DBC News

June 2012

In this Newsletter:

Lafora Screening Programme - latest

Lafora Disease

The following update was posted at whdc.co.uk on June 10th…….

Canada

The tests on the trial set of samples sent to Canada are now complete. The team was able to identify affected, clear and carrier animals from blood and successfully achieved the same findings on saliva. The results are posted below. The ratios are consistent with earlier findings.

Prior to the test going live, the Canadian team want to complete some further tests to ensure saliva findings will be robust. Quote Dr Minassian...

"I am analyzing the saliva and blood data we already have and some more experiments in progress carefully with the team to assess whether we are ready for exclusively saliva work at this stage or not. I will write you soon, at which time I will also answer all the financial questions past and future."

As soon as we have heard from Dr Minassian whether testing can go ahead exclusively on saliva or whether blood samples are required, what the lab test prices will be and how many samples the laboratory can process at one time, testing can resume. We will post an update here, including any details of additional charges although we will do our utmost to avoid / minimize these. We will invite any previously tested with Centogene, who wish to have a full spectrum test, to submit samples in the same order that those tests were submitted to Centogene. Those who are parents or progeny of Affected animals, if tested Unaffected by Centogene, will not need another test – they will be Carriers.

We expect this to be within the next two weeks. We will place an update here and contact individuals who confirm they want a full spectrum test, in date order to invite them to submit samples (or organise blood testing if needed)

When all those from the Centogene cohort have had a full spectrum test, should they choose to, we will then invite new animals to come forward for testing.

Centogene

Centogene confirm that they are unable to obtain reliable carrier results from saliva. They have sent us the majority of results for affected / unaffected now and the spreadsheet on here is now updated. It is not looking likely that Centogene will be able to use saliva for full spectrum testing in the near future. There are 12 results still outstanding form Centogene. If they are not forthcoming, we will request these owners to be in the first cohort for testing in Canada.

Breeding Advice

Now that testing can identify carriers, it will be simpler to avoid producing affected animals. The advice remains the same. Avoid using Affected animals wherever possible; if using Carriers only mate to a tested Clear and then ensure progeny is tested and new owners informed if animals are Carriers.

The spreadsheet of test results can be found here. With around 250 dogs now screened, we are beginning to have a useful database which breeders can refer to when making mating decisions. The spreadsheet includes not only the test results of all dogs screened but also identifies, where possible, the status of dogs where this can be deduced from the available data. For example, if a dog has been tested "Affected" and has produced a "Not Affected" puppy, we know that puppy will be a Carrier.

The spreadsheet shows 28 Affected dogs (11% of dogs tested). Although, so far, we have only identified 27 Clear dogs (11%), we would expect there to be approximately 44% Clear and 45% Carrier dogs in the overall Mini Wire population. Based on 2011 Registrations, if breeders make intelligent decisions based on the Lafora test, they will be able to avoid producing about 80 Affected dogs per year.

A pictorial guide to the genetics of Lafora, applicable to breeders is here.

Breed Survey 2012 – Behaviour/Temperament Report is now available

The report on Dachshund Behaviour and Temperament from Dachs-Life 2012 has now been published. You can view it online here, or download a pdf here.

The majority (85%) of Dachshunds were described by their owners as Always or Often Outgoing and Friendly, but 1 in 50 was described as Never behaving in this way. Just over two-thirds of dogs were described as Always or Often Excitable and Active. We tend to describe Dachshunds as being a noisy breed, after all they were originally developed to have a loud bark. 15% of owners said theirs Always or Often barks excessively or persistently.

Anecdotally, the Miniature Dachshunds are often described as being more difficult to house-train than the Standards. Overall, nearly one third of owners said their Dachshund had house-training issues to some degree. Data in this report shows the differences between each of the six varieties, which does support the anecdotal views. Four out of five owners said their Dachshund is not a submissive piddler!

Just under a third of owners said their Dachshund suffered from Separation Anxiety to some extent and a quarter suffer from noise or thunderstorm fear. Around a quarter were also reported as being destructive. As stated above, we don't know how much exercise these particular dogs get, so cannot deduce whether or not a lack of exercise is a causal factor in these behaviours.

1 in 10 is, to some extent, aggressive with people and nearly 1 in 3 is aggressive with other dogs, to some extent. 7 out of 10 were described as Never being nervous or fearful of people.

Taking the "Always" and "Never" scores for the positive traits and negative traits, it is possible to calculate an overall ranking for temperament and behaviour:

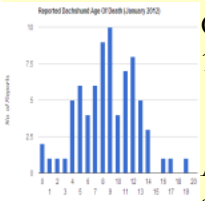
Most positive traits overall					**Least positive traits overall**
Long	Wire	Mini Wire	Mini Long	Mini Smooth	Smooth

Of course, whatever the survey says, we all know our variety of Dachshund is best!

Further reports will be issued as the data are analysed over the coming months.

Please continue to submit health reports for your Dachshunds here.

Dachshund Longevity



Our Dachs-Life 2012 Survey only had 27 deaths reported, with a Mean age of death of 11.0 years and a Median age of death of 11.8.

An analysis of 93 deaths reported in our online Health Report (at 8th June 2012) showed a Mean age of death of 9.0. Mean and Median age of death for conditions where there were 5 or more deaths are as follows:

Cause of Death	Mean age of death	No. of deaths	Median age of death	No. of cases reported of this condition	Deaths as % of Cases
Neurologic (IVDD)	6.2	28	5	67	42%
Cardiac	9.1	14	9.5	58	24%
Neurologic (Non-IVDD)	9.6	9	9	23	39%
Cancer	10.7	14	11.5	31	45%
Old Age/Other	11.8	12	13	51	24%

Note: Neurologic (Non-IVDD) includes Epilepsy and Lafora Disease.

