-being of the animals. If these measures are not enough the production should be temporally suspended.

6. In a case of spreading of cannibalism, the farm's working technology should be changed, for example living conditions for breeding foxes or their genetic stamps. If such measures are not enough, the production must be temporary suspended.

7. Foxes should have an opportunity to hide from people and animals, to relax and to observe other animals. Every separated animal should have own available territory for privacy or lifted platform or a box-nest with a roof where the animal can relax and observe the door of the cage or entrance to the open-air cage.

8. Private territory for foxes should be separated with a solid wall.

9. Pregnant female foxes and foxes with babies should have a box-nest consisting of a corridor big enough to hide the entrance to the main room, and the main room made from a heat-isolated material.

10. Separated young animals should be kept away from their mothers.

11. If the animals are kept in cages, cages should be kept high enough to clean excrements, and area below the cage should be covered with sand, gravel, ashes or other material for easy absorption and deletion of excrements. Cages are not placed one above other.

12. Often use of a neck tongs for the entrapment of foxes should be avoided.

13. The minimal space for a fox (free m2):

Single adult fox – 0.8

Adult fox with yield – 2.0

Young animals after separation, to 2 animals – 1.2

Minimal height for any cage – 70 cm.

Cage should not be less than 75 cm wide and 100 cm long without a box-nest. 0.5 m2 should be provided for every additional animal.

All above parameters concern new maintaining technologies and change of existing maintaining systems.

All cages with free space less than 0.16 m2 or with the height less than 35 cm should be replaced by new systems according to standards, mentioned in the Recommendation for fur animals maintaining till the 31 of December 2010.

7. Special technologies should be used in constructing, building or reconstructing of premises for fur animals according to the scientifically proved norms that will satisfy animals' biological needs.

It is essential to foresee the researches to determine the standards and development of maintaining technology systems that allow reducing the risks of deceases and providing the stimulating environment that will allow animals to satisfy their biological needs. By such technologies the need of free movement and observation of other animals, access to water and other social and search behavior is realized. Systems of common space including tunnels and removable walls between cages must be observed, and scientific researches should be implemented that will help to reduce fear of people, unusual behavior and stress among animals.

Appendix 4

Special provisions for raccoon dog

1. Since existing technologies do not satisfy all biological needs of foxes living in cages they should be replaced by new technologies which are better fitted for biological characteristics of animals and will comply with the requirements of the Recommendation.

2. Environment for raccoon dogs should be equipped with objects satisfying searching needs and with other materials, such as a straw.

3. Animals should get to use to the contact with a humans since their birth.

4. Clutches of the raccoon dogs should be kept in a good condition.

5. If the injury level among raccoon dogs at the farm is high, maintaining system should be changed correspondingly as for improving of the well-being of the animals. If these measures are not enough the production should be temporally suspended.

6. In a case of spreading of cannibalism, the farm's working technology should be changed, for example living conditions for breeding raccoon dogs or their genetic stamps. If such measures are not enough, the production must be temporary suspended.

7. Foxes should have an opportunity to hide from people and animals, to relax and to observe other animals. Every separated animal should have own available territory for privacy or lifted platform or a box-nest with a roof where the animal can relax and observe the door of the cage or entrance to the open-air cage.

8. Private territory for raccoon dogs should be separated with a solid wall.

9. Pregnant female raccoon dogs and raccoon dogs with babies should have a box-nest consisting of a corridor big enough to hide the entrance to the main room, and the main room made from a heat-isolated material.

10. Separated young animals should be kept away from their mothers.

11. If the animals are kept in cages, cages should be kept high enough to clean excrements, and area below the cage should be covered with sand, gravel, ashes or other material for easy absorption and deletion of excrements. Cages are not placed one above other.

12. Often use of a neck tongs for the entrapment of raccoon dogs should be avoided.

13. The minimal space for a raccoon dog (free m2):

Single adult raccoon dog – 0.8
Adult raccoon dog with yield – 2.0
Young animals after separation to 2 animals – 1.2
Minimal height for any cage – 70 cm.

Cage should not be less than 75 cm wide and 100 cm long without a box-nest. 0.5 m2 should be provided for every additional animal.

All above parameters concern new maintaining technologies and change of existing maintaining systems.

All cages with free space less than 0.16 m2 or with the height less than 35 cm should be replaced by new systems according to standards, mentioned in the Recommendation for fur animals maintaining till the 31 of December 2010.

It is essential to increase the height of cages.

14. Special technologies should be used in constructing, building or reconstructing of premises for fur animals according to the scientifically proved norms that will satisfy animals' biological needs.

It is essential to foresee the researches to determine the standards and development of maintaining technology systems that allow reducing the risks of deceases and providing the stimulating environment that will allow animals to satisfy their biological needs. By such technologies the need of free movement and observation of other animals, access to water and other social and search behavior is realized. Systems of common space including tunnels and removable walls between cages must be observed, and scientific researches should be implemented that will help to reduce fear of people, unusual behavior and stress among animals.

