

OFA Approves Separate Breed Code for the Epagneul Breton Breed

At its Fall 2006 Directors meeting, the Board of Directors of the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals, Inc. (commonly known as "OFA") reviewed and considered the petition and accompanying materials submitted by the French Brittany Gun Dog Association of America, Inc. whereby a request was made that a separate OFA data base (Breed Code) be established for the Epagneul Breton breed. OFA is the largest organization of its kind in North America, and performs independent evaluations and provides ratings for the hips of various breeds of dogs in order to aid in reducing and attempting to eliminate canine hip dysplasia.

Eddie Dziuk, Executive Director of OFA recently notified FBGDA that OFA had decided to grant the request by FBGDA to establish a separate and distinct breed code category for the Epagneul Breton. The new breed code for subsequent evaluations will be implemented in short order and any owner contemplating having an Epagneul Breton evaluated by OFA should request coding as an Epagneul Breton under the new system. Mr. Dziuk indicated that it would take some time for OFA to potentially develop and technically implement how OFA may possibly integrate dogs evaluated and coded under the previous Brittany database into the new breed coding system for the Epagneul Breton. One possible option being considered by OFA is to possibly implement exception logic into OFA's present computer programming which would allow dogs previously rated as a Brittany to be shown in an Epagneul Breton's information accessed through the OFA system. This issue is being carefully studied and FBGDA is optimistic that a workable system for inclusion of previous dogs can be implemented.

FBGDA has evidenced a strong commitment to both the OFA rating system and in promoting the important role OFA plays in monitoring and improving the health of the pointing dog breeds.

This organizational commitment by FBGDA, evidenced by the strong FBGDA organizational policy concerning hip rating criteria for breeding was undoubtedly an important factor taken into account by OFA in terms of deciding whether to grant the request for recognized status by OFA for the Epagneul Breton as a separate breed with its own breed code, ratings statistics and related information. FBGDA members who have labored on various aspects related to development of policy addressing the issue of canine hip dysplasia believe that having this new breed code established for the Epagneul Breton, which is separate and distinct from the coding system for the American Brittany breed, will actually be of benefit to breeders, owners and prospective owners of members of both breeds (Epagneul Breton and American Brittany) for the simple reason that it will produce more targeted and accurate information, history and statistics for each breed

While OFA has not yet committed how all aspects of the change will be technically implemented, FBGDA is hopeful and optimistic that Epagneul Breton dogs that have been previously evaluated and rated by OFA under the previous coding system will be able to be included in the newly established breed-coding database when it is implemented by OFA. Specific details surrounding the process of requesting rating under the new Epagneul Breton Breed Code and/or accomplishing the inclusion of Epagneul Bretons previously rated under the old system will be provided to the membership on the FBGDA web site, and in future issues of the L'Epagneul Breton Magazine published by FBGDA as soon as OFA provides information to FBGDA