

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, )  
 )  
 Plaintiff, )  
 ) Civil Action No 74 C 546  
 v. )  
 )  
 NATIONAL BOARD OF FUR FARM ) Filed:  
 ORGANIZATIONS, INC.; ) November 19, 1974  
 EMBA MINK BREEDERS ASSOCIATION, )  
 A COOPERATIVE; and )  
 GREAT LAKES MINK ASSOCIATION, )  
 )  
 Defendants. )

COMPLAINT

The United States of America, plaintiff, by its attorneys, acting under the direction of the Attorney General of the United States, brings this civil action to obtain equitable relief against the defendants named herein and complains and alleges as follows:

I

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

1. This complaint is filed and this action is instituted under Section 4 of the Sherman Act, as amended (15 U.S.C. § 4), in order to prevent and restrain the continuing violation by the defendants, as hereinafter alleged, of Section 1 of the Sherman Act, as amended (15 U.S.C. § 1).

2. Each of the defendants either transacts business or is found within the Eastern District of Wisconsin.

II

THE DEFENDANTS

3. The corporations named below are hereby made defendants herein. Each of the corporations is organized and exists under the laws of the state, and has its principal place of business in the city, indicated below.

<u>Corporation</u>	<u>State of Incorporation</u>	<u>Principal Place Of Business</u>
National Board of Fur Farm Organizations, Inc.	Minnesota	Brookfield, Wisconsin
EMBA Mink Breeders Association, A Cooperative	Wisconsin	Racine, Wisconsin
Great Lakes Mink Association	Wisconsin	Kenosha, Wisconsin

During the period of time covered by this complaint, EMBA Mink Breeders Association, a Cooperative (hereinafter called EMBA) and Great Lakes Mink Association (hereinafter called GLMA), through their members, have been engaged in the production and marketing of mink pelts. The National Board of Fur Farm Organizations, Inc. is a lobbying and educational organization representing the interests of EMBA and GLMA and other mink producing and marketing associations.

### III

#### CO-CONSPIRATORS

4. Various corporations, organizations, associations, firms and individuals, not made defendants in this complaint, participated as co-conspirators in the violation alleged herein and performed acts and made statements in furtherance thereof. Among these are members of EMBA and GLMA, the Board of Scandinavian Fur Farm Organizations and its member organizations, and the Canada Mink Breeders Association.

### IV

#### TRADE AND COMMERCE

5. Mink pelts are ranch-raised, finished or unfinished, skins suitable for sale for use in the manufacture of fur garments.

6. Members of EMBA and GLMA are engaged in the production and marketing of mink pelts in the United States.

They and other United States mink ranchers produce approximately 3 million pelts per year valued at approximately \$60 million in 1973, and, of this total, export some 1.3 million pelts.

7. Approximately 5 million mink pelts are consumed in the United States each year. Thus, a substantial number of mink pelts consumed annually in the United States are imported from abroad, primarily from Scandinavia and Canada. In the past ten years, imports of mink pelts into the United States have ranged from a high of 3.8 million pelts valued at approximately \$37 million in 1967 to a low of 1.9 million pelts valued at approximately \$23 million in 1972.

8. Mink pelts imported into or produced within the United States are sold principally to manufacturers who produce fur garments.

9. Members of EMBA and GLMA and other United States mink ranchers raise minks in various states of the United States, principally Wisconsin, Minnesota, Utah and Washington. Mink pelts produced by United States mink ranchers are transported in interstate commerce and sold at auctions held primarily in New York, Minnesota and Washington.

V

VIOLATION ALLEGED

10. Beginning in or about March, 1970, the exact date being to the plaintiff unknown, and continuing thereafter up to and including the date of the filing of this complaint, the defendants and co-conspirators have engaged in a combination and conspiracy in unreasonable restraint of the aforesaid interstate and foreign trade and commerce in violation of

Section 1 of the Sherman Act (15 U.S.C. § 1). This combination and conspiracy will continue unless the relief hereinafter prayed for is granted.

11. The aforesaid combination and conspiracy has consisted of a continuing agreement, understanding and concert of action among the defendants and co-conspirators, the substantial terms of which were:

- (a) to stabilize and maintain prices of mink pelts;  
and
- (b) to establish quotas on the sale of mink pelts within certain defined time periods.

12. For the purpose of formulating and effectuating the aforesaid combination and conspiracy, the defendants and co-conspirators have done those things which, as hereinbefore alleged, they combined and conspired to do.

#### VI

#### EFFECTS

13. The aforesaid combination and conspiracy had had the following effects, among others:

- (a) domestic and international prices of mink pelts have been raised, fixed and maintained at artificial and noncompetitive levels;
- (b) purchasers of mink pelts have been deprived of free and open competition in the purchase of mink pelts; and
- (c) competition between defendants and co-conspirators in the sale of mink pelts for the United States market has been restrained and suppressed.

#### PRAYER

WHEREFORE, plaintiff prays:

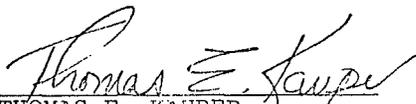
1. That the Court adjudge and decree that the defendants have engaged in a combination and conspiracy in unreasonable

restraint of the aforesaid interstate and foreign trade and commerce in violation of Section 1 of the Sherman Act.

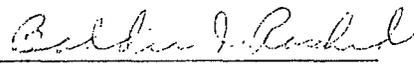
2. That each of the defendants, its subsidiaries, successors, transferees, assigns, and respective officers, directors, partners, agents, and employees thereof, and all other persons acting or claiming to act on their behalf, be perpetually enjoined and restrained from, in any manner, directly or indirectly, continuing, maintaining or renewing the combination and conspiracy hereinbefore alleged, and from engaging in any other combination, conspiracy, contract, agreement, understanding, or concert of action having a similar purpose or effect, and from adopting or following any practice, plan, program or device having a similar purpose or effect.

3. That the plaintiff have such other and further relief as the nature of the case may require and the Court may deem just and proper.

4. That the plaintiff recover the costs of this suit.

  
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