

A NOTE TO PUPPY BUYERS ABOUT THESE GUIDELINES

The Prospective Puppy Buyer (PPB) should understand that these Breeding Guidelines (BG) are purely voluntary in their recommendations. The Greater Swiss Mountain Dog Club of America (GSMDCA) is not a “Code of Ethics” club and has no power to regulate breeding practices or sanction club members for failure to follow these guidelines. The PPB is encouraged to meet and speak with as many breeders as possible and to see as many Greater Swiss Mountain Dogs as possible before deciding that this breed is suitable for their family and lifestyle. Perhaps the best way to accomplish this is by attending dog shows, where the dogs can be observed in conformation and performance events such as obedience and drafting. Most exhibitors will be happy to speak with you if approached after the event has been completed. Moreover, breeders who show their dogs and compete with them are sometimes thought to have a greater interest in improving the breed.

Remember, the puppy you select will live with you for many years. It is important that you feel comfortable with the breeder from whom you acquire the puppy and that you feel able to call upon the breeder for support and guidance throughout the dog’s life. Every responsible breeder should be happy to maintain such a relationship and should be willing to accept the dog back anytime in its life if an unfortunate event makes this necessary. In fact, it is desirable to have language to this effect in the sale contract.

These guidelines strongly urge breeders to obtain passing clearances on their breeding stock, at the very least for the Canine Health Information Center (CHIC) required tests (currently hips, elbows and eyes). It is desirable to also test shoulders and some breeders will perform patella, thyroid and cardiac tests as well. The GSMDCA maintains a database on which the results of these evaluations can be found. Go to www.gsmdca.org, then click on Health, then on Health Database. (CHIC related test results are also available from the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals website at www.offa.org.) The PPB should review the information published in the database for the sire and dam of the litter under consideration. Where available, the ancestors of the sire and dam may also be researched. Breeders listed in the GSMDCA Classifieds are required to publish in an open database the results of all CHIC required tests performed, regardless of their outcome. However, the GSMDCA cannot and does not insure that every breeder complies with this disclosure request. Consequently, to the extent that information concerning the sire and dam is missing from the database, the PPB should assume that the test was not performed or that the breeder failed to submit the result. In any case, the absence of this information should not be ignored by the PPB who should insist that the breeder provide a satisfactory explanation for the missing information. X- rays reviewed by OFA at 18 months (typically called “Prelims”) and/or vet interpreted readings of joint x-rays are not a substitute for OFA clearances issued after two years of age or for PennHip numbers.

Unfortunately, not all health conditions are susceptible to diagnostic testing and evaluation. As in other large, deep-chested breeds, there exists within the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog a serious gastro intestinal condition known as gastric torsion or bloat. Also within the breed, as with many others, there is known epilepsy. There are no reliable tests to ascertain the disposition of a particular dog toward these conditions but there is thought to be a hereditary factor so the pedigree should be reviewed for affected members. The PPB should not hesitate to question the breeder concerning measures taken to minimize these conditions through appropriate selection of the breeding pair. Similarly, breeders should willingly and candidly inform the PPB as to the prevalence of these conditions within their breeding pedigrees. Last, but certainly not least, the PPB should question the breeder with respect to the emphasis placed on temperament in selecting the sire and dam. The Swissy is a large, powerful breed and only sound, stable temperaments should be selected for breeding. Where possible, the PPB should meet the sire and dam.

The Greater Swiss Mountain Dog Club of America hopes that the foregoing comments will assist the Prospective Puppy Buyer in understanding the intent of these Breeding Guidelines and in acquiring a sound, stable and healthy Swissy. Remember to:

- Research the breed thoroughly to make sure that this is the right breed for you.

