

RANCH MINK

NORTH AMERICAN RANCH MINK

TYPES



COMMON PELT COLOURS OF RANCH MINK WHOLE PELTS

North American Mink are simply unlike any other mink in the world. They generally have more dense, more compact underwool, and range in nap from X-SHORT to LONG.

SIZES

5x0	Over 101cm
4x0	95 - 101 cm
000	89 - 95 cm
00	83 - 89 cm
0	77 - 83 cm
1	71 - 77 cm
2	65 - 71 cm
3	59 - 65 cm
4	53 - 59 cm
5	47 - 53 cm
6	Under 47 cm

OVERVIEW

Pre-sort is the first step in a long process that will produce large collections of fur which are sold at auction. In order to be as effective and efficient as possible, it is important that all pre-sort technicians strive to work at a pace that promotes high production rate as well as a high quality product.

Pre-sort was created to maximize the time and expertise of veteran technicians by removing all pelts with apparent damage. If done correctly, pre-sort allows for senior technicians to focus on grading the quality of the skin rather than finding imperfections. If done incorrectly, pre-sort has the potential to affect the entire warehouse in a negative way: Slow production impedes the entire warehouse, and inaccurate production delays technicians down the line.

GOALS

- To increase the rate of production
- To produce a consistent product

Presort technicians identify imperfections or defects and categorize the mink according to the type and amount of damage acceptable in each grade. At NAFA mink are pre-sorted into three main sections:

1. Labeled
2. Very Slight Damage (VSL)
3. Section III.

It is important to understand that pre-sort is the first technical process that a mink will go through, meaning that each mink will be handled several more times before it is lotted for auction. Pre-sort is the first line of defense and identifies the obvious imperfections.

Note:

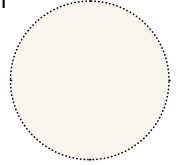
If you notice that a certain imperfection become increasingly common please make sure to inform your supervisor. Your supervisor will then take the required steps to document a common imperfection within a certain group.

PRE-SORT BREAKS



LABELED

Labeled mink are pelts that do not contain any imperfections. They must be complete, clean skins with no defects. Do not scrutinize every skin; scouring for damage will slow you down. If it is damaged you will notice. Skins with small, shallow surface mats or a light stain on belly can remain in the Labeled goods. It can be no greater than the size of this circle.



VERY SLIGHT DAMAGE (VSL)

Mink that contain slight imperfections which do not exceed 5% of the total skin. When making a decision it is important to consider which types and quantities of damage are acceptable in VSL. Remember that not all damages are the same.

SECTION III

Any pelts with damages that exceed 10% of the skin's total area. Included in this section are lowgrades, pieces, cottons, sprinklers and white marks. All taints, excessive holes, pronounced rips and pieces must always go in Section III.

TYPES OF DAMAGE



MATS AND STAINS

MATS

A Mat is clumped, knotted under wool caused by dirt, grease, blood, wet feed, or feces

There are Two Types of Mats :

- Deep Mat - the mat extends to the skin of the pelt and is very solid
- Surface Mat - the mat is very loose and it does not extend to the actual skin of the pelt.



STAINS

Stains are an imperfection of the fur caused by urine, blood, feed, or feces.

Breeder stains are the result of old age. The more pronounced the stain, the older the mink. Breeders are a category of mink that are graded separately.

CLIPS AND CHEWS

CLIPS

- Surface damage on the pelt where a chunk of guard hair is missing



CHEWS

- Chews are a deep clip that penetrates into the underfur

SLIPS, CLAMP DAMAGE AND TAINTS

SLIPS

- A spot on a pelt where fur is falling out and exposing the skin, a bald spot
- Damaged caused by handling/processing



CLAMP DAMAGE

- A slip that is caused during the pelt processing procedure
- Located on the skirt or by the tail of the pelt – Will have the appearance of a clip in that area
- Damage caused by handling / processing



TAINTS

- Loss of hair due to environmental factors. Taints can bleed into large bald spots



