

Dear All

Below is the official press release confirming that the Kennel Club now recognises PRA4 and NCL DNA tests for English Setters. These tests have been available through several laboratories but were not recognised and recorded by the Kennel Club.

This announcement comes after 18 months of discussions between the English Setter Health Committee, all the breed clubs, and the Kennel Club. The Health Committee recognises that the UK show bred English Setter's gene pool is unsustainable in its current size, and genetic diversity. The committee supports efforts to widen the gene pool for the betterment of the breed, but at the same time wants to ensure new conditions are not unwittingly introduced into the breed.

To this effect the committee made proposals to all the breed clubs that all imported dogs, or litters sired by a foreign dog should be tested for PRA 4 and NCL before being bred from, unless the imported dog or sire are shown to be hereditary clear. That the breed should seek to have these tests recognised by the Kennel Club.

These proposals were unanimously agreed by all the English Setter clubs.

What does this mean?

The Kennel Club recognising these two tests, now allows owners of imported dogs to have the results of these tests recorded on the Kennel Club database. Results of tests will now be sent directly by most of the laboratories to the Kennel Club to be added to the KC database.

This allows the recommendation agreed by all the clubs to be formally monitored to ensure members using imported dogs, or foreign sires are complying with the clubs agreed codes of ethics.

What does this not mean?

This does not mean that there is a requirement to test UK bred English Setters. There is currently no evidence that these conditions are an issue for the UK setter currently.

These tests will not become an Assured Breeder requirement or recommendation.

If any members require further information or clarification, please contact the Breed Health Coordinator.

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NEWS RELEASE

NEW DNA TESTING SCHEMES FOR THE ENGLISH SETTER

The Kennel Club has approved two new official DNA testing schemes for progressive retinal atrophy (PRA-rcd4) and neuronal ceroid lipofuscinosis (NCL) in the English Setter following consultation with the breed's health coordinator on behalf of the breed clubs.

PRA is a well-recognised inherited condition to which a number of breeds of dog are predisposed. The condition is characterised by bilateral degeneration of the retina causing progressive vision loss which culminates in total blindness. Although there is no treatment for PRA, dog breeders will be able to use DNA tests to screen their animals for the condition and factor this into their breeding programmes accordingly.

NCL is a severe inherited disease which causes a gradual degeneration of the nervous system. Signs and symptoms vary widely between the forms but generally include a combination of dementia, vision loss, and epilepsy.

To find out which laboratories the Kennel Club is able to record results from, and which labs will send results direct to the Kennel Club, please refer to the worldwide DNA testing list at www.thekennelclub.org.uk/worldwide-dna-tests/.

The Kennel Club constantly reviews DNA testing schemes in conjunction with breed clubs to ensure that breeders are supported with resources which help them to make responsible breeding decisions. The Kennel Club works alongside breed clubs and breed health coordinators in a collaborative effort to improve the health of pedigree dogs and is happy to accommodate a club's request to add a new DNA test to its lists. A formal request from the breed's health coordinator or a majority request from the breed clubs is normally required to do this.

Test results will be added to the dog's registration details which will trigger the publication of the result in the next available Breed Records Supplement. The result will appear on any new registration certificate issued for the dog and on the registration certificates of any future progeny of the dog, and also on the Health Test Results Finder on the Kennel Club website. Results for dogs already tested can also be recorded, but owners will need to submit copies of the DNA certificates themselves

If the owner includes the original registration certificate for the dog (not a copy) then a new registration certificate will be issued, with the DNA result on it, free of charge. DNA test certificates should be sent to Breeder Services, The Kennel Club, Clarges Street, London W1J 8AB or scanned and emailed to health.results@thekennelclub.org.uk.

ENDS

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7 August 2019

Photo caption: The Kennel Club has approved two new official DNA testing schemes for the English Setter breed. *Photo may be used free of charge for editorial purposes only where the following photo credit is given: Photo by Diane Pearce / The Kennel Club ©*

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Notes to Editor

The Kennel Club