

PRA UPDATE AND CLEARING DOGS BY PARENTAGE

Written by Jane Folkman -- Quackers Article, Fall, 2005, page 70

Since the introduction of the prcd-PRA marker test in February 2002 we have tested 1446 Tollers with 699 testing Pattern A (normal), 660 testing Pattern B (carrier) and 87 testing Pattern C (affected). We are pleased to report that the prevalence of the disease has dropped from 7% to 6% in just nearly 4 years. This means that breeders are using the test to breed away from prcd-PRA and using the test for the purpose it was intended. Thanks to choosing breeding stock wisely.

Many breeders have inquired about clearing dogs by parentage. I have consulted with Dr. Gus Aguirre and with Jeanette Felix, CEO from Optigen, as well as Eddie Dzuik who is CEO for the OFA about clearing dogs by parentage. This is what they said:

A dog can be cleared by parentage only if both the sire and dam are Optigen tested, and in the case of OFA, all these results must be registered with them. The offspring must also be DNA profiled to prove that they are indeed the rightful offspring of the tested sire and dam. Most of the issues come from mismatings – either intentional or not. Usually most are not, but all the experts have had experiences with multiple sires, mismatings, and in some cases misrepresented breedings.

All the experts recommend clearing by parentage for only one generation. The OFA will only allow one generation to be cleared by parentage.

Our club does not have a formal program to clear by parentage. We do however specify to breeders that have done or plan to do and A X A or A X C breeding, that they need not Optigen test the offspring because the results of these breedings are known and that prcd-PRA will not be produced.

The OFA does provide a clearing by parentage program, but does not currently provide it for the new Optigen gene test used for Tollers, as the original research has not yet been published in the scientific literature. Once published, the OFA can offer clearing by parentage for Tollers, but for only one generation and all the tenants above must be adhered to. Eddie Dzuik and I spoke about all of this at the recent AKC/Canine Health Foundation meeting in October.

So here are the costs figures to consider: One DNA profile costs \$40.00. Both the sire and dam and all of the offspring you would like to clear by parentage would be subject to this fee. The AKC does offer a reduced rate of \$35.00 for prepaid DNA kit orders. The cost of the prcd-PRA test is \$195.00, but you would have to also consider vet fees for drawing the blood and mailing costs.

Usually not all animals produced in a breeding do on to be bred, so it may not be necessary to DNA profile all of the puppies, but perhaps the ones that are considered the “best” in the litter. If you have a lot of good quality puppies and think many will potentially go on to be bred, then it could be costly to DNA profile most or all the litter.