HOLES, TEARS, AND PIECES

HOLES

- Missing areas of both fur and skin

TEARS

- Tears are rips in the leather of the mink pelt.
- Missing tails are common



PIECES

- Pelts with a mass amount of skin missing

BITES AND BOILS

BITES

- Bumps or scars from insects/bugs
- Considered leather damage

BOILS

- Infections that can fester and become pronounced with scars and/or scabs





DISCOLOURATION

COTTON

- Skins with all underfur a pronounced white due to poor health



SPRINKLER AND COBALTS

- Sprinklers have white guard hairs due to illness
- Cobalts have the appearance of a sprinkler in their underfur



WHITEMARKS

- Discolored patches of hair as the result of genetics causing lack of pigment



LOWGRADES

- A Summer Skin is a mink that has died before coming to prime
- Timing of death will dictate the grade - lowgrades range from II to V
- These skins are very flat
- These skins tend to be very rough in appearance
- The leather of the pelt is blue/black
- Summer skins trump all damages excluding excessive tainting

THE NAPS MADE ARE:



EXTRA SHORT NAP	XSN	1X
SHORT NAP	SN	1
SHORT-MEDIUM OPEN	SMO	2X
SHORT-MEDIUM NAP	SMN	2
MEDIUM NAP	MN	3
MEDIUM LONG NAP	MLN	4
LONG NAP	LN	5
EXTRA LONG NAP	XLN	6

COLOURS AND CLARITY BY MAJOR MINK VARIETY

BLACK MINK	BLK DK	XXDK DK-BR	XDK BR	
MAHOGANY	XXDK DK	XDK MED		
DEMI/WILD TYPE	XDK MED	DK PL	XPL XXPL	
PASTEL	XDK MED	DK PL	XPL XXPL	XXXPL (MOYLE BUFF)
SAPPHIRE	XDK MED	DK PL	XPL	
BLUE IRIS	XDK MED	DK PL	XPL	

CLARITIES:

1	Clear, Blue
2	Slight Off
3	Off
4	Red

LABELLED GRADES

GRADE	DEFINITION
NAFA GOLD	Complete, fully prime pelts. Adequate underfur and good, even guard hair coverage. Smooth appearance and silky texture.
NAFA SILVER	Complete, prime pelts. Weaker underfur and poorer or uneven coverage or coarser guard hair.
SPRINKLERS (GD)	Numerous white guard hairs all over pelt or concentrated in one area (GLD & SLV quality pelts.)
WHITE MARKS (GD)	Large white patches usually in throat area or between legs.

VSL GRADES

GRADE	DEFINITION
MATTED	Fur stuck together in knots caused by wet feed or feces.
STAINED BELLIES	Heavily discoloured or matted area around crotch and belly area.
HIPPER	Obvious discolouration in hip area around crotch and belly area.
VERY SLIGHT DAMAGE	Chews or clips (i.e. patches where guard hair is missing). One spot no larger than 2 cm or two spots of total area the size of 2 cm. One small hole or cut no larger than 2 cm in the main body of pelt. A missing tail where it indents into main body of skin. A scar from a boil or abscess in the main body of pelt. A torn or missing leg if it does not extend to the back of skin.
VSA	Skins of heavier weight with smooth, even and silky guard hair coverage.
VSB	Skins of lower weight with weaker finish.

BREEDERS

PRESORT

Breeder pre-sort is based on the back of the pelt. Matting, stains and small damages on the belly are ignored. Similar to the regular goods, breeders are presorted into Labelled, VSL and Section III.



GRADING

BR1	Back is clear of defects and has a slight stain down the belly.
BR2	Back is clear of defects and has slight matting and a pronounced stain on the belly.
BR3	Back is clear of defects and the entire belly is matted and stained.
BR-VSL	These skins are categorized according to breeder belly stains as detailed above, as well as any defects on the back. Only small damaged up to 10% are permissible in BR-VSL; anything exceeding 10% of the back must be put into Section III.

