

NZ DOG WORLD

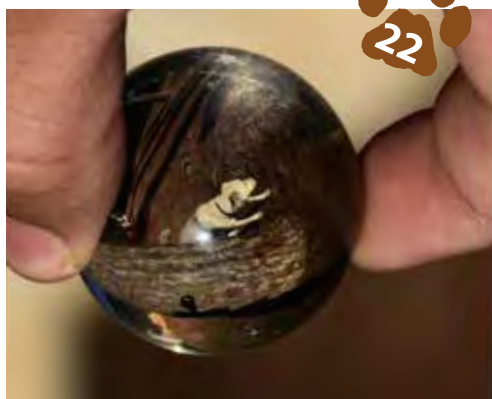
INCORPORATING "THE NEW ZEALAND KENNEL GAZETTE"

April 2025



June
Schedules

April 2025



Front Cover

Our Agility column (p18) this month addresses suitable dogs for the sport. Here we see Sandra Banks' Tonic in action courtesy of Brya Ingram's great shot. 🐾



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A new approach to pet cremation

Death is a fact of life but, as most readers will know, saying goodbye to a loved dog is never easy. Deciding what to do with your dog's remains is often not discussed until you are under the pressure of loss, so I sat down with Dr Nic Macdonald and Michelle Kirk of Gentle Waters Pet Cremation in Christchurch to learn more about the water cremation process.

The two business partners initially met when working at Christchurch's After-Hours Veterinary Clinic and have known each other for many years. Nic, a provider of at-home euthanasia, wanted to offer more care to the people and pets she was serving. Having researched water cremation extensively, she knew she would need a business partner to make it a reality.

"It was a natural partnership," says Nic. "We are so proud of the level of care we give animals here," adds Michelle. During our interview, I hear the words 'love' and 'respect' used repeatedly. The business imported its own Aquamation unit two years ago from Australia and hit the ground running with a growing interest in eco-friendly cremation.

Water cremation uses less energy, preserves a greater part of the animal's skeleton because it is a low impact process and doesn't generate carbon dioxide, providing a lower carbon footprint cremation option.

Because traditional cremation relies on high heat, many people wonder how a water-based process can be considered

cremation. However, regardless of the method used, cremated remains consist only of bone. Ash is not a product of combustion alone.

In water cremation, a 95% water and 5% solution of potassium hydroxide is gently heated (not to boiling point) and circulated around the body. This process breaks down soft tissues and fur by dissolving carbon bonds. The resulting solution is

chemically neutral, free of DNA and pathogens, and safe for land disposal. Steam is released as part of the process, explains Nic. "What is left is a beautiful skeleton."

The bodies of beloved pets are managed with respect from the beginning. The business has invested in special wax-lined body bags known as cocoons. In various sizes, the bag looks like a rectangular zippered envelope. This enables a pet to be curled up in their bedding and transported with care. "We often open a cocoon to see a dog peacefully asleep with soft toys and its special blanket," says Michelle.

Michelle manages the facility on a day-to-day basis. A cremation cycle is usually started around mid-day and allowed to run overnight. Following the cremation process, she rinses the skeletons and dries them under low heat for several hours before the bones are placed in a cremulator for reducing to ash. It is these ashes that are returned to the pet's family. All equipment is cleaned between animals so there is no risk of mixing remains.

The animal's bedding and toys can either be cleaned and returned to the family or some items can be donated to a rescue group according to the family's wishes. Surgical implants can typically be retrieved after cremation, and some families request their return. "We're prepared to do whatever the family wishes," says Michelle. Teeth have been returned intact, for example, along with microchips.

Ashes are placed in cardboard scatter tubes with a paw print motif, decorated with ribbon, alongside a certificate of cremation. Families may choose a wooden urn of various styles at additional cost, with time required for engraving.

