

Advice of the Veterinary Academy of France:

On the need to strengthen prevention and fight against canine "hypertypes"

The Veterinary Academy of France

Observing that:

- In very popular breeds, such as some of the first group (sheepdogs and cattle dogs), the second (guard dogs, mountain dogs and Swiss drovers) and the ninth (pleasure dogs and companion dogs), the number of Registrations in the *French Book of Origin* (LOF) increases significantly more than the average increase in matriculations for all pedigreed animals;
- this infatuation is corresponding to an important demand often satisfied by non-LOF production and marketing channels, without any type¹ control being exercised;
- exaggeration of certain physical characteristics, sought by the public and accentuated by a fashion effect, has led to international veterinary organizations such as the *World Small Animal Veterinary Association* (WSAVA) or the *Federation of European Companion Animal Veterinary Association* (FECAVA) to warn against the research and/or the selection of subjects presenting "*always more of type*", tendency which drives breeders to select hyper types subjects², deviance resulting in morphotypes whose health and well-being could be compromised.

Considering that:

- each dog should have a physical and behavioral aptitude corresponding to the purpose of his group of breeds: herd guard (1st group), defense (2nd group), approval and company (3rd group);
- failure to respect these principles, the production of hypertyped subjects often leads to serious pathological conditions: respiratory, locomotors, cutaneous or ocular affections, impossibility to reproduce naturally, behavioral disorders;
- these disorders, sources of pain, must be considered as mistreatment;

- in cases where the known breeders are few or over-stressed, the selection pressure can quickly modify a phenotype (three or four generations in a breeding, a little more on the scale of a purebred;

Recommend:

- to veterinarians:

- to collect observations related to the pathology and treatment of hypertyped subjects in order to build databases;

- to contribute to:

- informing and educating breeders, breed clubs, qualified judges and the public about health, behavior and well-being;

- the drafting of standards³ by their technical comments;

- the establishment of standardized, reliable test protocols within breed clubs, the findings of which clearly inform the status of breeding stock included in breeding and breeding program;

- to breeders:

- to select subjects conforming to the type, in large consanguinity⁴ within the same breed, limiting in particular the number of projections of the standards;

- to respect the breed standards, without looking for the extreme type, considering the hypertypes as a selection error, morphological and/or behavioral, potentially detrimental to the health of the individual and that of the breed;

- the judges of canine competitions:

- fully play their role as livestock counselor by refusing to reward hypertyped subjects;

- to the public authorities:

- ensure that the assignment of the puppies is in full compliance with the provisions of Article L 214.8 of the Rural Code;

- encourage the suppression of commercials featuring hypertypes.

In Paris on June 21st, 2018 :

Opinion unanimously adopted by the Veterinary Academy of France

(1) Type: a so-called typed or typed subject (as opposed to lack of type or type insufficiency) is a representative dog of the breed to which it belongs and of which it possesses all the distinctive characters.

(2) Hypertype (hypertyped subject) extreme phenotype from an ideal racial type, concerning either the conformation as a whole, or an element of it resulting in an extreme expressiveness, even excessive, of particularities inscribed in the standard of the race concerned or which can sometimes result from a tendentious interpretation of the latter (B. Denis 2007).

(3) Standard, standard of a breed: description of the external characters typical of the breed.

(4) Broad consanguinity: close consanguinity is relevant to first to fourth degree relatives, broad consanguinity of related subjects beyond fourth degree (B. Denis 2007, Oberbauer & Sampson 2001).