

Ranching chinchillas



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Ranching chinchillas

Chinchillas are native to the Andes Mountains in South America. For many years, they were trapped to fill the strong demand in Europe for their soft, luxurious pelts. Finally, to prevent their extinction, the Chilean government banned trapping and exporting chinchillas in 1914. However, six years later an American mining engineer obtained permission to export 11 live animals to the United States. They were brought to California and, from this small herd, the modern chinchilla industry began.

During the 40-year period from the trapping ban to the first auction of ranch-raised pelts in 1954, chinchilla fur was not available. As a result, the fur industry knew very little about it; details of dressing and using pelts had to be relearned and the fur had to be promoted to consumers. Chinchilla has now made a place for itself in the fur industry and, provided ranchers are able to upgrade their operations and produce good-quality pelts, there is no reason why the industry should not continue to grow.

Ranchers still need to know more about chinchilla nutrition, disease control and ways to improve production. Currently, slightly more than two kits are raised to maturity annually from each breeding female and, for a prosperous operation, this production has to be increased to three or more kits per female.

The first chinchillas were brought to Canada in 1937, and since then their numbers have increased steadily. Chinchillas are now being raised in most provinces, with Ontario being the largest producer today.

In recent years, many people have been attracted to ranching because they believe chinchillas are easily raised and large profits can be made even by beginners. Actually, a successful rancher needs specialized knowledge of the breeding, care and feeding of chinchillas. This is best acquired through actual experience working with them.

You cannot successfully raise chinchillas commercially in living rooms, basements or other makeshift accommodation, and it is unlikely you would make large profits operating under these conditions. Although some say females can produce five or more kits each year, this claim is open to question. The national average is about two kits per female.

Visit as many experienced, established ranchers as you can to see firsthand what is involved in caring for the animals. If you wish to learn more about the chinchilla business, write to:

National Chinchilla Breeders of Canada
R.R. #10
Brampton, Ontario
L6V 3N2

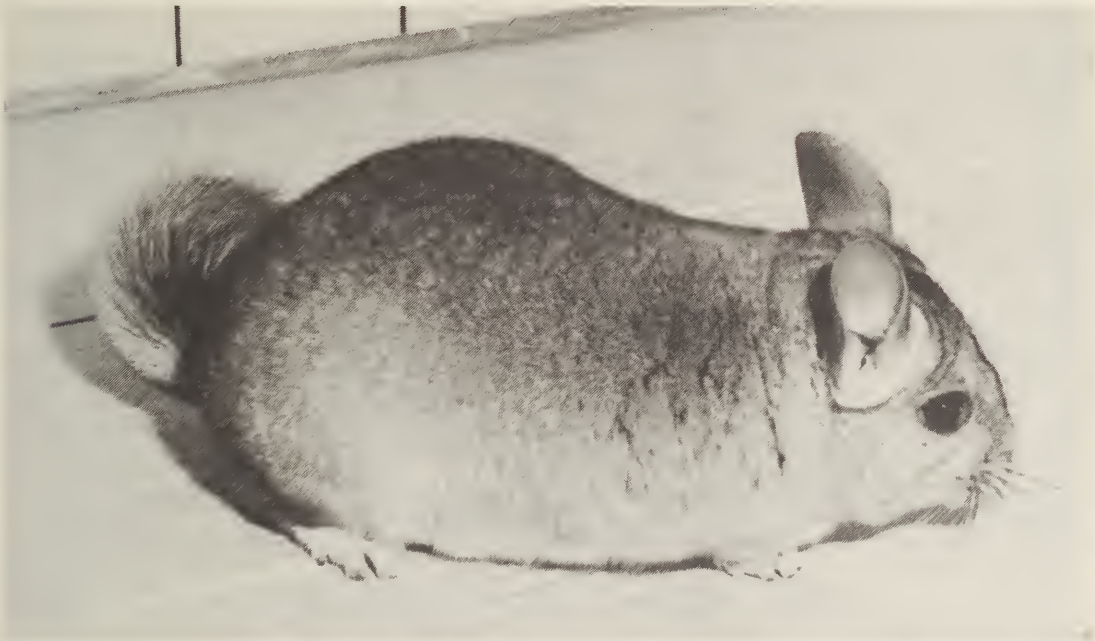
Description and habits

Chinchillas are rodents. At maturity (about 1 year), males weigh 425-570 g and females 510-710 g. The animal somewhat resembles a large squirrel, with its shiny black eyes, long bushy tail, strong back legs and short