SECTION III

This is the most complicated grading that we do. It is essentially broken into two categories

- 1) Damaged, seasonable skins
- 2) Low grades and pieces

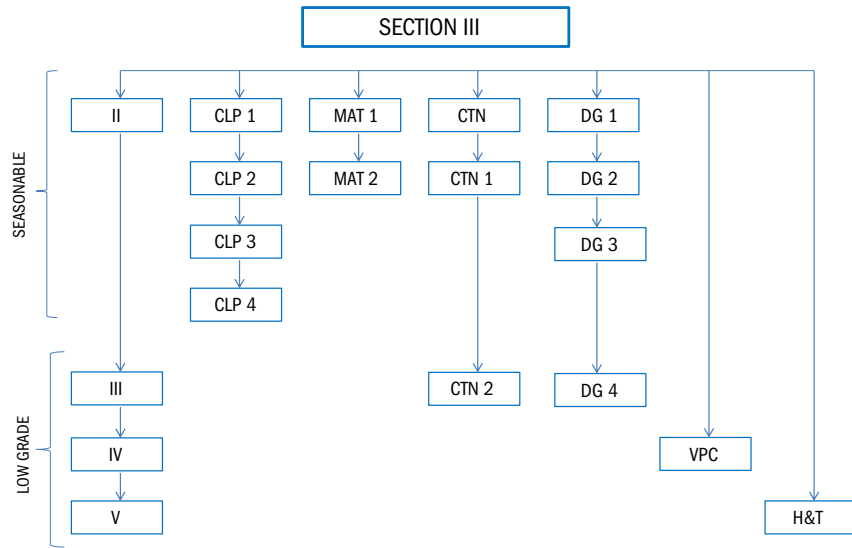
Damages can range in cause and appearance but are evaluated by their severity and size.

Below is a table of commonly encountered types of damage and descriptions of their underlying cause.

DAMAGES AND THEIR CAUSES

DAMAGES	CAUSES
TAINTS	Overheating during the harvesting process; the internal temperature once deceased
MATS	Wet food, poor bedding conditions, wet environment
LEATHER DAMAGE	Scars from fighting or bug bites, boils in the neck or head (abscesses which require draining) or stale/oxidized pelts
CLIPS & CHEWS	Playing, fighting, feeding or breeding process
HOLES, RIPS & TEARS	Pelting process
COTTONS & SPRINKLERS	Indication of a sick mink
WHITE MARKS	Genetics for hair pigmentation (positive trait in female but not males)
SINGE	Literal burning from a heat source or the result of environmental conditions (very hot and windy)
CLAMP DAMAGE	Hair loss/shedding near the legs or tail due to clamps used during the drying process

This is a simplified visual representation of the III section grading process



PRESORT

The SECTION III Grading process starts with a simplified pre-grade break down:

II & III	Clear of defects but under-prime
SLT CLIP	Clip damage 5 - 10%; no other defects allowed
SLT DGD	Damage 5 - 10%; no taints allowed
GOOD CLIP DGD	Clip damage amounting to 10-25%
GOOD DGD	Damages amounting to 10-25%
POOR DGD	Damages amounting to 26-50%
VERY POOR DGD	Damages amounting to over 50%
VPC	Little or no commercial value
MATS	Matting only, no other defects allowed
CLEAN CTN & SPR	Cottons and sprinklers, no other defects allowed
DGD CTN & SPR	Cottons and sprinklers with damages up to 30%
SUMMER SKINS	Under-prime skins with little to no under wool

Once pre-sorted, mink are napped and coloured before grading begins.

NAPPING

Napping is required in some of the grades and will vary in separation according to type.

Black Mink	XSN	X-SHORT on its own
	SMN	SHORT and SHORT MEDIUM together
	LN	MEDIUM and LONG
Mahogany & Demi Mink	SN	X-SHORT and SHORT together
	SMN	SHORT-MEDIUM on its own
	LN	MEDIUM-LONG and LONG together



Note: Some Mutations will be napped depending on quantity.

COLOURING

Black and Mahogany mink will be coloured in some grades depending on quantity.

