



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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STUDIES BEING MADE OF
FUR PRODUCTION IN ALASKA

The production of fur-bearing animals in Alaska is to be studied under a cooperative agreement recently made between Gov. George A. Parks, of Alaska, and the Biological Survey of the United States Department of Agriculture. Dr. Earl Graves, who is a veterinarian and a graduate of Kansas State Agricultural College, has been selected to conduct the work. He will study the problems incident to the production of fur for commercial purposes, and advise fur farmers of Alaska in matters pertaining to the breeding and care of fur-bearing animals and the prevention and cure of diseases among them. Prior to sailing for Alaska, Doctor Graves spent a month at the United States Fur-Animal Experiment Station, in Saratoga County, N. Y., where he studied methods of breeding, feeding, and handling fur animals that are being raised there in captivity.

The business of raising fur-bearing animals to meet the increasing demands of the fur trade and to supplement the fast diminishing supply in the wild is comparatively a new industry, but it has engaged the attention of the Biological Survey for many years. To Alaska it is of particular importance, since it utilizes outlying islands that are of little or no value to agriculture, especially for raising blue and white foxes, which are native to the Territory. The results of the first studies of this sort made in Alaska by the Federal Government have been published in Bulletin No. 1350 of the Department of Agriculture, "Blue-Fox Farming in Alaska."

The present cooperative agreement stipulates that all field operations shall be under the immediate charge of the veterinarian, who shall consult frequently with Governor Parks relative to the plans and procedure required on the part of the Territorial and Federal Governments to serve most effectively the fur farmers of Alaska. The work will be carried on in cooperation also with the Alaska Game Commission, the United States Forest Service, fur farmers' organizations, and others interested and in position to participate. The sum of \$15,000 has been appropriated by the Territory for expenditure in the new project during 1927 and 1928, in addition to funds that may be allotted to the undertaking by the Biological Survey from its regular appropriations by Congress for investigations in the production of fur-bearing animals.

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