front legs. Its posture is also like a squirrel's; it sits on its haunches and uses its front paws for eating. In the wild, the chinchilla is nocturnal and relies heavily on its whiskers, nose and highly developed sense of hearing to survive. The color of the standard chinchilla is bluish gray on its back and sides, shading off to white below.

Mutations

Several color mutations from the standard bluish-gray animal are now being produced. These new colors are sapphire, beige, charcoal, black, white and silver (white with black guard hairs). Other colors are being developed through crossbreeding.



These mutations are promising and when they are produced in sufficient volume to provide good matching of pelts, they may offer buyers a variety of colors like those found in ranched mink today. However, ranchers must produce clear pelts, free of cast, with good pattern and dense fur, particularly in the neck area.

As the proper breeding of mutations requires a sound understanding of genetics, new ranchers should work first with standard-colored chinchillas before tackling mutations.

Housing

Beginners often house their animals in makeshift quarters, like unused garages or basements. However, as your herds grows, you will have to provide proper housing. Plan to construct well-ventilated but draft-free quarters. Chinchillas do not need a lot of sunlight but there should be enough windows to light the interior during the day.



Most ranchers keep their pelting animals at 7-10°C and breeders at 10-16°C during the cold months. Chinchilla kits are active from birth and many die after becoming chilled. This can be avoided by keeping the cage warmer for the first week or so after the young are born. In the hot months, protect the animals during prolonged heat waves. Keep the temperature of their quarters below 27°C. Temperatures over 32°C are dangerous.



Many sizes of cages are in use but perhaps the most popular are 30 X 60 X 30 cm for pelters and 38 X 60 X 30 cm for breeders. If you use sliding metal trays under the upper cages to collect refuse, you can have two or more tiers. For economy and convenience, build the cages in batteries of five or six. Leave a 2.5 cm space between cages so the animals can't fight, and add a "buck run" along the front or back of the females' cages, with access to them. If the run is left open, females can be fitted with a plastic or metal collar that prevents them from leaving their cages. Unfortunately, collars will damage the fur and lower the value of the pelt.

Use 16 gauge 2.5 X 2.5 cm galvanized wire for the top and sides of pelter cages and 2.5 X 1.25 cm wire for the bottom. For breeder pens that will house kits, use 2.5 X 1.25 cm wire for the top, sides and bottom.

Dusting

The chinchilla cleans itself by rolling in dust, so each animal must have access to a dust bath. Use a box 15 X 30 X 8 cm deep and half fill it with dusting compound. Put the dust baths in the cages for 5-10 minutes daily. Some ranchers leave the baths in the cages at all times.

For pelting animals, the dust bath plays an important role in producing clean, bright-looking pelts. Keep the dust dry and clean and change it when necessary. For large operations, automatic dusters are now available.

Several types of powder for the dust bath are available from equipment and supply firms. These are usually clay products and must be fine, free-flowing and nonabrasive.

Chinchilla taking a dust bath



Feeding

The chinchilla, like many other rodents, is completely herbivorous. Most ranchers feed their stock good quality hay with coarse grains, like wheat, oats, corn and barley, or a commercially prepared pelleted feed. Some ranchers offer pellets as a complete feed. Others supplement basal hay and pellet diets with greens, such as clover, lettuce or dandelions. Commercial vitamin-mineral mixes are unnecessary if you feed your animals good quality hay and fresh commercial pellets.

Feed free choice, with pellets and hay available to the animal at all times. When changing from one feed to another, especially from dry feed to greens, the new feed should be offered, mixed with dry hay, sparingly at first. Take care how you mix minerals and vitamins, since imbalances and excesses of these nutrients are as detrimental as deficiencies.