Black Mink	BLK-XXD	XD-DK
Mahogany	XXD-XD	DK-MED

Note: Some mutations will be coloured depending on quantity.

GRADING

SEASONABLE SKINS

These are all prime skins with varying types and degrees of damage. Low grade skins are not permitted in the following categories.



COTTONS

II These skins will not be as good as fully primed skins because they did not reach maturity. The leather should be slightly blue and somewhat board-y. The look of the fur will not be as silky but there are weaker varieties still. This pelt must be clear of defects.



CTN Seasonable skins, of good to average quality, that are free of defects. Will have white under wool due to poor health, often an indication of Aleutian disease.

CTN 1 Seasonable cottons and sprinklers with SLT DGD or DG-1 level defects. Mats and stains are okay to include. If damage exceeds 25% pelt becomes DGD 2-3 or VPC.

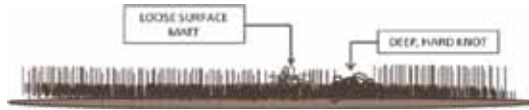


CTN 2 Low grade cottons and sprinklers (II & III), free of defects. Mats & stains may be included. If there are any defects pelt becomes DGD 2-3 or VPC.

MATS



- MAT 1** Gold and silver quality skins which are damaged exclusively by matting. Mats cannot be deep hard knots and may amount to no more than 10-25% of the skin. Clip damage not allowed. If mats are deep and hard pelt drops to DG 2.



- MAT 2** Gold and silver quality skins with up to 26-70% of skin matted. Mats must be loose and shallow. No clip damage allowed. If mats are deep and hard pelt drops to DG 2 or 3.



DAMAGES



- DGD-1** (SLT DGD) Good quality skins 5 - 10% of skin damage. Allowable defects include rips, small holes, and small clips, small sew jobs. No taints, mats or stains allowed. If skin is not seasonable (II or III) drop down to DG2-DG3.



- DGD-2** (GOOD DGD) Good to average quality skins, some woolly, with 11 - 25% of skin damaged. Allowable defects include tears, holes, mats, stains, clips, sew jobs and small taints. If skin is not seasonable (II or III) drop down to DG3.



- DGD-3** (POOR DGD) 26-50% of skin damaged. Acceptable defects include tears, cuts, holes, clips, deep mats, stains, large sew jobs and taints. If skin is not seasonable (II or III) drop down to DG4.



CLIP DAMAGE



CLIP 1 (SLT DGD) Gold and silver quality skins with 5 - 10% of the skin being damaged by clips. No other defects allowed. Note: Previously lotted with SLT DGD but now separate for shearing.



CLIP 2 (GOOD DGD) Good quality, clean skins with 11 - 25% of skin damaged by clips. No other defects allowed.



CLIP 3 (POOR DGD) Good quality, clean skins with 26 - 50% of skin damaged by clips. No other defects allowed.



CLIP 4 (VERY POOR DGD) Good quality, clean skins with over 50% of skin damaged by clips. No other defects allowed. BACKBELLY Note: if clips are deep enough to expose leather pelt drops down to DGD 1-4.

LOWGRADES AND PIECES



III The leather on these skins will be darker blue than the II, or black. They will also be weaker and flatter, but there will still be some under wool. The pelt must be clear of defects.



IV Clean skin, no defects. Small stains or loose mats allowed. Leather is mostly black. Pelt is very flat with very little under wool. If damaged drop down to V.



V Clean to VLS, some mats and stains allowable. Leather is very black. Pelt is very flat with no under wool and very coarse hair.



DGD-4 (VERY POOR DGD/PIECES) Good to average quality skins, some woolly. More than 50% of skin damaged (back and belly). Defects include holes, rips, tears, stains, mats, big taints, very large sew jobs. Can be considered pieces, but it is still a full length pelt.



VPC Pelt with no commercial value. Very, very poor damage, damaged IV and V, bad taints, low grade pieces.



HEADS & TAILS Pieces divided into large and small sizes.