Breeding dogs in Sweden
SKK’s tools and efforts for improved health in Swedish dogs

Sofia Malm, PhD
Geneticist, the Swedish Kennel Club

Photo: Åsa Lindholm
• The Swedish Kennel Club (SKK)
• Recording systems
• Tools and efforts for improved health
• Breed-Specific Breeding Strategies (RAS)
• Ongoing projects
Short facts about dogs in Sweden

✓ Approximately 800,000 dogs in Sweden

✓ Seven out of ten dogs in Sweden are pedigree dogs registered with the Swedish Kennel Club (SKK)

✓ More than 300 dog breeds registered with SKK

✓ A large proportion have a health insurance

✓ No stray dogs

Hamiltonstövare
(Swedish scent hound)
The Swedish Kennel Club (SKK)

- Founded in 1889
- SKK is a union of non-profit clubs with approximately 300,000 individual members
- 50,000 puppies registered per year
- 15,000 active breeders
- 70 employees at the main office (and almost 100 dogs)

Jämthund
(Swedish hunting spitz)
SKK Department for Breeding and Health

- Employs eight persons, including two full-time breeding consultants, a geneticist and a veterinarian
- Assists the Breeding Committee and breed clubs in breeding-related issues
- Recording of health results
- Responsible for education of breeding officials from the clubs
- Contacts with authorities, researchers etc.
Recorded data

Dog registry (pedigree information)

Veterinary records (health records e.g. screening programs, genetic testing)

Trial/test/competition registry (e.g. dog mentality assessments)

Owner registry (cats and dogs)
Veterinary records

✓ New results added daily

✓ Positive as well as negative results submitted and recorded

✓ Yearly about:
  15,000 records for hip dysplasia
  11,000 records for elbow dysplasia
  3,500 records of patellar luxation
  18,000 records for eye examinations

✓ More recently also test results from various genetic tests
Open registries – a valuable source of information

✓ The registries are accessible to the public, anyone can view them on the SKK website

✓ A valuable source of information for breeding decisions as well as for research!

✓ SKK provides researchers with pedigree info, health records and address info to dog owners
Breeding statistics on the SKK website

- Breeding statistics for both individual dogs and for each breed as a whole
- Statistics for littermates, full-sibs and offspring
- The pedigree and coefficient of inbreeding is shown for each dog
- More recently: predicted breeding values, genetic test results, behaviour profiles

www.skk.se
SKK predicts EBVs for hip and elbow dysplasia (HD and ED) in 20 breeds.

- Published on the SKK website and updated weekly.

- Preliminary EBV for litter – parents’ average EBV at date of mating.

- Individual EBV – all dogs born since 2000 with a screening record for HD/ED.

- Accuracy of prediction published (standard error of prediction).
Genetic trend for HD in the Rottweiler

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Genetic testing

- Mostly for diseases with simple recessive inheritance
- Increasing number of “risk tests”
- Only recorded if accurate and validated for the breed – scientific publication need to be available
- Testing must be done by a veterinarian who checks ID of the dog

+ Enables a more subtle management of breeding programmes
- Implies new questions and challenges
Breed-specific instructions for show judges (BSI)

✔ First edition developed in 2009

✔ Aims to identify characteristics at risk for exaggerations and remind the show judge to increase his/her awareness of those risks
• New Nordic BSI from 2014
• Includes 39 breeds
• General requirements for all dogs
• Revised regularly
• Available at skk.se!
Brachycephalic breeds in focus

- DVD on assessment of dogs’ respiration (2012)
- Prioritize healthy dogs with less pronounced brachycephaly in breeding
- Recording of some diagnoses that disqualify dogs from breeding
- Veterinary inspection of dogs prior to breeding
- Education of breeders, show judges and veterinarians
- Increased public awareness
- International collaboration with respect to breed standards
What about behaviour?

- The Dog Mentality Assessment (DMA)
  - More than 100,000 records (from 1997 until today)

- The Behaviour and Personality Assessment (BPH)
  - About 8600 records (from 2012 until today), 233 breeds
Behaviour and Personality Assessment - BPH

✓ Aims to give an objective description of how the dog reacts to and cope with various situations in everyday life

✓ Helpful for breed clubs, breeders and dog owners in breeding and training of the dog
Breed-specific breeding strategies (RAS)

✓ Each breed in Sweden should have a breeding strategy, developed by the breed club and approved by the SKK

✓ Should include all aspects in the breeding goal for that specific breed

✓ Currently more than 300 breeds have a strategy

✓ Published on the breed club websites and the SKK website
Ongoing projects

• EBVs for additional breeds and traits, e.g. personality traits
• Veterinary inspection prior to breeding in some breeds
• Recording of mortality and cause of death
• Education of breeders - SKK Play, distance education etc.
• Increased international collaboration and exchange of information
Thanks for your attention!