

8/14 /17 Health Committee Report - Data Collected from Breeders

Our members who are breeders would benefit by receiving information on Club recommended health testing along with breeding and puppy rearing practices. The HC expressed concern. The first step was learning which clearances active PBGV breeders are presently testing their breeding stock for.

I personally queried thirteen member-breeders. I've asked each, "what health tests do you conduct prior to breeding?" I did not question members that had not bred a litter. Nine of the thirteen responded. The following is a brief account of the nine responses received.

Seven breeders had POAG testing on their breeding bitches, owned stud dogs and outside service stiud dogs. CBP sires were the popular males used for breeding.

Three of the seven (POAG tested) breeders also did CERF exams. They were looking for ppm and other anomalies on their bitches and stud dogs. PPM was evident in some and were used for breeding.

Six breeders had thyroid testing on their females prior to being bred and also annually. One breeder insisted on thyroid testing on an outside service stud dog.

Six breeders had cardiologist and veterinarian heart evaluations on females. Four breeders asked for heart evals on sires.

OFA hips. There was confusion with responses from seven of the nine breeder responses. Nine of the breeders had (xray) OFA hip evaluations. (none did PenHip) Because of the board's decision to not include hips in the CHIC protocol, three breeders said they discontinued the testing noting cost as a probable factor. Six indicated they will continue OFA hip clearances because they are pleased with the results of their breeding stock and wanted to continue to monitor.

Two breeders said they conduct elbow, patella and shoulder OFA testing or view xrays.

This random selection of breeders showed that POAG, Thyroid, Heart and Hip testing was important to their breeding programs.

I was impressed by the added comments regarding puppy examinations. Three breeders added remarks to their responses that between 8-10 weeks of age, pups are thoroughly examined by trusted veterinarians.

Among the areas of these breeders' concerns were joint laxity and palpating of hips, shoulders, elbows and stifles. Heart specialists were enlisted for two breeders. Pups' hearts were listened to for murmur, enlarged heart, valve degeneration and PDA. One breeder indicated that pups are checked for hearing as a recent litter produced a pup with bilateral hearing loss. Mouths are checked for missing teeth/over or under shot bites, and tails for kinks. One breeder checks for back dew claws.

(note:) I was surprised that no breeder mentioned checking for inguinal hernias. That anomalie presented itself in early PBGV years in the U.S where surgery had been performed to close the hernias.

HC members are concerned that there is a need for breeder education. During HC discussions, our concern is that a breeder's breeder should be their mentor and know where to obtain needed information. The mentor should be the go-to person and I do not believe that is a process that is happening.

The HC Reference Center will contain accredited information categorized for easy reference. But with breeders and litters, there are day to day questions needing quick responses, possibly to save a pup's life. If not a mentor, could we have a board selected panel of breeders that members could consult if needed?

A broadcast email asking breeders to apply by responding to board-posed questions could result in a selected panel.

PBGVCA has the responsibility to offer a clear, concise code of recommended practices for all members, owners and for breeders. We're in the position to serve our membership. Let's get organized and work together to offer the best recommendations for breeders so they can produce healthy litters and for members and new owners to thoroughly enjoy their puppies. Suggestions and solutions are welcome.

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