

## FEDERATION CYNOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE - MANIFESTO OF THE CENTENARY

### For the welfare of dogs

November 2011

On the occasion of its Centenary Year, the Fédération Cynologique Internationale does confirm its mission across the globe : to preserve the health of dogs and to promote the relations between dog and man thanks to its international activities. Through its 86 members and contract partners (one member per country), it cares about the welfare of all dogs worldwide. The FCI considers health, temperament and behaviour to be the essential points to reach this welfare and it promotes dog activities and dog sports which it considers beneficial to the dogs.

These visions and values, re-confirmed this year 2011, one hundred years after the FCI foundation, are supported by the FCI statutory goal. The FCI's objective is indeed « to encourage and promote the breeding and use of purebred dogs whose functional health and physical features meet the standard set for each respective breed and which are able to work and to carry out different functions in accordance with the specific characteristics of their breed (...) in the countries where the FCI has a member or a contract partner ». One of its tasks is to support dogdom and canine welfare worldwide thanks to a well-established ethics, the ever increasing scientific research and the non-profit exchange of cynological information. Under any circumstances, the welfare of the dogs must be of the utmost priority in a context of fair-play principles and humanitarian objectives where any form of discrimination is strictly forbidden (Statutes, art.2-3-4).

This utmost care about welfare implies that any member or contract partner can refuse to (re)-register in its studbook a dog suffering from hereditary defects or featuring defects which go against the Article 2 of the statutes or a dog which does not comply with the rules of selection defined by the member or contract partner in question (Standing Orders, art.8, point 5). Equally, the members and contract partners are not obliged to

issue pedigrees to pups produced as a result of mating of parents which do not meet the FCI breed standards (Standing Orders, art.8, point 14). The pedigrees issued by an FCI member or contract partner are "documents proving that the pups are born of purebred parents from the same breed" (Standing Orders, art. 8, point 13). This concern about authenticity makes it impossible for a pedigree prepared incorrectly to be automatically included in an FCI recognised studbook (Standing Orders, art.8, point 5).

Breeding and the development of dog breeds must be based on long-term objectives and sound principles so that the breeding does not result in diseases, bad temperament or lack of working skills.

Breeding must serve the objective of preserving and preferably extending the genetic diversity (polygenicity) of a breed.

Only functionally healthy dogs are to be used for breeding. It is incumbent on all breeders selecting dogs for breeding to determine whether such breeding animals are mentally and physically suitable for reproduction.

The breeder must ensure that the animals he intends to use for breeding have a stable temperament and are in good physical condition.

As long as a puppy is in the breeder's custody, he must ensure a physically and mentally beneficial environment for the puppy to guarantee proper socialisation (Standing Orders, art.12).

Breeding can only be carried out with pedigree dogs which have a sound temperament, are healthy in functional and hereditary terms. The only dogs which can be considered to be healthy in hereditary terms are those transferring breed standard features, breed type and temperament typical of that breed without displaying any substantial hereditary defects which could impair the functional health of its descendants. It is therefore required to prevent any exaggeration of breed features in the standards which could result in impairment of the dogs' functional health. Dogs with eliminating faults cannot be bred.

With regard to surfacing hereditary defects, e.g. HD or PRA, the FCI members and contract partners are obliged to record affected animals, combat these defects in a methodical manner, continuously record their development and report to the FCI on this matter when requested.

The FCI scientific commission supports the evaluation of hereditary defects and helps combating them. To this end, the commission can issue a catalogue of measures which would become binding on being adopted by the FCI General Committee.

The FCI members and contract partners have to draw up their own breeding regulations, based on the FCI breeding regulations, in which the breeding objectives are laid down. These regulations must take appropriate and reasonable account of the specific working characteristics of the respective breeds.

Dog traders and puppy farmers are considered to be people who focus on buying and selling dogs in order to get economic profit without taking appropriate care of the dog's individual welfare. Dog traders and puppy farmers are not permitted to undertake breeding under the patronage (responsibility) of a member or contract partner of the FCI (International Breeding Rules, preamble 1).

As a rule, puppies are to be sold and transferred to a private individual in whose name the export pedigree must be issued (International Breeding Rules, point 15, basics).

The FCI show judges are responsible for choosing and placing the best dogs in each breed and thus for allowing these dogs to be the base of the individual breed gene pool as well as the tools for selective breeding for all responsible dog breeders. They give a proactive and valuable contribution to dog health and welfare, as well to responsible dog breeding. From this perspective the show judges will attend information, education and continued education meetings.

They shall comply with the FCI show judges code of commitment to the welfare of pure bred dogs, as well as with the specific FCI circulars and instructions regarding health and behaviour.

For the preservation and the further development of the breeds they judge, the show judges must, in addition to the conformation and movement qualities, consider as well the health aspects of the breed or the dog and its fitness for functionality. This assessment should be clearly reflected in his critique of the dog.

Under no circumstances shall aggressiveness and anxious behaviour during the judging of a dog be tolerated. They will result in the disqualification of the dog(s) concerned.

Their judging has to take into account that extreme features which can cause health, behaviour or movement problems have to be severely punished (FCI show judges' code of commitment to the welfare of pure bred dogs).

They may not interpret any standard in such a manner to be in conflict with the functional health of a dog (FCI show judges regulations).

The dogs' welfare must be of **UTMOST PRIORITY** at all dog shows (FCI show regulations).

Most of these guidelines, which appear in the FCI Statutes, the FCI Standing Orders, the FCI International Breeding Regulations, the FCI show judges code of commitment to the welfare of pure bred dogs, the FCI Show and FCI Show Judges Regulations, were included in the FCI INTERNATIONAL BREEDING STRATEGIES, approved by the FCI General Committee in Madrid, in February 2010.

They are a major achievement after a one-century development in favour of the preservation and improvement of the canine breeds around the world. They are the starting point of the FCI towards a new century for the welfare of dogs **WORLDWIDE**.

F. Denayer

Former president of the Société Royale Saint-Hubert

