

followed, eg provision of sufficient space to allow bullied goats to move away from their aggressor, and removal of persistently bullied goats from the herd. Recommended best practice is then provided, in varying levels of detail, and in the case of mixing goats it is recommended that goats are not mixed more frequently than necessary due to the social distress that occurs during the re-establishment of a social hierarchy between the resident and incoming goats.

Codes of Welfare are not stand-alone documents and for more detailed information on painful husbandry procedures the new Code directs readers to the Animal Welfare (Painful Husbandry Procedures) Code of Welfare 2005. Goats may be subjected to a number of painful husbandry procedures during their lifetime (eg disbudding, castration and occasionally dehorning) and the new Code makes the point that special care should be taken when disbudding goat kids using thermal cautery to avoid damaging underlying tissues, including the brain, as the skull of goat kids is much thinner than that of calves.

Other useful Codes of Welfare, Codes of Recommendation and Minimum Standards, and Guidelines are listed in the Appendix, along with a Body Condition Scoring Chart for goats, a list of interpretations and definitions of terms used within the code and a section on legislative requirements.

Welfare codes play a key role in improving the care of animals by providing extra detail to the relevant animal welfare legislation and, although not legally binding in themselves, minimum standards may be used as evidence to support a prosecution for an offence under the NZ Animal Welfare Act. Codes are reviewed at least every 10 years or sooner if necessary.

Animal Welfare (Goats) Code of Welfare 2012 (March 2012). A4, 48 pages. National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, New Zealand. ISBN: 978 0 478 38763 3 (print) ISBN: 978 0 478 38764 3 (online). The guidelines are available at the MAF website: <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/animal-welfare>, or by emailing: animalwelfare@maf.govt.nz.

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Progress report on The Kennel Club's dog health group

This report summarises the work of the Dog Health Group of the Kennel Club, which includes the work of the Assured Breeders scheme, Breed Standards and Conformation, and Genetics and Health Screening sub-groups. As such it gives some insight into how the Kennel Club has sought to tackle the issues concerning the health and breeding of dogs that, of late, have been a subject of much media and public concern that resulted in a number of independent reports (outlined in Reports and Comments published in previous issues of *Animal*

Welfare: volume 19, issues 1 and 2) and the formation of the Advisory Council on the Welfare Issues of Dog Breeding.

The report highlights the launch of 'Mate Select' as being the most significant activity of the group in 2011. This service seeks to address the issue of inherited genetic defects by trying to assist breeders in avoiding matings between individuals that are very closely related. An online service calculates an individual's inbreeding coefficient, the current inbreeding coefficient for their breed, and predicts the inbreeding coefficients of puppies from a hypothetical mating. Also welcome is the information that the Kennel Club's Charitable Trust has spent £400,000+ in support of research into improving canine health and welfare.

For those who like reports with data, of interest will be the sections on the 'Monitoring of Judging of High Profile Breeds' (15 breeds of dogs whose health and welfare the Kennel Club has identified of particular concern — these include the Pug, Pekingese and St Bernard) and Annex A that reports on the annual summaries of health data generated by the British Veterinary Association/KC health schemes for hip and elbow dysplasia and eye health, and the results of DNA testing of breeds for prevalence of various heritable conditions.

With respect to 'High Profile Breeds', the Kennel Club has now agreed that the 'best of breed' award at their dog shows should be discretionary (rather than mandatory as previously) enabling judges — should they be so disposed — to not declare a 'best of breed' if they decide that the dog before them is suffering from any visible condition which adversely affects its health or welfare*. As part of encouraging such decisions, judges have been requested to complete a report providing their opinion of the health and well-being of dogs they have judged and a summary of these along with similar reports from independent observers are detailed. The St Bernard and Mastiff breeds are two that attracted some of the lowest gradings, with eyes, hindquarters and lameness being of specific concern in both.

Finally, the report draws attention to the fact that initiatives to limit the number of litters born to individual dogs have now come into effect. The number of litters that can be registered per bitch is now limited to four and the number of litters born by Caesarean section that can be registered to two.

* NB: At the Kennel Club's premier dog show, Cruft's, earlier in 2012, independent veterinary surgeons contracted by the Kennel Club decided that no 'best of breed' award should be given to the Pekingese, Clumber Spaniel, Neapolitan Mastiff and Bulldog breeds because of health concerns.

The Kennel Club Dog Health Group Annual Report 2011 (2012). A4, 40 pages. Published by The Kennel Club, UK and available at: <http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/item/3671>.

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