Put a small block of wood in each cage so the animals can satisfy their urge to chew coarse materials and keep their teeth worn down.

Palatability

Fishmeal and seaweed generally make feeds unpalatable. Soy protein and casein appear to be the most successful protein sources. Up to 20% protein is recommended for growing or reproducing chinchillas; for the rest, 16% is satisfactory.

Hay

Alfalfa and timothy are the most commonly fed hays. While they are similar, there is some information that suggests alfalfa may be slightly superior for breeding females. Hay cubes are becoming increasingly popular because they are easy to handle. However, be careful with alfalfa cubes as they may become moldy in the center and you could inadvertently poison your animals.

Pelleted rations

Pelleted feeds should be chosen carefully, particularly when they are fed alone. They should be fresh, as many important nutrients deteriorate with prolonged storage. Rabbit pellets are used successfully on some ranches. They have the advantage of being less expensive and more consistent in quality because of their greater sales volume. Many ranchers (or cooperative groups) have arranged for local mills to prepare custom feed. The following table describes two rations used in several commercial operations. It can serve as a guide to beginners.

FORMULATION OF HIGH AND LOW PROTEIN RATIONS

Ingredients	Low protein (16.25% crude protein) (%)	High protein (19.56% crude protein) (%)
Ground wheat	15.00	13.50
Ground corn	5.00	4.50
Ground barley	5.00	4.50
Soybean meal (48.5% crude protein)	13.50	22.10
Sun-cured alfalfa	30.00	27.00
Ground beet pulp	5.00	4.50
Distillers's solubles	10.00	9.00
Defluorinated phosphate	2.50	2.25
Dried whey	0.80	0.75
Iodized salt	0.50	0.45
Molasses	10.00	9.00
Durabond ¹	2.50	2.25
Vitamin-mineral-antibiotic premix ²	0.25	0.25

¹ Durabond is a commercial lignin sulphate product that hardens the pellets. It is manufactured by Georgia-Pacific Co. Ltd., Bellingham, Washington.

² The premix contributes the following amounts of vitamins, minerals and antibiotics per kilogram of complete diet: vitamin A, 4410 IU; vitamin D3, 1100 IU; vitamin E, 5.5 IU; riboflavin, 4.4 mg; calcium pantothenate, 8.8 mg; niacin, 19.8 mg; vitamin B12, 6.6 mcg; choline chloride, 250 mg; D-L methionine, 610 mg; vitamin K, 1 mg; oleandomycin, 2 mg; zinc oxide, 66 mg; potassium iodide, 0.5 mg; manganese oxide, 88 mg.

Water

Water is the most important part of the chinchilla diet. They can survive much longer without food than without water. Thus, they should always have a fresh supply of good quality water. A healthy chinchilla drinks about 30-45 mL of water every day. Use either individual water bottles or an automatic watering system.

Diseases and disorders

Chinchillas are hardy animals and, if properly fed and housed, usually remain healthy. However, several disorders and parasitic, bacterial and viral diseases may affect them. Some of these diseases are transmissible to man so be careful when opening and examining dead animals. If possible, necropsies (postmortems) should be performed by veterinarians or other professionals.

Miscellaneous conditions

FUR CHEWING Chinchillas cause considerable economic loss by damaging their own fur. Studies to find out why they do it and how to stop them have had inconclusive results. Most ranchers cull fur-chewers as fast as possible. Check and make sure their diet is adequate and they are not suffering from stress.

MALOCCLUSION The four large front teeth (the incisors) grow throughout a chinchilla's life. Particularly in older animals, upper and lower teeth may not meet properly and therefore are not kept worn down. Sometimes, molars may also become maloccluded. This causes chewing to become painful. Treat by anesthetizing the animal and chipping or filing down the teeth. Cull chinchillas with dental abnormalities from your breeding program.