- Talk with more than one breeder. Ask questions about their experience in the breed, what types of activities they participate in with their dogs, what clubs – breed and all breed – they belong to, titles they have put on their dogs, etc. Beware of breeders who's only involvement with the breed is breeding.
- Research what the breeder has produced. Do the dogs have the type and temperament that you are looking for? Ask for registered names and registration numbers of the breeding pair so that you can validate clearances. The presence of a CHIC number does not indicate that clearances (or “passing grades”) have been received for the tested conditions or that the results will remain publicly available. A CHIC number means only that the tests have been performed. The puppy buyer should still review test results at either www.offa.org or the health database at www.gsmdca.org to determine the results of the tests. Ask the breeder for a copy of tests results which are not publicly available.
- Talk with the breeder about which health guarantees, if any, are available.
- Review the breeder's contract before you fall in love with a puppy. If the contract imposes conditions you don't like or don't understand ask questions and negotiate if needed. If you don't like the contract, find another breeder.

GSMDCA BREEDING GUIDELINES

The responsible breeder of Greater Swiss Mountain Dogs will protect the health, temperament, type and welfare of the breed and the puppies they produce. As an AKC member club the GSMDCA is not, by constitution, an ethics club and does not regulate the practices of its member breeders. Puppy buyers are encouraged to carefully research all breeders. While responsible breeders do their best to avoid health problems, no breeder can guarantee 100% against health problems. Breeders of GSMDs are strongly encouraged to:

- Show their dogs and bitches in both conformation and working events.
- Attend specialty shows to better familiarize themselves with correct breed type.
- Breed only those dogs and bitches which most closely conform to the AKC breed standard.
- Breed only dogs and bitches that exhibit and produce sound, stable temperaments.
- Research pedigrees to better understand and mitigate health risks.
- Obtain passing health clearances on their breeding stock and choose breeding partners who likewise have received passing clearances, particularly for CHIC required tests (CHIC required tests currently include hips, elbows and eyes).
- Breed only those dogs and bitches not affected by Osteochondrosis (OCD) or degenerative joint disease (DJD) of the shoulder.
- Breed only those dogs and bitches not exhibiting seizures.
- Breed bitches only after they reach two years of age; limit the number of litters produced by a bitch to four litters over her lifetime.
- Breed dogs only after they reach two years of age; limit the litters produced by a stud dog to 3 per year for the first two years of breeding.
- Maintain a safe, healthy environment for bitch and puppies.
- Sell all puppies with a contract and make use of AKC limited registration for pet quality puppies.
- Not sell any puppy to a pet store, broker or through any auction or raffle.
- Carefully screen puppy buyers to ensure that the buyer has the knowledge, environment and facilities to properly care for the animal.
- Microchip puppies prior to placement.
- Support puppy buyers and be willing to take back any puppy during its lifetime.
- Disclose to puppy buyers any other health issues.
- Disclose to puppy buyers any deviation from these guidelines.

A NOTE TO BREEDERS

The GSMDCA has established an open health database for the long-term health and welfare of the Greater Swiss Mountain Dog and to assist breeders in making informed breeding decisions. We are urging Swissy owners to disclose all health testing results (passing or not) and all health related issues in the GSMDCA health database which is maintained on the GSMDCA web site at www.gsmdca.org. We are asking breeders who advertise in the GSMDCA Breeders' Classifieds to lead this endeavor by voluntarily submitting all of their breeding Swissys' health information to the health database. This can most easily be accomplished by initialing the "Authorization to Release Abnormal Results" box on the OFA Health Application when testing is being done or sending a photocopy of the testing results to the GSMDCA Health Database manager. The

GSMDCA believes the development of the open health database is of paramount importance to the breed.

GSMDCA BREEDERS' CLASSIFIEDS

To be listed on the GSMDCA Breeders' Classifieds breeders agree to:

Be GSMDCA members in good standing, per the GSMDCA bylaws, for a minimum of two years.

Breed only AKC registered GSMDs on full registration; if using a foreign sire, the sire must meet AKC requirements for registration.

Publish in an open database on the OFA website (www.offa.org) and / or the GSMDCA health database (www.gsmdca.org) the results of CHIC required tests for all breeding stock they own.*

Submit litter records to the GSMDCA Registrar within 6 months of whelping.

Permanently identify puppies prior to placement through the use of a microchip or other permanent marking system.

