

WAFDAL meeting 2011 in Salzburg Report from the Health and Breeding Commission

In general there has been little activity from the member clubs towards the Health and breeding commission concerning health problems. At the Oslo meeting in 2009 a report was given on the status of mega-oesophagus, epilepsy, urate stones and deafness gene testing. More recently the question of osteochondrodysplasia (inherited dwarfism) has come up again.

Mega-oesophagus (MO)

Since the last meeting two litters with MO have been reported, one in Belgium and one in the Netherlands. In both litters the pedigrees included dogs that had given MO earlier. There is nothing new of the mode of inheritance. MO does not seem to be a major problem among Dalmatians in Europe, but the individual member clubs should continue to keep MO under observation.

Epilepsy

Nothing new.

Urate stones

Dr Danika Banasch gave a thorough overview of the situation on NUA (LUA)-Dalmatians at the Oslo meeting. Since then two NUA-Dalmatians have been imported to Europe, one in France and one in UK. A separate discussion of the matter takes place at this meeting.

Osteochondrodysplasia (dwarfism)

Inherited dwarfism is well known in many breeds. Among Dalmatians in Europe dwarfism has been noticed occasionally in Sweden for over 30 years, but in relatively few reported litters. In 2003 and 2009 dwarfs were found in two litters in Norway, in dogs with pedigrees going back to the old lines in Sweden. The breeder has notified the owners of dogs from these litters with suggestions of how to avoid future problems.

The mode of inheritance is not known. Swedish breeders suspect autosomal recessive inheritance. This can be the case if we can accept that the number of defects and the degree of defects are less than expected for this inheritance. In two other breeds dwarfism is inherited recessively, but this fact cannot not automatically be transferred to Dalmatians.

Inherited deafness

A pigmentation related gene, the microphthalmia-associated transcription factor (MITF), turned out to be of interest in testing for inherited deafness and eye pigmentation by a research group at the University of Veterinary medicine in Hannover, led by professor Ottmar Distl. Blood samples from Denmark were included together with blood from German dogs. Unfortunately there appears to have been little progress in their research on this subject, since nothing has been published since 2009.

Development of deafness in litters from the years 200-2004 to the years 2005-2009/10

Based on the reports of the years 2000-2009/10, data from the Netherlands and from

the German clubs DDC, DVD and CDF have been accumulated. Since there can be less significant variations between individual years, the data were assembled in two blocks in order to obtain larger numbers.

Years	Number of all dogs	Bilateral deaf %	Unilateral deaf %	Blue eyed %	Patched %
2000-2004	6717	2.5	8.4	5.2	10.6
2005-2009/10	6401	2.4	8.3	4.6	11.5

The percentage of bilaterally deaf dogs is relatively stable at a very low level. There are some variations between the clubs, but altogether there appears to be a very small decrease in deafness and blue eyes accompanied by a small increase in patches.

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