

## **International efforts for dog genetic health**

Health and welfare problems in pedigree dogs have recently been highlighted in the media worldwide and verified internationally by cynological organizations. Dog breeding is nowadays international and collaborative actions therefore have been initiated on an international level to deal with both existing and future issues concerning the health and welfare of dogs.

The 1<sup>st</sup> International workshop on enhancement of genetic health in pedigree dogs was arranged in 2012 by the Swedish Kennel Club. The event, also known as the Dog Health Workshop 2012, gathered about 140 stakeholders from more than 20 countries in Europe, South and North America and Oceania. The participants represented different groups that share a responsibility for dog health, such as geneticists, veterinarians and representatives from the cynological and animal welfare organizations.

### **Suggested actions**

Seven key issues with relevance for dog genetic health were discussed during the workshop and the following actions were suggested:

#### **Recognition of breeds and varieties**

Stricter regulations for international recognition of breeds need to be developed.

#### **Harmonization of screening procedures**

New screening procedures need to be initiated and existing procedures need to be harmonized and validated.

#### **Genetic tests**

Procedures for technical validation of DNA-tests and testing laboratories should be developed. Recommendations for proper use of DNA-tests in different populations need to be outlined.

#### **Anatomical soundness**

To avoid extreme phenotypes, regulations and breed standards need to be reviewed. Further education of breeders and show judges is also needed.

#### **Breed-specific breeding programmes**

Breed-specific breeding programmes need to be developed on national and international level.

#### **Selection for behavioural characteristics**

Guidelines for terminology and evaluation of behavioural characteristics in dogs need to be established.

#### **Platforms for collaborative efforts**

An international platform for collaboration between different stakeholders, interested in and responsible for dog health and welfare, should be developed.

### **Work in progress**

Work has already been initiated internationally within all seven issues but a major effort is now needed to boost the process. Working groups are therefore being created to pursue this work and on

February 14-15 2015 the German Kennel Club will arrange the second Dog Health Workshop in Dortmund to support the process.

## **Get informed and become involved!**

Detailed presentations of the suggested actions, information about achievements made and information about the upcoming Dog Health Workshop are continuously presented on the workshop webpage; [www.doghealthworkshop.com](http://www.doghealthworkshop.com).

On behalf of the organizing committee,  
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**doghealth**  
workshop.com

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BREEDING HEALTHIER DOGS -  
FROM ATTENTION AND AWARENESS TO ACTION!