Accept back puppies for which they are the breeder of record at any time during the life of the animal.

Names of members not in good standing will be immediately removed from the Classifieds. If a listed breeder is breeding an unregistered or limited registration dog or bitch or found to be in violation of the open database, litter registration, or permanent marking requirement their name will be removed from the Classifieds for a minimum of twelve months. Any breeder contacted by GSMDCA Rescue who fails to take back or otherwise take responsibility for puppies for which they are the breeder of record will be permanently removed from the Classifieds.

* Any bitch being used by a breeder listed in the Classifieds must be in an open database whether owned, co-owned or leased. Co-owned dogs being used by the listed breeder must be in an open database.

Although not required, listed breeders are encouraged to publish in an open database test results for any stud dog tested by a co-owner and, if using a stud dog they do not own, to use only stud dogs that are listed in an open database.

GSMDCA PROCESS FOR THE BREEDERS' CLASSIFIEDS

There are two versions of the Breeders' Classifieds:

1. A Printed Version distributed quarterly in the newsletter.
2. A Community Version placed on the GSMDCA World Wide Web (WWW) site and forwarded in response to requests received by the GSMDCA Corresponding Secretary.

Eligibility

The Breeders' Classifieds are open to any GSMDCA member in good standing as an Individual or Household Member.

Fees

The annual enrollment fees will be \$20 for the Printed Version and \$20 for the Community Version for a one-year period of advertising January through December. Enrollees will have the option of advertising in either version for \$20 each or both for \$40. Anyone enrolling after June 30th will pay a reduced fee of \$12.50 per version to be listed for the remainder of the calendar year. Fees will not be refunded to any breeder removed from the Classifieds for failing to meet one of the requirements as specified in the GSMDCA Breeding Guidelines.

Application

Fees for the Printed and for the Community version and the enrollment form must be sent to the Classifieds Manager. After confirming the membership status of the applicant the Classifieds Manager will forward payment to the Treasurer and forward data to the Internet Coordinator, the Newsletter Editor, and the Corresponding Secretary. Application forms will be available on the GSMDCA website or from the Classifieds Manager.

Format

A uniform format will be used for the Breeders' Classifieds. Listings will be the same in both hard and soft copy versions and will include the following:

Kennel Name (Required)
First and Last Name (Required)
Address Line 1 (Optional)
Address Line 2 (Optional)
City (Required)
State (Required)
Zip (Optional)
Phone 1 (May list phone or e-mail address or both)
Phone 2 (Optional)
Fax (Optional)
Website Address (Optional)
E-mail Address (May list phone or e-mail address or both)
Disclaimer

The following disclaimer will be listed at the top the Breeders' Classifieds:

Puppy buyers are encouraged to read the GSMDCA Breeding Guidelines to help them in the selection of a reputable breeder. The GSMDCA is not an ethics club and therefore does not police, endorse or recommend any advertiser or their breeding practices. Breeders listed below have paid to advertise in the Classifieds and have agreed to:

Be GSMDCA members in good standing.

Breed only AKC registered GSMDs; if using a foreign sire, the sire must meet AKC requirements for registration.

Publish in an open database on the OFA website (www.offa.org) and / or the GSMDCA health database (www.gsmdca.org) the results of CHIC required tests for all breeding stock they own.*

Submit litter records to the GMDCA Registrar within 6 months of whelping.

Permanently identify puppies prior to placement through the use of a microchip or other permanent marking system.

Accept back puppies for which they are the breeder of record at any time during the life of the animal.

All breeders require that you schedule an appointment prior to visiting them.

List Management

The Classifieds Manager will be the recipient of all enrollment forms and will be responsible for generating the Breeders' Classifieds. The Internet Coordinator will be responsible for maintaining the current web-site based version of the Classifieds.

Notes

No listing in the Classifieds will be automatically renewed. Breeders must submit a form and payment for the Breeders' Classifieds each year. In December of each year the Classifieds Manager will send an application for the Breeders' Classifieds to those listed in the Classifieds as of December 1st of that year.