

The Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Switzerland and Objective 10

Apart from the BMDC of Switzerland club members who were present at the international symposium in Salzburg, the members of our club's breeding commission and myself who "invented" the description "Objective 10" there is practically nobody in Switzerland who is presently aware of this goal or objective. The BMDC of Switzerland therefore has still to make its members and breeders aware of this objective. Hence most of the activities which the club undertook so far with regards to longevity are centered around making breeders and Bernese Mountain dog owners aware of the longevity problems in our breed and aware of the fact that without information this problem cannot be solved.

Present activities :

1. Breeders can request cause of death and age of death information on particular dogs from the breeding commission to plan their litters.
2. Breeders are requested to deliver cause of death information and age of death information on all their breeding stock to the breeding commission.
3. An agreement was reached with the Swiss Kennel Club (who establishes the pedigrees) that the date of birth and date of death of all ancestors of the respective dog be included on the pedigree. The date of death information will be put into a pedigree based on an official certificate from a veterinarian.
4. In 1999 the BMDC of Switzerland created a health fund. It is the responsibility of the commission which administers this fund to define what health problems the breed suffers from and to create projects to solve such problems, as well as to collect the necessary funds to pay for the necessary research.
5. Participation in International Working Group activities.

Future/planned activities:

1. In 2007 the BMDC of Switzerland will organize an international symposium which will have the longevity of Bernese Mountain dogs as the major topic.
2. It is planned to send out a health questionnaire which should provide us with a snapshot of the state of health of the breed in Switzerland and provide the health fund commission with information of which health research projects to initiate.
3. Discussions with the Veterinary University in Bern have started around the possibility of creating a "longevity breed value". It seems however at present, that the club has too little information at hand to create such a breed value in the near future. Discussions will continue in the breeding commission and with veterinary universities to find a scientific method to include longevity as a clear criteria in making breeding decisions.

Aire/Geneva, October 5th 2006 Martha Cehrs