



Agenda

International Workshop

“A Dog Loving Society: Best Practices and Perspectives”

Vilnius, Lithuania

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Mandatory Education for All Professional Breeders and Dog Keepers in Denmark

DMV, PhD. Helle Friis Proschowsky, Denmark

DMV, PhD. **Helle Friis Proschowsky**, the veterinarian consultant in the Danish Kennel Club, organisation comprising 33,000 members, 30 employees and 4,500 active breeders, producing around 20,000 registered puppies each year, informed that mandatory education was introduced in Denmark in 2010, when “The Commercial Dog Breeding Act” was adopted. The Act includes provisions on compulsory education for all people working with dogs at a professional level. Dog breeders make an extremely important group to focus on as they are responsible for producing the pedigree dogs of “tomorrow”, developing dog breeds, ensuring welfare of dogs used in breeding and counselling future puppy owners. Prior to the Act, there had been only voluntary breeders’ education.

Subjects of the Act are people who work with dogs on a professional level: commercial dog traders, commercial dog breeders and those involved in commercial boarding of dogs. Breeders are considered commercials when they breed three or more litters with three or more bitches every year.

Education is mandatory when applying for a kennel name in the DKC. DKC complete several hundred visits every year to inspect physical and mental environment of dogs in DKC kennels. Inspection visits are also stipulated in the Act, but the authorities do not conduct many visits.

DKC offers an education approved by the authorities for people working with dogs at a professional level. The first level education is developed for breeders applying for a kennel name. The curriculum includes topics of general legislation, dog behaviour, genetic and reproduction. The second level of education includes additional courses on dog behaviour, breed knowledge and general health. So far, 2,300 people completed the basic level education courses and 1,100 people completed mandatory more advanced training. DKC notices a current trend among new breeders to complete education before the first litter is born.





“The Commercial Dog Breeding Act” sets requirements in relation to physical environment of dogs and defines the minimal length of daily individual human contact.

According to the Act, a breeder should issue detailed written instructions (form approved by authorities) to puppy buyers, informing of the adult size of a puppy, demands for exercises, grooming, etc. and about general health (feeding, vaccination, etc.).

One of the challenges in relation to the Act is that there are no tools to follow implementation of its provisions. Many commercial traders and breeders “stay in the dark”.

To sum up, the education of the breeders remains an important and challenging task and the legislation as such does not solve all the problems. However, cooperation with other organisations and authorities is beneficial while overcoming difficulties.

