

## **How To Find (by phone interview) a Responsible Breeder**

It is important to ask as many questions as possible of a prospective breeder. These can be asked over the telephone or via email, however we suggest it is best over the telephone as you can pick up things like intonation etc, whilst carrying on a conversation. Here are questions that should be asked and at the end of the article, we have also included questions a responsible breeder may ask of you.

- How many years have you been breeding? (How many dogs a "breeder" has had over the years goes to their depth of knowledge of the breed. There are exceptions but it is a good rule of thumb.)
- Why do you breed? ( You should hear things like for the love and preservation and possibly improvement of my breed).
- Are the sire and dam and or related dogs on premise to see?
- Are the pedigrees available? (The answer should always be YES)
- What health issues are in your breed? (the buyer should have researched the National Breed Club web site to determine what health issues are predominant in this breed, so that you have a point of reference to go by on the breeders answer(s) to you).
- What are known hereditary problems (ask for certification that the parents are clear)
- How long do your dogs live? (this can be a tricky question, because someone who has only just started breeding but may have been in there breed for 5 to 10 years, may not know, or may not have any dogs that have died yet).
- What age will puppies be available to go? (the buyer should be aware that pups leaving prior to 7 or 8 weeks of age is not a good idea unless they have a motherly dog at home who will gently play with and teach the pup. Otherwise it is best that the breeder keep the pups in the company of the mother here and there throughout the day so she can teach them proper canine etiquette and social skills).

### **Environment**

- Puppies were raised in (house or kennel)? (very preferable that puppies are raised in the house)

- What kind of HUMAN AND/OR DOG socialization program do you provide? (puppies should have seen a few human visitors over the weeks, preferably have Early Neurological Stimulation done in the first 3 to 14 days, and have some gentle exposure to puppy-friendly “auntie/uncle” dogs who help to teach them proper canine etiquette/behavior)
- What are the temperaments of the sire and dam? (should be unafraid, and stable. Friendliness often depends on the breed, but there should be no FEAR shown to humans, nor aggressiveness when not in the presence of the puppies).
- May I contact other previous puppy buyers for references? (answer should be yes)
- What type of health guarantee/warranty/contract does the breeder give on puppies.
- What kind of registration is provided? (AKC, CKC, UKC, Rare Breed Club Registration)
- Will the breeder take the dog back or assist you in placing the dog should you ever decide that you cannot keep it? (answer should be yes and this should be within the contract/agreement)
- How many litters a year do you have? (this may depend on the popularity of the breed and how many females this breeder has, but no female should be bred more than 3 or 4 times, especially in a row, because it does take a lot out of them)
- What other breeds of dogs do you breed? (if it is many breeds, it might indicate a puppy mill)
- What kind of diet are the dogs on?
- Do you keep in contact with your puppy buyers?
- Do you belong to any dog clubs?

### **Common Questions Asked By Reputable Breeders:**

1). Are you aware of the problems (be they health, temperament, conformation or whatever) in this breed? If you answer in the negative, expect to be educated at great length if this is an applicable subject.

- 2). Do you have a fenced yard with adequate shelter facilities?
- 3). Will your dog be a house dog? (Many breeders will not sell to anyone who does not want the dog in the house)
- 4). Do you have children? (When considering a sale to a family with children, a good breeder will want the children to come over so they can meet them too)
- 5). Are you aware of the size, coat etc., of the adult dog? (it is sad and troublesome when someone wants to get rid of their young adult Great Dane because it “got too big”...it's a giant breed....what did they expect?) Some people don't properly research a breed before they make a decision to buy and the adult size or coat may be more than they want to cope with. This can be especially true about coat and the cost of caring for the coat in both money and time.
- 6). Are you aware of the temperament traits of this breed?
- 7). Do you both/all want this dog? (A home where the wife loves dogs and the husband or kids are not so inclined, will not be a permanent home for the puppy, or if it is permanent, possibly not a happy home for the dog).

There are a lot of considerations on both sides of the equation when one thinks about purchasing or adopting a puppy or adult dog. We hope this has enlightened the reader and given food for thought.

Compiled by Members of AuNaturelK9s.com

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