



Agriculture

Animal Health Laboratory
65 River Road
Bible Hill, NS
B2N 5G6

Mink Ranch Health Assistance Program (MRHAP)

Purpose: To encourage mink breeders to utilize the professional services of a veterinarian, on a regular basis, for the maintenance and improvement of ranch mink health, through the application of the principles of biosecurity and preventative medicine.

Eligibility: Owners of a mink ranch who meet the following criteria are eligible for this program:

- (a) are registered under *The Farm Registration Act*;
- (b) have a minimum of 500 breeding females maintained on their premises; and,
- (c) employ a veterinarian for the above stated purpose, consecutively, on a quarterly basis.

Veterinarians employed by owners of mink ranches under this program must be licensed to practice veterinary medicine in the Province of Nova Scotia, and work from an enrolled practice center as defined under the *Livestock Health Services Act* and Regulations.

Assistance: Assistance is available for a **maximum of four (4) properly recorded visits per year**. The following portions of the veterinarian's fees will be paid to the veterinarian by the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture (NSDA):

- (a) Fifty percent (50%) of the 'basic call fee' not to exceed ten dollars (\$10.00) per program visit; and,
- (b) The professional fee for veterinary consultation and service

- at the rate of seventeen dollars (\$ 17.00) per hour; and, in addition,
- (c) NSDA agrees to provide suitable recording forms without charge.

Application: Eligible mink ranch owners should complete an Agreement Form and forward it to

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65 River Road
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ph.: 902-893-6540
fax: 902-895-6684

**Herd Owner's
Responsibility:**

- Enrolled mink ranch owners must;
- (a) agree to maintain current breeding and production records on approved recording forms;
 - (b) arrange with the veterinarian for regular visitation to the mink ranch at minimum intervals of three (3) months;
 - (c) understand that when calls are made by the veterinarian under this program, the veterinarian cannot be expected to deal with other unrelated problems;
 - (d) sign, or have one's agent sign, the veterinarian's "mink ranch health summary report" form at the conclusion of each visit;
 - (e) should participate in an Aleutian disease testing program, and remove any test positive mink from the ranch, in a timely manner; and,
 - (f) have on hand, a current copy of the "Recommended code of practice for the care and handling of mink", and follow its guidelines.
(<http://www.nfacc.ca/code.aspx>)

**Veterinarian's
Responsibility:**

- The veterinarian supervising the on-ranch program must;
- (a) co-operate in making the necessary arrangements for regular ranch visits [as listed under previous "Section (2)" of this program];

- (b) make a conscientious effort to keep abreast of current developments in the mink industry that pertain to the efficient delivery of biosecurity and preventative medicine programs;
- (c) assist in the dissemination of current and new knowledge and technical information to the mink ranch owner;
- (d) assist with the interpretation of health and production indices within the enrolled herd;
- (e) take the lead role to provide owners of enrolled ranches with the expertise of others to assist in the resolution of a particular problem;
- (f) agree to encourage use of the principles of biosecurity and preventative medicine to enrolled ranches; especially, with respect to:
 - a. the on-ranch breeding program;
 - b. control and prevention of Aleutian disease
 - c. vaccination program;
 - d. parasite control;
 - e. all aspects of herd management (including nutrition); and, any other disease deemed to be of increased importance, from time to time, by the veterinarian, in consultation with the Program Veterinarian, Agriculture Protection (NSDA);
 - f. complete a “mink ranch health summary report” form outlining the particular aspect of the mink ranch health program addressed on each made to the enrolled ranch;
 - g. have the owner of the mink ranch, or an employee, sign the “mink ranch health summary report” form; and,
 - h. agree to keep confidential all information discussed with the mink ranch owner, or their employees.

Claims:

- (a) Claims by the veterinarian / enrolled practice center for the assistance provided to mink ranches enrolled under this program, are made by forwarding a completed copy of the “mink ranch health summary report” form, along with a statement of account to the animal health laboratory at the address below.
- (b) Claims made under this program must be received within one (1) month of the end of the month in which the mink ranch health visit being claimed is made by the veterinarian.
- (c) Claims being made for visits to enrolled mink ranches, which are submitted after the period stated in the foregoing section (b), will be considered stale-dated and not eligible for payment under this program.

- Termination:**
- (a) The Director of Agriculture and Food Protection may investigate the operation of the mink ranch health program on any enrolled ranch, and may delete the owner's enrollment if the ranch owner fails to carry out the terms of the agreement.
 - (b) The veterinarian may terminate, at any time, their participation in the mink ranch health program, for one or more ranches, by notifying the Director of Agriculture Protection of the decision.
 - (c) The mink ranch owner may discontinue enrollment in the mink ranch health program, at any time, by notifying the veterinarian who, in turn, should notify:

Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture
Agriculture Protection
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