DIGESTIVE DISTURBANCES Chinchillas suffer from many digestive disturbances like bloat, diarrhea, constipation, indigestion and gastroenteritis. Generally, these conditions are associated with feeding and management, although sometimes they may result from a specific infection. When only individual animals are affected, carefully review your feeding and management program.

HEATSTROKE Hot humid weather and temperatures over 27°C can cause heat exhaustion, especially if the animals are excited. Keep them quiet and cool with good ventilation and shade.

Infectious diseases

GIARDIASIS Giardia is one of the chinchilla's most common protozoan parasites. The clinical signs are persistent diarrhea, poor appetite and anemia. Diagnosis is based on the symptoms and laboratory tests. Effective drugs are available for treatment.

PSEUDOMONIASIS Pseudomonas is associated with eye, ear and wound infections. Often the respiratory or urinary tracts are involved. The kits are affected most. Poor sanitation, especially dirty water bowls, is often involved. Specific antibiotic treatment combined with good hygiene will control this condition.

LISTERIOSIS This bacterial infection is fairly common in chinchillas. It may attack the nervous system causing blindness or convulsions; or it may affect the abdominal organs, especially the liver and intestines, causing diarrhea and loss of condition. Penicillin treatment combined with good hygiene helps control it.

More complete information on diseases and disorders can be found in an excellent bulletin entitled *Chinchilla Diseases* (publication 80-8). It is published by the British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Veterinary Branch, Victoria, B.C. (there may be a charge for it when requested from outside the province).

Selecting stock

When selecting chinchillas for breeding, pay special attention to their color, fur quality, size, breeding record, health and general appearance. Examine each animal carefully outdoors in a north light, or under a grading light, to ascertain the exact color of the fur. You should aim to eliminate from the breeding herd all off-colored animals and fur chewers. Although market preferences are subject to change, for many years, dark and medium-dark colored pelts have been outselling lighter colors.

If you are a beginner, seek advice from your provincial association of chinchilla breeders before buying breeding stock. Many Canadian chinchilla ranchers are members of the National Chinchilla Breeders of Canada. This organization has branches in most of the provinces. For information write to the Secretary-Treasurer, National Chinchilla Breeders of Canada, R.R. #10, Brampton, Ontario L6V 3N2.

Breeding

Most chinchilla ranchers plan on their females having two litters a year. Usually, they follow a polygamous breeding program (one male to six or eight females). As explained in the housing section, the male can have access to the females' cages, but flanged collars keep the females from leaving.

Chinchilla females are receptive to breeding every 28 days and they can usually be rebred within 24 hours of littering. Their gestation period is 111 days. If you plan two litters a year, remove the kits from the female about 12 hours after birth and place them in a warm nest box. Reintroduce the male and leave him with the female overnight to mate. In the morning remove the male, bring back the kits and close the entry so he cannot get back into the cage.

Females are usually ready for mating, and males for breeding, at about 6-8 months of age. Most ranchers prefer to start a young male off with only two or three females, otherwise too many misses occur. Although they can be nervous and easily frightened by strange noises, there is not much difficulty in mating chinchillas. Occasionally, a female attacks a male, or vice versa, and the weaker animal may be killed or severely injured. Be sure, therefore, to provide a refuge so the weaker one may escape.

The usual number of kits in a litter is two, but litters of one and three are not uncommon. More rarely, litters of four, five or even six are born. Occasionally, X-ray examinations have shown five or six fetuses in pregnant females but only two or three kits are born, the others having died and been absorbed.

Care of kits

Shortly before the litter is expected, put a nest box in the cage. If you use all-wire cages, fit them with false bottoms of plywood to cover most of the floor. Some ranchers cover the plywood with shavings.

The mortality rate of kits is high on many ranches. Neglecting to hand-feed young needing extra help is one reason, and another is undoubtedly lack of knowledge about proper prenatal feeding. Females that are improperly fed or overfed may have stillborn, weak or deformed kits. Chinchilla kits are born fully furred, with their eyes open and incisor teeth well developed. Since they can move around immediately after birth, they often stray from the mother and become chilled. You can use a low-wattage heating pad under the cage for the first week or so during the cold months to keep the kits warm.