The facility also offers a quiet area for families who may wish to say goodbye to their pet for a final time; this applies to pets delivered directly by the family but also those who were euthanised at a vet practice and transported to the premises by the Gentle Waters team. "We wanted a space where people can show their love and honour their pets. It's such a huge thing to lose a family member," says Nic.

In closing our interview, I ask whether there are any animals or services that particularly stand out for Nic and Michelle. There are many. Nic recalls a service where a dog was farewelled with a haka, and another where a service dog arrived at the facility draped in a New Zealand flag.

Gentle Waters also holds a twice-yearly celebration of life service which can be attended by anyone even if their pet was not cremated there (the next service takes place 4 May 2025). The first such service occurred in December 2024 with remembrance ornaments decorated by those who attended. These are now displayed as an added show of respect.

To explore your pet cremation options, a Google search is the best way to find services in your area. 🐾





From the President...

Crufts, 'the greatest dog show in the world', has been and gone for this year — thanks to Vince Hogan for the report starting on page 12 in this issue. A large delegation of New Zealanders was in attendance, including New Zealand's representative in the International Junior Handler competition, Georgia Calman. Georgia showed real professionalism and ability during her time in the ring. Well done, Georgia. You did us proud.

For those of you contemplating attending a major dog show overseas, the World Dog Shows and the European section shows are well worth considering. The next World Dog Show will be held in Helsinki, Finland, on 8-10 August. WDS 2026 will be held in Bologna, Italy, on 4-7 June; in 2027 WDS is being held in Wels, Austria, on 27-30 May; and WDS 2028 will be held in Mexico City in November.

Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.

Visiting dog shows internationally offers us the opportunity to see some great dogs and many breeds which we are unfamiliar with here in New Zealand.

By the time you read this, the governance road shows will have been around the country for the second time and you will have had the opportunity to ask questions and be ready to discuss at club level how you would like your club to vote when the issue is discussed at the Annual Conference of Delegates (28 June 2025). This is potentially the biggest change to our organisation since the formation of the New Zealand Kennel Club in 1886.

With several retirements from Executive Council this year, there will be a number of vacancies to be filled. A lot of sacrifices have to be made by EC members. It is important that the persons elected to Council are capable and dedicated. 🐾

Brian Harris
President

139th Annual Conference of Delegates

New Zealand Kennel Club (Inc)
trading as Dogs New Zealand

Notice is hereby given that the 2025 Annual Conference of Delegates of Dogs New Zealand is to be held as follows:

Date: Saturday 28 June 2025
Venue: Level 4, Members Lounge,
Sky Stadium, 105 Waterloo Quay,
Wellington
Time: 10:00am

Further information and dates:

11 April 2025 Closing date for remits, recommendations and discussion papers and nominations for four Executive Council roles (2 North Island, 2 South Island) and President
14 April 2025 Voting documents sent to eligible clubs for Executive Council votes (if required) and President (if required)
16 May 2025 Voting Closes for Executive Council roles (if required) and President (if required)
27 May 2025 Yearbook and 2024 ACOD minutes posted to clubs (to include remits, recommendations and discussion papers)

Relevant clubs (to include Agility and Dog Training clubs) are encouraged to schedule meetings in a timely fashion to discussion voting for Executive Council roles (if required), President (if required), and the remits, recommendations and discussion papers as lodged and set out in the yearbook (post May 2025). 🐾

Victoria Nelson
Director Secretary



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Ringside Thoughts

Insights from judging in Oz

Dog shows consist of three very important components.

1. The club and officials.
2. The judges.
3. The exhibitors and their dogs.

The enjoyment and success of a show relies on these elements and everyone playing their part. As I begin writing this, I am on the plane returning from a show in Australia which was particularly enjoyable due to these elements all coming together in a harmonious way.

