



BUYING A CHESAPEAKE

Your puppy's breeder should freely furnish information regarding the health status of the parents of the puppies. As in most large breeds, hip dysplasia is a health concern in the Chesapeake. Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) and Penn-Hip are two groups who use radiographs (X-rays) to evaluate the conformation of dogs' hips. The possibility of inherited eye problems is minimized by Canine Eye Registry Foundation (CERF) examinations. Genetic testing of breeding stock should also be done for Progressive Rod-Cone Degeneration (PRCD), which is the most common form of Progressive Retinal Atrophy (PRA) in the Chesapeake; Exercise Induced Collapse (EIC) and Degenerative Myelopathy (DM).

AKC requires that breeders furnish registration applications or a Bill of Sale (if those registration applications are not available yet) to every buyer. The Bill of Sale must include the buyer's name, amt of price paid, a description of the pup as to its sex, color and its DOB. The names and registration numbers of the parents also must be included. It must be signed by the breeder.

Selecting a Puppy

First be certain what you are looking for when you decide to get a puppy. Is this going to be a hunting dog working every week in hunting season; a show or agility, obedience prospect; do you want to compete in field trials or hunt tests; or a family companion. Tell the breeder what you intend to do with your pup and the traits that are most important to you. Titles like: FC, AFC, ***, QAA, Ch*, BIS, MH, SH, JH, MACH, UD, CDX, TD etc. indicate that the dogs in the pedigree have competed and made in achievements in various areas of competition. Color should be immaterial in choosing a puppy. Discuss with the breeder the differences between females and males. Most breeders match the puppies to the buyer and the buyer's needs and preferences.

Breeding

To contemplate breeding your Chesapeake involves many considerations. First, ask yourself why you want to breed. If you desire another Chesapeake in your family, know that you would save a great deal of money and hardship by buying a puppy from a reputable, established breeder. Work on your part will be necessary for the pups to make a good transition into their new homes. This involves training. The pups should be socialized, crate trained, and accustomed to the collar and leash. You must have a plan and criteria for placing pups in suitable, lasting, loving homes. Know what health and other guarantees you are able to provide puppy buyers. Have a plan for upholding the guarantees because you may have a puppy returned to you. Good record keeping is also essential. Have the paperwork in order: veterinary records, information on the sire and dam, AKC registration forms, purchase agreements, etc. Be available to offer advice on training and problem correction long after the puppies are in their new homes.

Second, does your Chesapeake have the characteristics the breed standard describes? What about genetic defects - have you had your Chesapeake tested and certified to have good hips and eyes? Do you know what other genetic problems may be in your dog's background? The mate should also be a good specimen of the breed and certified free of genetic disorders.

Third, ask yourself if you have what it takes to be a responsible, conscientious breeder. You must know and understand the breed standard to evaluate your own dog and to choose a suitable mate. You must research both the sire and dam's heritage to know what good and bad traits they may be carrying. . You must have the time, money, and facilities to raise a healthy litter. It is not unusual to see ten or more pups in a Chesapeake litter. You must educate yourself and be ready for problems that are likely to occur during whelping. Your facilities must be safe and adequate for the pups until they are at least eight weeks old. Most states outlaw the sale of pups

before this age. By this time, you will have had the pups wormed 3-4 times, and given them and given them 1-2 of their puppy vaccinations. Work on your part will be necessary for the pups to make a good transition into their new homes. This involves training. The pups should be socialized, crate trained, and accustomed to the collar and leash. You must have a plan and criteria for placing pups in suitable, lasting, loving homes. Know what health and other guarantees you are able to provide puppy buyers. Have a plan for upholding the guarantees because you may have a puppy returned to you. Good record keeping is also essential. Have the paperwork in order: veterinary records, information on the sire and dam, AKC registration forms, purchase agreements, etc. Be available to offer advice on training and problem correction long after the puppies are in their new homes.

Breeding can be rewarding if you are educated and prepared for the work that is involved. Remember that as a conscientious breeder, you will be responsible for placing many puppies in deserving, loving homes.