Most chinchilla females can raise a litter of two kits without help, but if she has three or more you may have to assist her by hand-feeding the extra kits. Or, if you have another female littering on the same day with one kit, it is usually possible to have her accept an additional kit.

Kits grow rather slowly for the first 10 days after birth but, from then on, until weaned at 6 weeks, they gain weight rapidly. When you separate the kits from the mother, it is a good idea to give them individual cages. Usually there is a period of adaptation after which they resume growing, but at a slower rate than before.

Fur

In a fur skin, the term “quality” embraces the actual quality of the fur (primeness, silkiness and density), plus size and color.

A good chinchilla pelt has a clear, bluish-gray top, a smooth, even appearance with no wooliness, color contrasts or yellow cast. The fur has a natural luster and is dense and evenly distributed, with no open grotzen or swirls. A fine pelt has a smooth, unbroken veil from neck to rump, with no weakness in the neck. Coarser top hair (guard hair) that protects the under-fur protrudes through the veiling.

The fur has three distinct shades; close to the skin it is a deep slate blue, topped by a narrow band (called the bar) that may be white or bluish white. The tips of the fur (veiling) range from light to dark bluish gray, depending on the color phase of the individual animal, that is, whether the animal is naturally light, medium or dark. The guard hair is usually black over the back and flanks, and white on the underside.

Harvesting pelts

Keep pelting animals in clean pens without nest boxes. Many ranchers keep a piece of board about 20 X 38 cm in the cages for the animals to sit on, but you must keep it clean and dry at all times.

Determining primeness

Like other fur-bearing animals, the chinchilla grows a heavier coat of fur during the cold months. The new fur growth starts at the head and works down to the rump.

In younger animals, approach to primeness can be predicted from birthdates. Chinchillas usually reach their first prime at 9-12 months of age. Using this as a guide, you should segregate animals into age groups as they are weaned, so you can handle them efficiently in groups when they reach their peak of primeness. Adult animals shed their fur in late spring and summer, and become prime during winter, usually in January. Chinchillas prime and produce evenly furred pelts at constant temperatures of 4.5-7°C. Avoid temperature fluctuations.

During shedding season, the fur of the animals appears rough and lusterless and a good deal of loose fur may collect in the cages. Make sure dust baths are available to assist shedding and prevent fur mats developing. Also, combing the fur when the animal is 6-7 months old will help keep fur from matting. The mats are caused by tufts of unshed fur that become anchored by the new fur growing up through them. Once the new coat grows, it is almost impossible to remove the mats without damaging the new fur and lowering the value of the pelt.

As the old fur sheds and the new grows in, the coat becomes smoother and more uniform. It looks cleaner and the colors are sharper. The skin of the fully prime animal loses its dark-blue color and becomes creamy white. If the animal has been kept as a breeder, it may have lost small patches of fur during mating. If the unprime spots are few, it is probably better to pelt at the peak of overall primeness rather than wait for another shedding season and a new coat of fur. Finally, the decision to pelt should be made following inspection of the animal, not the calendar.

Killing

The condition of the pelt and its preparation for market are important in determining its sale value. Since a good skin can be ruined through lack of skill, every rancher should know the best method of killing and pelting chinchillas. Seek the advice and supervision of an experienced rancher when first attempting pelting. It is imperative that the animal dies as quickly as possible, with no struggling or thrashing around.

The National Chinchilla Breeders of Canada recommends the following technique using commercial chloroform. Chloroform is humane for the animals and, provided it is used carefully, safe for the operator.

Construct an airtight box measuring about 30 cm each way, with one end hinged and sealed tightly with rubber insulation, and a screen wire floor about 5 cm above the base. For the chloroform, you need a container with a tight-fitting lid, such as a low round tobacco tin about 15 cm in diameter. Place a good-sized piece of cotton batting in the tin and saturate it with chloroform. Put the lid on the tin, then place it on the floor of the box and close the door, leaving the chloroform to vaporize. Chloroform will not

vaporize properly under 16°C and in cooler weather some ranchers use an electric light bulb under the box to raise the temperature.

