

INSTRUCTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING CROSSES BETWEEN BREEDS

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How to apply for crossbreeding

The goals of the crossbreeding should be defined in the application. Also plans or guidelines for further use of F1-offspring in breeding should be given.

Goals: what is lacking: why are breed crosses needed?

- Improving or restoring working traits
- Decreasing the incidence of breed-specific genetic problems in health, behaviour and/or reproduction traits
- A harmful mutation allele has been fixed in the breed: bringing back a normal allele into the breed
- Improving the health in a breed with exaggerated conformation traits
- Improving general fitness in the breed (decreasing the incidence of immunological problems)

Breed crosses are primarily intended for breeds which lack the necessary genetic variance needed in breeding against important traits.

The application should include an analysis of the situation of the breed. The analysis should clearly show the need for crossbreeding. The breed-specific breeding strategy (JTO) of the breed may form the basis of the analysis.

Which breed to choose for the crossbreeding?

"Why are we going to cross-breed?" This question will help to choose the intended breed:

- A breed with traits lacking in our breed
- If the goal is just to increase genetic variation, the best choice is a breed with only few genetic problems, and otherwise as similar to the original breed as possible
- The intended breed should not have the same genetic problems with similar frequencies as the original breed
- The intended breed should have the same purpose (similar behaviour and working traits) as the original breed. Alternatively, a neutral, companion-like breed should be preferred, in which no extreme behavioural features exist.

The reasons for choosing the specific breed/breeds will be written in the application. Possible health and other risks involved in crosses with this/these intended breeds are being brought out.

Which individuals to choose?

- Individuals that answer the best to the question "What kind of dogs do we want?"
- Individuals old enough -> accurate health information of the individual and its' close relatives
- Both the sire and the dam of a crossbred litter should have earlier, evaluated offspring
- Healthy and in every way trouble-free individuals which meet the requirements set in the breed-specific breeding strategies.

Results of health examinations, temperament and working tests as well as conformation evaluations of the chosen individuals are given in the application. Also all other (health and behaviour) information available on these individuals and their close relatives is given.

How many crossbred litters are needed?

The number of crossbred litters needed depends on the situation of the breed and the goals of the crossbreeding. The needed quantity of litters may become clear only during the project.

Use of crossbred individuals in breeding

Preliminary plan for the use of crossbred individuals in breeding is given in the application:

- What kind of dogs and/or lines will be bred with the F1- and F2-individuals?
- Will the crossbred individuals be used only in some part of the breed or is the plan to spread their gene variants evenly to the whole population?
- How many offspring should we aim to have from each F1- and F2-litter in the future?
- How many dogs per litter should be used for breeding?

It should be noted that the F1-generation individuals may have such behavioural traits that both parent breeds lack. This does not have to be a barrier to use of these dogs in breeding, unless these traits are for example timidity and/or aggressiveness.

During backcrossing behavioural traits start to stabilize in the parent breed.

Appendices

- Statement from the land of origin
- Statement from the breed association

Follow-up report

In the follow-up it will be evaluated whether the crossbreeding project actually achieved its goals, whether the number of crossbred litters is sufficient, and whether any undesirable traits were introduced from the other breed. Based on this evaluation, it will be decided how to proceed.

It is recommended that both the parents and the offspring of the crossbred litters are being monitored during their whole life. Future plans in the project depend on which traits should be strengthened and which reduced. At the same time it should be controlled that no one line, not even the crossbred line, is not increased too much in relation to the whole breed population.

It will be recorded whether there was something particular regarding the pregnancy or whelping. The puppies will be monitored before they move to their new homes. In addition to routine recordings, like body weight development, any divergent observations regarding the health and behaviour of the dam or the puppies will be recorded.

The owners of the puppies will be asked to record reasons of all the visits to a veterinarian, until the puppies are eight years old. They will also be asked to fill in the Finnish Kennel Club's health and behaviour surveys when the puppies are 3-4 years old.

Breed-specific routine health examinations will be performed to the puppies. It is recommended that the puppies will also attend to the Finnish Kennel Club's temperament test or temperament description.

Finnish Kennel Club's breeding inspection will be performed to the puppies when they are at least three years old.

Dates of death will be recorded to the Finnish Kennel Club's breeding database. If known, also the cause of death will be recorded.