

NEW DNA TESTING PROGRAMME FOR BORDER COLLIES

The Kennel Club has approved a new official DNA testing programme for severe sensory neuropathy (SN) in Border Collies, following consultation with the breed's health co-ordinator on behalf of the breed clubs.

SN is a severe neurological disease caused by the degeneration, primarily of sensory, but also of motor nerve cells. Affected Border Collies usually show an onset of disease from 2 to 7 months of age; signs include knuckling of the feet, self-mutilation wounds (caused by excessive chewing or licking as a result of the lack of sensation in the limbs) and progressive ataxia (incoordination of gait). The loss of sensation progresses in all four limbs. Regurgitation and urinary incontinence can occur in the later stages of the disease. The prognosis is poor, quality of life is severely affected and there are no effective treatments; Border Collies with SN are euthanased on welfare grounds before they reach two years of age.

To find out which laboratories the Kennel Club is able to record results from, and which labs will send results direct to the Kennel Club, please refer to the worldwide DNA testing list at <http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/health/for-breeders/dna-testing-simple-inherited-disorders/worldwide-dna-tests/>.

The Kennel Club constantly reviews DNA testing schemes and programmes in conjunction with breed clubs to ensure that breeders are supported with resources which help them to make responsible breeding decisions. The Kennel Club works alongside breed clubs and breed health coordinators in a collaborative effort to improve the health of pedigree dogs and is happy to accommodate a club's request to add a new DNA test to its lists. A formal request from the breed's health coordinator or a majority request from the breed clubs is normally required to do this.

Test results will be added to the dog's registration details which will trigger the publication of the result in the next available Breed Records Supplement. The result will appear on any new registration certificate issued for the dog and on the registration certificates of any future progeny of the dog, and also on the Health Test Results Finder on the Kennel Club website. Results for dogs already tested can also be recorded, but owners will need to submit copies of the DNA certificates themselves.

If the owner includes the original registration certificate for the dog (not a copy) then a new registration certificate will be issued, with the DNA result on it, free of charge. DNA test certificates should be sent to Health and Breeder Services, The Kennel Club, Clarges Street, London, W1J 8AB or scanned and emailed to health.results@thekennelclub.org.uk.