After about 5 minutes open the door, remove the lid from the tin, place the animal in the box, then close the door. The animal will be unconscious almost immediately and dead in 5-10 minutes. After you have killed the number you plan to pelt that day, put the lid tightly back on the tin and store it in a safe place.

PRECAUTIONS IN USING CHLOROFORM

- Chloroform can be dangerous in an enclosed, heated space. If you are using it indoors, be sure windows and/or doors are open so there is a free passage of air.
- When you put animals into the box or take the carcasses out, be careful not to breathe any fumes.
- If you are killing several animals, keep the chloroform container tightly closed between times. Do not kill more animals than you can pelt in 2-3 hours.
- Hang carcasses in fresh air for a short time before further handling. Do not pile dead animals on top of one another.
- Chill the carcasses for about 3 hours before pelting. Do not allow them to freeze.
- When not in use, keep the container tightly closed in a locked cupboard. Keep children away from the box at all times.
- Be careful next time you use the tin. If the weather is cool, some of the chloroform will still be in the cotton and you will not have to use as much as before.
- Other methods of killing are: breaking the neck and electrocution.

Pelting

The National Chinchilla Breeders of Canada recommends the following procedures for pelting:

EQUIPMENT

- Scalpel or razor blade, 10 cm tin shears, sharp scissors
- Brass furrier's nails or aluminum pushpins (not thumbtacks)
- Four clips with springs attached
- An umbrella stave
- Tentest drying boards 25 X 43 cm, one for each pelt
- Pelting board, about 51 X 51 cm

