

SYNOPSIS OF FCUSA's PROGRAMS

Education/Public Relations

FCUSA communicates to a variety of audiences by a range of methods. Our primary method is the Internet, and our main vehicle is the website [furcommission.com](http://www.furcommission.com). Page views annually range from 300,000 to half a million.

Found here are an extensive Press Kit section featuring statistics and general info on the fur industry, key articles and opinion pieces, plus special features grouping key info on hot issues of concern to the media. Special features include eco-terrorism (Safe Farms) and the misuse of tax-exempt status to promote eco-terrorism (Regulating the Conflict Industry), essentially the public face of our Fair Business Practices Program (Red Flag Reports). Other special features cover the European Union, and the domesticated dog/cat fur issue. Fur farming videos are located in our Fur on Film section, while our Education section offers a host of materials for teachers. Our password-protected Members' section includes items of interest to farmers but its eco-terrorism library is also of great value to law enforcement. FCUSA also maintains maninnature.com which focuses on the broader issues of sustainable use and helps with general coalition-building.



Furry Friends

A valuable promotional and coalition-building tool for FCUSA is our Furry Friends program of teddy bears made from donated pelts and fur garments. Please remember us if you have damaged pelts or old coats to donate!

Fur wRaps The Hill

Fur wRaps The Hill is a grassroots lobbying effort focused on two issues: trade and eco-terrorism, as addressed by our elected federal representatives. This is a joint project of the American Fur Merchants Association, the American Mink Council, FCUSA, the Fur Information Council of America, the Fur Council of Canada, Fur New York, the International Fur Trade Federation, the National Trappers Association, North American Fur Auctions and American Legend Auctions. FCUSA's President Paul Westwood served as the first FWTH Chairman, from 2002 to 2004. Current FCUSA delegates are our Vice President, Ryan Holt, and Board members Cindy Moyle and Kolby Stembridge, with our Secretary, Kate Roesler, serving as an alternate.

Grants

Approximately 25% of FCUSA's budget goes to the Research Committee which donates grants to scientists working in areas of concern to fur farmers. Additionally, the Animal Welfare/Government Affairs Committee issues grants to farmers working on projects at State Fairs and Beauty Pageants.

Legislative Monitoring

FCUSA monitors legislation and litigation nationwide, working with others as needed. "Confinement" issues continue to be hot in several states. Much of our PR work focuses on countering the opposition's efforts to mislead the public and our elected representatives.

Political

FCUSA is involved in the political process at the state and local levels and at the federal level beyond the issues targeted by FWTH. We play an integral role in stopping or modifying negative legislation and moving positive legislation forward. Every year the minutiae change, but the broad picture is the same, as animal rights groups seek new ways to legislate animal users out of business. For the last several years, a focus has been the amount of space farmers must allocate to livestock, and FCUSA has been active in educating the public and lawmakers

about the true intent behind initiatives aimed at making farming unprofitable.

AgRights

In 2009 we launched a combined website and email listserve, AgRights, to build a politically focused coalition of groups and individuals fighting to defend the rights of America's agricultural community. AgRights is particularly concerned with political efforts to limit our food and fiber choices to plants and synthetics. Participants are asked to agree to certain principles, and to play an active role in monitoring and supporting or opposing legislation that concerns these principles. The email list currently numbers almost 2,000 contacts representing livestock, hunting and fishing, timber and medical research, plus dozens of state and federal legislators. Custom programming for the website automates the compiling of coalition lists supporting/opposing legislation. With just a click or two, participants are added to the lists for all selected pieces of legislation, and these lists in turn are delivered regularly to target lists of legislators, registering support or opposition on each introduced bill.

Certification

FCUSA maintains a third-party certification program to ensure a high standard of husbandry for mink on our farms.

Ranch Services

The general on-call services of several veterinarians are underwritten by FCUSA.

Neighborhood Watch

As part of a broad effort aimed at ensuring the safety of fur farmers, FCUSA operates a Neighborhood Watch program. Participants gather information on any suspicious activities, and FCUSA ensures that this information is shared in a timely manner with other participants and with local law enforcement.

Newsletters

FCUSA publishes *Fur Farm Letter*, an eight- or 12-page quarterly, distributed both as hard copy (print run: 1,200) and electronically, and *Fur Animal Research*, an eight-page quarterly edited by James Oldfield, PhD and read by about 600 recipients. *Fur Farm Letter* is posted in the Members section of furcommission.com, and also distributed via the Netwatch email service.

There is no subscription fee for either publication. However, paid advertisements do generate a small amount of income. *Fur Farm Letter's* articles are reprinted in other publications and posted on the Internet if they are of interest to a wider audience.

Highlights

- FCUSA is a key player in the war on eco-terrorism, working effectively with law enforcement, prosecutors and policy makers. We have helped set the agenda by providing pertinent information designed for a variety of audiences and delivered in a cost-effective manner.
- FCUSA played a crucial role in building the broad coalition that pushed for passage of the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act in 2006. Since then, all resource users have reaped the benefit of tax dollars spent on investigations leading to prosecutions, convictions and jail time for many criminals. Attacks on fur farms are still a reality, but they are few and far between, and law enforcement are better equipped than ever before to bring the perpetrators to justice.
- FCUSA is working effectively with resource providers, policy makers, the media and the public to celebrate and secure the fur trade. The efforts of FCUSA have changed the atmosphere surrounding fur from poisoned to positive.

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