

Fur Information Council of America

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FICA Facts

The fur industry is one of North America's oldest and most historically significant industries, supporting thousands of jobs. Fur remains a plentiful, renewable natural resource and a highly desirable consumer product.

What is the Fur Information Council of America?

The Fur Information Council of America (FICA) is the largest fur industry association representing fur retailers and manufacturers across the country who collectively account for over 80% of U.S. fur sales. FICA's 35 member board of directors includes the CEOs of the nation's largest fur retailers, manufacturers, and auction houses, as well as wildlife management and agricultural experts. FICA provides the public with information on the fur industry, wildlife conservation and responsible animal care to which the fur industry is committed.

How big is the U.S. retail fur market?

There are approximately 1100 retailers and 100 manufacturers in the U.S. Most (85%) are small, family-run businesses which have been passed from generation to generation. In the global fur market, the U.S. ranks among the top countries for retail fur sales. Other top countries include Italy, Russia and China.

How have fur sales fared in recent years?

U.S. fur sales were \$1.5 billion in 2014, a 7.3 per cent increase over 2013. If fur, fur trim and accessories sales through designer and fashion boutiques, ski/sporting goods boutiques, luxury shoe stores, department stores and online retail sites are factored in total fur sales would be substantially higher.

In contrast, according to the Worldwide Luxury Goods Market Study conducted by Bain & Company, U.S. sales of personal luxury goods, the “core of the core” of luxury, grew at just 5% in 2014 (at constant exchange rates).

According to Editd, a trendspotting service that tracks retail fashion data, the number of fur outerwear products in stores (including faux fur and shearling) jumped by 74% in November 2014 vs, November 2013.

Designer interest in fur continues to grow as fur has become a branding trademark for luxury apparel. Fueled by fur’s unique tactile and visual characteristics as well as manufacturing innovations and broad creative adaptability, 73% of the designers showing in New York, London, Milan and Paris presented fur in their collections for fall 2015 maintaining fur’s role as a key fashion trend and a preferred luxury textile.

Mink remains the most popular fur representing approximately 70% of all fur sold at retail. Sheared mink continues to show strong growth as does knitted fur. Other fur types showing growth are broadtail, which has seen an increase in use for both outerwear and ready to wear looks. Fox and beaver, popular for trims, have also experienced growth.

Looking at fur sales over the longer term, sales today stand nearly 50% above early 1990 levels fueled by fur’s prominence as a luxury textile. Nearly 500 international designers now include fur in their collections offering more product at more price points in silhouettes and styles and accessories that appeal to a broader audience than

ever before. And beyond the traditional fur retailer, fur fashions can now be found in departments throughout major high-end department stores as well as an increasing number of designer boutiques and specialty retailers.

U.S. Retail Fur Sales

- 2014- \$1.50 billion
- 2013- \$1.39 billion
- 2012 – \$1.27 billion
- 2011 – \$1.34 billion
- 2010 – \$1.30 billion
- 2009 – \$1.26 billion
- 2008 – \$1.36 billion
- 2007 – \$1.59 billion
- 2006 – \$1.61 billion
- 2005 – \$1.82 billion
- 2004 – \$1.81 billion
- 2003 – \$1.80 billion
- 2002 – \$1.70 billion
- 2001 – \$1.53 billion
- 2000 – \$1.69 billion
- 1999 – \$1.40 billion
- 1998 – \$1.21 billion
- 1997 – \$1.26 billion
- 1996 – \$1.25 billion
- 1995 – \$1.20 billion
- 1994 – \$1.10 billion
- 1993 – \$1.20 billion
- 1992 – \$1.10 billion
- 1991 – \$1.00 billion

Which U.S. markets sell the most fur?

More people buy fur in New York than any other city, followed closely by Chicago. Other top fur markets in order of retail sales are Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Washington D.C./Baltimore, Boston, Detroit, Cleveland, Dallas/Ft. Worth, San Francisco, Milwaukee and Seattle.

Who buys fur?

55% buyers today are under 44 years of age. One in five women own a fur coat. Over the past several years the market has experienced significant gains in sales of men's fur fashions which now accounts for nearly 5% of total fur sales.

How significant is the fur industry to the American economy?

With over \$1.5 billion in retail sales, the fur industry makes a substantial contribution to the U.S. economy. The fur industry in the U.S. provides full-time employment for over 32,000 workers and seasonal or part-time employment for an additional 155,000+ workers. Over 12,500 workers in fields such as marketing, banking and insurance also owe their livelihood in part to the fur industry.

Are endangered species ever used to make fur coats?

Absolutely NOT! Endangered species are never used by the fur industry. In fact, the industry is a strong supporter of CITES and all laws protecting endangered species. Only abundant furbearing populations are used today.

Did you know...

- There are more designers working with fur today than in the '80s. In 1985, only 42 designers were creating fur fashions. Today, there are over 500 renowned designers using fur in their collections.
- For Autumn/Winter 2015 – 2016, 73% of the designers showing during collections in New York, Paris, London and Milan included fur in their collections.
- 92% of Americans disapprove of the harassing tactics used by animal rights groups.
- 88% of all Americans say the animal rights movement has had NO influence on their decision to buy fur.
- 86% of Americans support an individual's freedom to choose whether or not to wear fur.
- The 2014 Gallup "moral acceptability" poll showed that a majority of responders in America support the purchase or wearing of fur clothing. Most important to note....at 58% affirming their support versus 37% opposed it is a strong majority! Also revealed in this year's poll was an acceptance of fur clothing that is consistent across all age brackets. This runs counter to conventional wisdom that younger people are more susceptible to animal rights propaganda.
- Warmth was the number one reason given by consumers when asked why they own a fur coat.

- Many models and celebrities (Naomi Campbell, Nadja Auermann, Claudia Schiffer and Cindy Crawford) who in the past refused to wear fur have recently been seen wearing beautiful fur coats in ads, on the runways, and socially. Famous fur lovers include Sharon Stone, Madonna, Demi Moore, Elizabeth Hurley, Jennifer Lopez, Beyonce Knowles, Goldie Hawn, Cybill Shepard, Glenn Close and many others. Melissa Etheridge, who once supported certain animal rights groups, publicly renounced her support when she discovered they did not support animal research seeking to find a cure for AIDS, cancer and other killer diseases when her father succumbed to cancer. Check the Celebrities section for a list of celebrities who choose to wear fur.
- 85% of all U.S. fur retailers are small independently run businesses.
- Less than 3% of Americans live by the animal rights philosophy. The majority of Americans (including the fur industry) support animal welfare groups, not the animal rights movement. Animal welfare groups support the humane treatment and responsible care of animals, while the animal rights philosophy condemns the use of all animals for any purpose whatsoever. There is a very distinct difference between supporting animal welfare, (that is, humane treatment and responsible care of animals, — a philosophy strongly supported by the fur industry), and the animal rights philosophy, (the condemnation of animal use for any purpose whatsoever). This philosophy dictates that you should not pet or ride a horse, watch movies or TV shows that employ trained animals, nor should you play sports with a ball made of leather, wear silk or wool, nor eat eggs, cheese, honey or yogurt (or any animal-related products.)
- Crimes committed in the name of animal rights have been designated as domestic terrorism in the U.S. by the FBI.