- Fine hardwood sawdust
- A whisk broom
- A soft brush and soft cloth

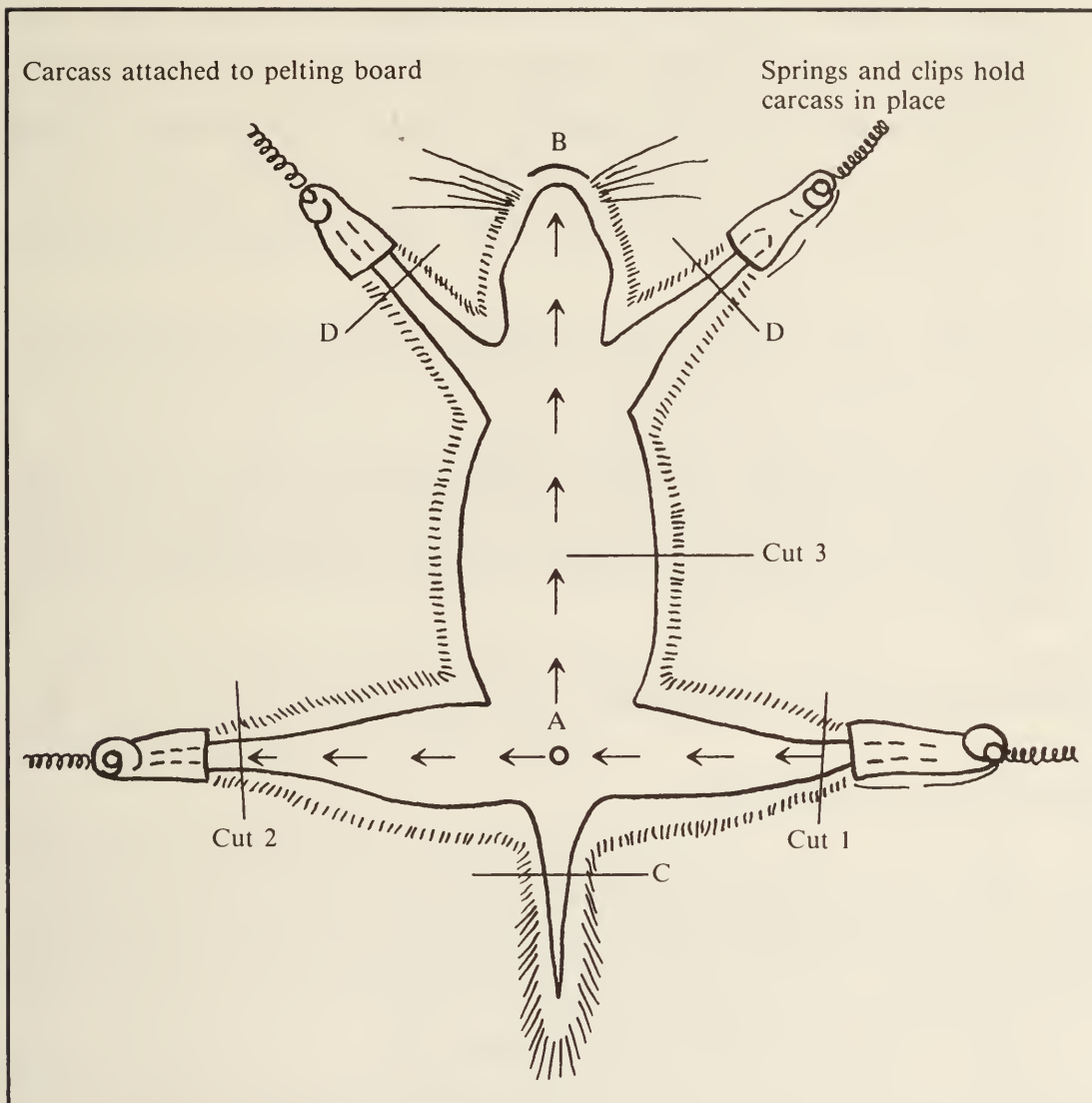
PRECAUTIONS IN PELTING

- Keep fingers dry at all times by using sawdust freely. Use plenty of sawdust throughout the operation to absorb the oil.
- Never handle the fur at the edges of a pelt; grip the pelt from the leather side only.
- After enough of the pelt has been freed from the carcass to provide a grip, cover this area with sawdust to absorb the oil. Ensure no sawdust gets on the fur at this stage as it tends to mat the fur at the edges of the pelt.
- Before you stretch the pelt, sew up any small tears carefully, so they do not spread during dressing.
- In the raw state, the leather of a chinchilla pelt is very light and easily torn during pelting. The leather toughens up considerably after dressing and the pelt can then be worked without fear of damage.

Removing the pelt

Work with an experienced chinchilla rancher when removing and stretching your first pelts.

- Lay the carcass on the pelting board with belly side up and head at the top of the board. Fasten each leg with a clip as shown in the illustration.
- Make cuts No. 1 and No. 2 with razor blade, as illustrated. These are no more than nicks through the skin to allow insertion of the umbrella stave. Insert stave in cut No. 1 and work it, just under the skin, so that it will emerge from cut No. 2. Insert point of scissors in the groove of the stave at cut No. 1 and slide scissors forward to cut No. 2. This opens up both legs with one long cut.
- Insert the stave at point A, and push it gently forward, against the skin with the tip of the stave pointing upwards, until it reaches point B, just under the lower lip. Make a nick there so the head of the stave can come out. Insert point of scissors in the groove of stave at A and slide the scissors forward, cutting the pelt open along the center line to B.
- Use the tin shears to cut off the hind legs about 1.25 cm above the joint. Cut off the tail at C. This is the point where the fur begins.
- Cut off the front legs at D. This cut is less important since you can trim the legs after the pelt is on the stretcher.
- Turn the carcass over and cut the ears off at the base, where the fur growth starts.



- Place the carcass sideways to you, on its back, with its head towards your left. Using sawdust liberally, place your fingers under the pelt at the front leg and work the leg out of the fur. The fur on the leg will be turned inside out (cased). Once the leg is free work your fingers under the pelt towards the ear and case it. Now work your fingers forward to the eye. This will be covered with a white membrane. Work your fingers forward until this membrane is fully exposed, then cut it, using the razor blade. You will then be able to work your fingers towards the nose.

CAUTION When removing the pelt, be sure to use the full palm of your hand to hold the pelt. Do not use your fingers as they put too much pressure on a small area.

