

Guidelines for Ethical Behavior

These recommendations are meant as guidelines for what the American Shetland Sheepdog Association (ASSA) considers ethical dog-related practices in the areas of breeding, selling, buying, and exhibiting the Shetland Sheepdog.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BREEDER/SELLER:

- 1) The ultimate goal of the responsible breeder should be to improve the breed by producing attractive, healthy, puppies with good temperaments, whether for pet or show.
- 2) Breeders should have a basic knowledge of genetics, the breed, dog breeding in general, and the specific faults and virtues of their chosen genetic lines. They should also be aware of potential health problems, associated both with the breed itself, and the specific lines. This is to encourage improvement of the breed by using top quality stock, along with extensive, researched knowledge.
- 3) A breeder should be discriminating in the placement of his stock. A breeder should not sell to, or aid in selling a Sheltie to any person who he, or she, has reason to believe will not provide proper care and environment, or who may use the dog in a fashion which is detrimental to the dog itself, or the breed.
- 4) It is recommended that breeders not sell puppies under the age of eight (8) weeks and/or without proper, documented, immunization and health protection for their age.
- 5) Breeders should be honest and forthright in answering questions pertaining to their Shelties.
- 6) Breeders should recommend future immunization and worming schedules, as well as ways to deal with various health and/or behavioral problems that might occur. Breeders should also inform new owners of any health clearances that have been performed on one or both of the parents.
- 7) The ASSA encourages all Sheltie owners that breed Shelties to assume more responsibility for dogs produced throughout their lives rather than just until the first sale.
- 8) Breeders should maintain the best possible health, safety, cleanliness and veterinary care for their animals, as well as proper nutrition and socialization; and should pass these recommended measures along to new owners.
- 9) All agreements should be in writing, and be clearly understood by all parties.
- 10) Breeding arrangements should never be established which would encourage the pet buyer to undertake a breeding program. If a "breeder" does not have the time, facility or desire to themselves have a litter out of a particular brood matron, that dog should not be passed to a pet buyer just to produce puppies.

11) Responsible breeders should require the spaying/neutering of all non-breeding animals and follow-up should be done to ensure that this aspect of the contract has been fulfilled.

BREEDING ANIMALS:

- 1) Shelties used for breeding should conform as closely as possible to the breed standard.
- 2) Breeding animals should be screened and clear of discoverable genetic defects prior to breeding.
- 3) The following is a partial list of possible screening recommendations:
Eyes certified normal.
Hips clear.
Thyroid tested.
Males should be entire (monorchids and/or cryptorchids should not be used.)
Dogs with questionable temperaments should not be used for breeding.
Dogs on medication intended to alter the dog's physical or mental condition should not be used for breeding.

NON-COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY:

- 1) A responsible breeder prohibits the sale of animals or the provision of stud services/brood matrons to commercial operations, including puppy mills, pet shops, brokers, laboratories, auctions, raffles, or contest giveaways.
- 2) Motivation for breeding the Shetland Sheepdog should be the creation and improvement of the breed, rather than solely for financial gain.

AKC RULES COMPLIANCE:

- 1) Complete and accurate records must be kept; and those necessary forwarded to new owners.
- 2) Breeders agree to abide by all AKC rules and regulations, whether pertaining to breeding, exhibiting, record-keeping or any other aspect of purebred dog ownership.
- 3) Breeders will breed only AKC-registered dogs.

EDUCATION:

- 1) Sheltie owners should encourage public education, represent the breed honestly to prospective buyers, and help people to make informed canine-related decisions.
- 2) Breeders should make themselves available to the purchaser after the sale has been consummated to help with education counseling, grooming and other care questions as well as solving behavioral problems.
- 3) Breeders should make available to fellow breeders any information they have that might aid in that breeder's efforts to improve the breed.
- 4) ASSA members should be an example of leadership and outreach to encourage proper ethical behavior.

SPORTSMANSHIP:

1) Maligning of others or others' dogs is inappropriate. Good sportsmanship is appropriate at all times.

In general, all dog owners have a responsibility to their canine companions to provide proper care and humane treatment at all times, whether in a multiple or single dog household. Proper care and humane treatment includes adequate and nutritious diet, clean water, adequate exercise, clean comfortable living conditions, regular veterinary care, kind and responsive human companionship, and training for appropriate behavior. Dogs should not be kept in circumstances or numbers where all of these needs cannot be adequately fulfilled.

Approved by ASSA Board of Directors - May 1996