Appendix 5

Special provisions for nutria

1. Environment for keeping animals should provide an opportunity for social contacts and contain elements for gnawing and a material for manipulation.

2. Nutrias should be kept in groups.

3. Cages' and open-air cage' construction should allow animals to be within eyeshot and smell for other animals. There also must be special territory with a hard floor for exercises.

4. Nutrias should be kept in a nest-box with straw or other heat – insolating materials safe for animal's health. Size of nest-box must allow animals from one corral to lie and warm themselves with heat of their bodies. A nest-box should have 2 rooms and 2 exits. Female nutria with babies should be separated from other animals to protect them from injuries.

5. The minimal space for nutrias (free m2, except for water for swimming):

Single adult nutria – 1.0

Adult nutria with yield – 2.0

Young animals after separation – 0.5

Minimal size of fence – 2.0

70% of floor should be hard.

All above parameters concern new maintaining technologies and change of existing maintaining systems. All fences should correspond to minimal requirements given in Recommendations concerning fur animals till December, 31, 2010.

6. Special technologies should be used in constructing, building or reconstructing of premises for fur animals according to the scientifically proved norms that will satisfy animals' biological needs.

It is essential to foresee the researches to determine the standards and development of maintaining technology systems that allow reducing the risks of deceases and providing the stimulating environment that will allow animals to satisfy their biological needs. By such technologies the need of free movement and observation of other animals, access to water and other social and search behavior is realized. Systems of common space including tunnels and removable walls between cages must be observed, and scientific researches should be implemented that will help to reduce fear of people, unusual behavior and stress among animals.

Appendix 6

Special provisions for chinchilla

1. Environment should be equipped with certain stimuli, such as a manipulation material.

2. Chinchillas must have special subjects for edging of cutting teeth. It is necessary to provide the access to sand bathes at least one a day.

3. After separation young animals should be provided with platforms to ease their moving activity.

4. The animals should be provided with zones for solitude where they can rest and hide, with beddings, there should be 25 % of the hard floor.

5. Chinchillas are social animals; single living is an exception for them. Group of young animals after separation and before pubertal age should be from one brood, if possible.

6. Chinchillas should be treated very carefully to avoid exceeding fur loses. During fixation the tail should be taken between thumb and forefinger, the hand should be around chest and legs to support the body. Fur should not be torn from living animals.

7. The minimal space for chinchillas (free m2):

Single adult chinchilla – 0.5

Adult chinchilla with yield – 0.5

Young animal after separation – 0.3

Minimal height for any cage – 100 cm.

Cage should not be less than 50 cm wide and 60 cm long without a nest-box. 0.16 m2 should be provided for every additional animal.

All above parameters concern new maintaining technologies and change of existing maintaining systems.

8. Special technologies should be used in constructing, building or reconstructing of premises for fur animals according to the scientifically proved norms that will satisfy animals' biological needs.

It is essential to foresee the researches to determine the standards and development of maintaining technology systems that allow reducing the risks of deceases and providing the stimulating environment that will allow animals to satisfy their biological needs. By such technologies the need of free movement and observation of other animals, access to water and other social and search behavior is realized. Systems of common space including tunnels and removable walls between cages must be observed, and scientific researches should be implemented that will help to reduce fear of people, unusual behavior and stress among animals.

Appendix 7

Methods of fur animal slaughter

1. Electric stun

The method of electric stun leads to immediately lose of consciousness and cardiac arrest For foxes if electrodes are placed in chaps and rectum, the voltage with average index 0.3 A during 3 seconds is used. Equipment for electric stun is supplied with an instrument fixing voltage.

2. Method of slaughter by means of choking

The room where animals are influenced by gas is planned and built in such a way to avoid mechanical animal damages. Animals should be well observed in those rooms. Gas leads to deep general anesthesia and causes death.

Animals are in the room till total death.

Except for the cases allowed below, only gas or gas mixture which does not cause the defection of breathing by entering is used.

Choking gas:

Animals enter the room only when the level of choking gas doesn't exceed the concentration of 1% of volume, it should be supplied from a ware containing 100 % of carbonic oxide.

Gas evolved from oil engine specially adopted for this purpose can be used if this gas:

- accordingly chilled (for example gas went through the water)
- filtrated enough (for example metal filter)
- not accompanied with a smell of irritative gases
- if the system is checked by the owner before every slaughtering.

Carbon dioxide is used for slaughtering of mustelines and chinchillas till other less aggressive gases or gas mixtures with equal effect are available.

Chloroform can be used for slaughtering of chinchillas.

3. Lethal injection.

Sodium solution of pentobarbitron (200 mg/ml) or any other anesthetic means that shows similar results, except for chloralgidrat, can be used for slaughtering of some mustelines and foxes. Muscles relaxants are used only for anesthesia.

For remarks

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