- Turn the carcass around and free the other front leg, ear and eye in the same way. Work your fingers towards the nose, freeing the pelt completely from the head. Use the scissors to cut the pelt off at the nose.

- Turn the carcass with the head to your left. Place the palm of your left hand on the head of the pelt and grasp the head of the carcass with your right hand. Pull it gently to your right until it is free down to the front legs. At this point, a pinkish membrane starts. Free the membrane along with the carcass and keep separating both from the pelt. Keep moving your left palm down the pelt so that it is an inch or so behind the point you are working on. Try to keep moving steadily so that the membrane does not dry on the pelt.
- When you reach the tail, be careful you do not use too much pressure or you may tear or damage the pelt as it comes completely free from the carcass.
- If you have removed the membrane cleanly, there will be no need for scraping. Any surplus fat or spots of membrane can be removed with the fingers, using plenty of sawdust. Do not use a knife – do not scrape. Hold the pelt flat with the palm of the hand and brush the loose sawdust off the leather with a soft brush.

Preparing pelts for market

Stretching and shaping

Place some clean paper toweling on the tentest drying board. Lay the pelt, leather side up, on the paper toweling and smooth it out with your hand, from the head to the butt. Use the razor blade to open the stump of the tail. Place three pins in a row, close together, right at the base (root) of the tail. This anchors the pelt at the butt.

Take a pin in each hand and insert them in the leather (not the board) at the edge of the pelt just above each front leg. This is the neck of the pelt and the space between these two pins determined the width of the neck. This width will range from about 7 cm on a small pelt to about 11 cm on a very large one. Hold a pin (through the leather) in each hand and move the pins ahead until the pelt is about 1.25 cm (but no more) longer than its natural length. You must not overstretch the pelt in any direction. Now pin out the head. Place a pin at the nose, then pin around the head as it lies on the board. Do not stretch the head.

Pin the right hind leg in line with the three pins at the butt. This will leave a flap of fur from the underside between the pins. Pull this flap down until the heavy fur from the rump is in line with the pins, and pin down this area. Do the same on the left side. The space between the two outside pins will range from about 9 cm in a small pelt to about 13 cm in a very large one. At this stage, there will be a slight crease running lengthwise in the leather between the neck pins. This will disappear in drying. The rest of the pelt should be smooth, with no creases or wrinkles.

You will notice the pelt has a flap of fur from the underside sticking out on each side. Lift these flaps up one at a time and cut them off using the razor blade. Be careful to cut only the leather, not the fur. Also you should

cut on a line slightly wider than the pelt, since the pelt will shrink slightly as it dries and, if you cut off too much, there will be a 'U' in the side of the pelt after it has dried. Finally, pin along each side at 2.5 cm intervals. Align the pins opposite each other. Little creases will disappear as the pelt dries.

Care during drying

The National Chinchilla Breeders of Canada recommends drying chinchilla pelts in a well-ventilated room at 10-16°C, with around 55% humidity. Do not dry the pelts at high temperatures or low humidity.

After 4 or 5 days, remove the pins and wipe off the leather with a soft cloth. If pelts are left on the board too long, they tend to become stiff and brittle. This makes it difficult not only to remove the pins, but also to do any additional cleaning that may be necessary. Do not trim or cut the pelt in any way after it has dried. Any necessary trimming will be done by the fur dresser.

Place the finished pelts in cold storage as soon as possible, to protect them from spoilage as well as from insect damage. A temperature of around 4.5°C with low humidity is satisfactory.

Packing for shipment

Place the raw skins in pairs, leather to leather and put absorbent paper towels between them to soak up oils. Wrap each pair in tissue paper and pack them snugly in a strong cardboard box. Do not fold or bend the pelts. Do not use plastic bags. If the pelts do not fill the container completely, add crumpled paper or other packing to keep them from jostling in shipment. Wrap the box in heavy kraft paper and tie securely with strong twine.

The National Chinchilla Breeders of Canada provides a list of sanctioned fur buyers where ranchers may sell their pelts.