It is important to recognise that average age of death reported in the online survey is likely to be lower than in the population as a whole. The median age of death reported in the KC's 2004 survey was 12.7 (245 dogs) and in Dachs-Life 2012 was 11.8 years (27 dogs).

We would like to encourage more people to report the death of their Dachshund on our on-line Health Reporting site so that we can build more data on age and cause of death.

Breed Mentoring Scheme

Helen Geeson has taken over responsibility for the Breed Mentoring Scheme and is currently recruiting Mentors and Mentees.

If anyone is interested in joining the Mentoring Scheme (either as a Mentor or Mentee), please contact Helen.

US Dachshund History Project – more news

The Dachshund History Project is a US website that is attempting to document the history of the Dachshund in America. It's a work in progress, but is already establishing itself as a comprehensive resource for those interested in the history of the Dachshund, albeit with an American flavour (flavor?).

Some more interesting articles, published over recent weeks:

- When does your "line" begin?
- The Huntersbroad Crest
- Checkpoints for dogs in motion

Myasthenia Gravis – a case study

Myasthenia Gravis is a rare neurological condition that affects dogs and people. Tina Scott's Wire Dachshund Talisker contracted the condition and sadly died earlier this year. She has kindly written a short case study for our Health website, which you can read here.

Online Health Reporting

Although our Dachs-Life 2012 Survey has now closed we need to continue to monitor breed health. If you Dachshund develops a health problem, or dies, please continue to submit reports at our Health website.

A bit of light relief...

Judge Select and EJVs (reprinted from ECDA's 2012 Newsletter)

Most Dachshund breeders will be aware that the Kennel Club launched its Mate Select program in 2011. This is an online software tool that breeders can use to help plan future matings, using information on individual dogs and a whole breed's Coefficient of Inbreeding (COI). Over time, every registered dog's health information may be accessible through Mate Select and in some cases the development of Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs) will also be available. These powerful tools will provide a whole new level of information to help breeders minimise the risk of producing unhealthy puppies and also avoid adversely affecting the genetic diversity of the breed as a whole.

We have now obtained a leaked e-mail which describes the planned development of a similar set of online tools aimed at improving the standard of judging. These tools will be known as Judge Select and Estimated Judging Value (EJV). They will work in a similar way to Mate Select and EBVs.

In a first of its kind, the Judge Select program, which will be accessed via the Kennel Club website, will allow both occasional and regular exhibitors, as well as show societies, to assess the impact that a proposed judge will have.

As new judge screening tools are developed, these will also be incorporated into Judge Select so that, in future, exhibitors will be able to select judges to show under which will maximise their chances of winning a Challenge Certificate or Reserve Challenge Certificate and minimise their chance of wasting their money.

One of the first pieces of information that will be available from Judge Select is a COI value. This Coefficient of Incompetence will be calculated from a judge's previous judging performance. It will be based on data such as:

- the number of seminars the judge has attended
- the number of breed assessments the judge has failed

The Kennel Club has already banned matings which would produce a Coefficient of Inbreeding of over 25% and the leaked e-mail suggests a similar approach will be taken with Coefficients of

Incompetence. Any judge with a COI of 25% or more will be removed from judging lists.

Over time, Judge Select will also be used to provide Estimated Judging Values (EJVs). The mathematics behind these calculations is complex, but will take account of factors such as:

- the number of times the judge has awarded CCs to their friends
- the number of times they have awarded CCs to exhibitors whose dogs are by their stud dog
- the average size of their entry compared with the breed average entry
- the results of any eye testing, for conditions such as Kennel Blindness
- the number of times a judge has asked a dog to move again and still awarded the top prize to the dog with the worst movement

A source has told us "These EJVs are based on very complicated calculations such as the prevalence of certain prejudices in a particular judge, or the size of the entry they draw. The database is the first of its kind to be able to compute all of this information and to tell exhibitors not only which judges will produce the most competent decisions, but which judges will have the most positive effect on the overall show entries of that breed."

The program will be available for CC judges initially, because the KC knows their heritage and therefore has more information available for them, but it is expected that information about all other judges (from B and C Lists) will also be fed into this database.

For EJVs to be accurate you need to have competence information for as many judges as possible throughout the UK. This will come in the main from the feedback from exhibitors, but the contributions from KC Assessors and Evaluators are also extremely valuable.

Judging competence 'bottlenecks' such as that produced by the over use of popular judges (so called 'greedy judge syndrome') must be avoided to maintain judging diversity and keep the pool of judges as a whole, competent.

The program will be able to give each judge an EJV score *below*, *average* or *above average* for the breed. Alongside each will also be given an indicator of how accurate the score is for that particular judge. The top and bottom ranking five judges in each breed, according to their judging competence will also be provided.

It is important to note that EJVs can change over time. As more information on the judge from exhibitors, or from his/her peers, becomes available, the EJV can change as the accuracy of the estimate improves. And, since the EJV represents a judge's risk of incompetence relative to the rest of the breed's judges, if selection away from an incompetent judge is successful then the EJV will fall slightly.

With so many incompetent judges and the most incompetent judging occurring with such regular frequency, attempting to eliminate them too quickly would reduce the pool of judges to a dangerous level. The work being done to develop Judge Select and EJV calculations aims to provide exhibitors with tools to 'optimise' their choice of judges so that there is a low risk of them wasting their money in show entries and judging diversity is maintained at a sustainable level.

The leaked e-mail hinted that Judge Select will be launched on 1st April 2012. We can't wait!

E-mail: secretary@dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk

Website: http://www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk

Health Website: http://www.dachshundhealth.org.uk

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