



International Workshop

“A Dog Loving Society: Best Practices and Perspectives”

Vilnius, Lithuania

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Designer dogs: Fashion or New Breeds?

Sean Delmar, Ireland

The president of the Irish Kennel Club **Sean Delmar** presented an overview of some key aspects related to a growing popularity of designer dogs.

Dog breeds are groups of closely related and visibly similar domestic dogs bred from a known foundation stock. During the dog domestication more than 30 000 years ago different traits were selected and maintained by humans, which led to different dog breed groups. Within the present variety of types of dogs, a clear terminology defining pedigree, purebred, crossbred and mongrel dogs is very important. Some misleading facts about crossbred dogs (hybrids, “designer dogs”), e.g., they are healthier and have longer life expectancy than their parents are not supported by science since recent research from RSPCA and Royal Veterinary College showed no difference in health between pedigree and crossbred or mongrel dogs, as well as life expectancy, which is mostly linked to the dog size. Generally, people who are involved in breeding hybrids disregard dog welfare and do not care about health issues. In fact, media reports and information from veterinarians show that certain cross-breeds are even poorer in terms of their physical or mental health than their ancestors. These dogs are bred from parents that are not checked for health problems and often puppies are not provided with proper socialization. The factors stimulating growing numbers of crossbreeds include cute names, high prices, fashion and popularity among celebrities. Therefore, it is crucially important that potential puppy buyers would understand the traits of both breeds and realize that these puppies might get the worst of both breeds whereas the rarity is not necessarily compatible with high value.

