

GUIDELINES FOR THE CARE, BREEDING, SELLING, AND EXHIBITING OF BEARDED COLLIES

Introduction

In an effort to preserve, protect and advance the interests of the Bearded Collie through responsible ownership and breeding, the Bearded Collie Club of America (BCCA) has developed these guidelines which are intended to assist owners/breeders, both newcomers and veterans. The guidelines are to serve as a reference to be used in conjunction with other published materials, along with the knowledge and wisdom gleaned from reputable breeders.

General Care

Bearded Collies need maximum health protection through regular veterinary care (including inoculations); proper nutrition and coat care; adequate exercise; appropriate socialization and training; and a secure and sanitary environment at all times.

Breeding

Breeding Bearded Collies, or any animal for that matter, is choosing to take on added responsibilities. Before you begin breeding, consult with established conscientious breeders and your veterinarian, and properly research the endeavor. It is important to take into consideration whether you have both the time and the facilities to devote proper care and attention to the rearing of the puppies until such time as they can be placed in good homes, and whether you also will be able to accept the return of puppies, if necessary, during their entire lifetimes.

Good breeding practice involves striving to improve the breed by producing get (puppies) which are better than the sire and dam. To accomplish this goal it is necessary that careful consideration be given to health, temperament, type and soundness when selecting sires and dams for breeding. You'll also want to consider the following:

- Be familiar with the official standard of the Bearded Collie and learn about inheritable defects.
- Have prospective sires and dams examined by a veterinarian to insure that they are in good health.
- Since hip dysplasia is an inheritable defect, breed only dogs having OFA certification numbers (or preliminary OFA evaluations in case of dogs less than 24 months of age). When breeding to foreign dogs, obtain written verification from a qualified veterinarian that such dogs are free of hip dysplasia. When possible, researching the incidence of hip dysplasia in prior generations is desirable.
- Breed only dogs that have had their eyes examined and determined normal by a canine ophthalmologist. (CERF registration is desirable.)
- Breed only dogs that have tested free of brucellosis within a period of 6 months for males and 30 days for bitches prior to mating. (Brucellosis is a highly infectious venereal disease that can cause sterility in both sexes and abortion and stillbirths in females.)
- Breed only bitches that can be reasonably expected to successfully whelp and nourish a litter. The recommended age range for bitches to be bred is considered to be at least 2, but generally no more than 8 years of age. Breed bitches over the age of 8 only if they have successfully whelped a litter within the prior 2 years and are in excellent physical condition. It is also recommended that a bitch not be bred during three consecutive seasons unless either of the first two breedings produced fewer than two live puppies or her seasons are 12 or more months apart. It is advisable that a bitch not produce more than 5 litters during her lifetime.
- Breed only males having both testicles descended.
- Repeat no breeding if two or more resulting puppies exhibit major departures from the official standard or have a condition classified by a veterinarian as an inheritable health defect. If the same bitch or stud produces similar undesirable results from other matings, it is recommended that bitch or stud not be used again for breeding purposes.
- Register all litters with the AKC and maintain records as required by the AKC.
- Provide stud service only to bitches that are healthy, meet the official standard for the breed, and are owned by individuals who can be reasonably expected to properly care for the resulting puppies.

Selling Puppies/Dogs

Every possible effort should be made to place puppies or adult dogs in safe and loving environments where they will be properly cared for. Prospective new owners of Bearded Collies should be carefully screened for suitability as Bearded Collie owners. They should also be accurately advised of the characteristics of the breed and the level of responsibility and commitment they will be assuming should they be given the privilege of having a Bearded Collie. To assist in successful placements, we suggest the following:

- Release no puppies to their new owners before the age of 7 weeks or as permitted by state law and only then with full knowledge that they are healthy and have had all recommended inoculations to the date of release.
- All terms of agreement pertaining to placement/sales, co-ownership, etc. should be in writing (i.e., a contract).

- Clearly state in sales contracts whether the dogs being sold are companion dogs (i.e. pets) or potential show prospects, and under what conditions they may be returned for full or partial refund or for replacement.
- In addition to a written contract, provide buyers with complete health records, registration papers, a 4-generation pedigree and a reasonable health guarantee. Also provide buyers with adequate information about diet, grooming, training, socialization, worming and inoculations. Sellers are advised to make themselves available to buyers on a continuing basis for consultation and guidance.
- Sell companion dogs (i.e., pets) within the stipulation that they are to be spayed or neutered at an early age (such age to be as recommended by the buyer's veterinarian) to guard against unwanted/undesirable breedings. Breeders may choose to withhold AKC registration papers until buyers have complied with this stipulation. AKC Limited Registrations also may be provided with the sale of puppies not considered suitable for breeding.
- Sell no dog having a known defect or showing a definite departure from the official standard without first informing the buyer of such defect or departure and the likely consequences.
- Sell no dog to pet shops, laboratories or dealers in dogs; or to any person known to sell to pet shops, laboratories or dealers. (To do so is a violation of the [BCCA Code of Ethics](#).) Similarly, dogs should not be offered as "prizes" for raffles, auctions or competitions.
- Much consideration should be given before a Beardie is sold to a foreign country. Items to be taken into consideration are the position of the dog in the culture and society of the country, humane organizations in existence within the country, available veterinary care and concerns, and the purpose for which the dog is being purchased.

Exhibiting

Members should exercise good sportsmanlike conduct when attending dog show and trials, whether as an exhibitor or a spectator. Members are also expected to abide by the rules and regulations set forth by the AKC, including those prohibiting the physical alternation of dogs and the administering of performance enhancing medications for show, obedience or other competition purposes. Engaging in false or misleading advertising or making derogatory comments to judges in writing or in public regarding dogs belong to others is contrary to good sportsmanship.

Final Note

Members who can no longer properly care for their Beardies(s) should make every effort to either return their Beardie(s) to the breeder or place them in suitable new homes. If the breeder cannot or will not assist in the placement of such Beardie(s), help should be sought from the BCCA's [Beardie Rescue](#), [local Beardie clubs](#), and/or other [Beardie breeders](#). No member should abandon their Beardie or place it in a pound or shelter.

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