Let's go back a few months. I received an email from Casino & District Kennel Club in northern NSW asking if I was available to judge at their upcoming shows. A bit of back and forth with the secretary, and the appointment was confirmed and the contract signed and agreed. Only thing left to do was to sort the flights and wait for the date to come around. Up to that point, it was like any other appointment, but it was after this that we started to experience dog shows 'The Casino way'. I was pleasantly surprised at the communication from the secretary in the weeks leading up to the show. Now, I know all clubs communicate with their judges, but some do it just a little bit better than others. It was the emails checking we were all sorted; the email checking what our taste in refreshments was and whether we had any dietary requirements; the email with a copy of the schedule that had been advertised (nice touch); then the email with clear details on where we were being picked up from and who was picking us up (a very tall man who, as it turns out, can spot a dog show judge from some distance away as they come through the arrivals gate!).

Enter Andrew into the play and it turns out that he is known for his taste in good food and wine. We had quite a drive from the airport to where we would be staying (across the state line too with a different time zone in each) so getting us watered and fed was needed before we set off. A coffee and sandwich at a cafe was all that was expected but instead we enjoyed a restaurant in a beautiful park-like setting which was well known for its gin distillery. That kind of set the scene for the hospitality and the club didn't disappoint for the rest of the stay.

We arrived at our quaint (think 1970s style) motel to find that Mel (the wonderful secretary) had been there earlier and turned the aircon on for our arrival — the outside temperature was low 30s — plus in each room she had stocked the fridge with refreshments to keep us hydrated, some sweet treats, our preferred beverages and her amazing lemon drizzle cake, which was absolutely delicious.

Now I have to say that country shows like this have a different atmosphere to those in the big cities. I'm not really sure why this is but the reason may be that many of the exhibitors are locals and therefore support their home club or if they have travelled, they have made a conscious effort to attend those shows knowing that the club will put on a great show for them. What I found really refreshing was the camaraderie between exhibitors, the clapping

and cheering for the winners and the assistance for new exhibitors. Add to that the incredibly efficient stewards, who clearly were very experienced and knew their regulations and kept everything running to time which in turn allowed us to concentrate on giving every exhibitor the time they deserved without pressure. The club also rotated the group order over the three days so early starts were shared around. Australian exhibitors have to cope with conditions quite different to ours here and ants that bite the dogs when in the ring are a bit of a hazard. But the club had that under control too with their trusty groundsman and his ant spray dealing to them as required. But the exhibitor consideration didn't stop there, every exhibitor received a goodie bag containing vouchers and some product samples plus there were lucky number draws throughout the weekend. The club raffle was also run a bit differently, consisting of online tickets with the prize a beautiful leather overnight bag, something very useful for the lucky winner.

On the first morning we all ordered a coffee to get us started. Then each morning following, our coffee was ready for us on arrival. Perfect! It was warm, 30° by mid-day, but the stewards made sure we were well hydrated, even to the point of insisting the remaining water was finished before continuing with the next breed. I've never before experienced exhibitors chanting 'drink, drink, drink' as I struggled to finish my bottle of water due to laughing so much and I doubt I ever will again. A good laugh for all those in the assembly area as well.

One of the things I love about Australia is the variety of wildlife and being on the outskirts of the town where we were staying, we did have some well-known Aussie wildlife visitors. The rainbow lorikeets and cockatoos are extraordinary, and I love seeing them in the trees in their natural environment. The little geckos were abundant, but I would have preferred they remained outside, and the large spider I discovered just as I was about to go to bed on the second night wasn't welcome at all. Given that spider identification isn't my forte, a quick Google did nothing to help the situation. The first thing that comes up is a picture of four spiders and a red warning: deadly and dangerous. Yikes! Now this critter could move really fast and wasn't hanging around long enough for me to analyse whether it was one of the red zone beasts or not. As it turns out it was a harmless Huntsman and although apparently small by their standards, it was still the largest spider I had encountered and there was no way that I was going to go back to bed with it in the room. Fortunately, the motel proprietor and her son were well used to relocating them and left me with some spray just in case he had 'friends'! Thankfully that was the extent of the Aussie creepy crawly visitors.

As judges, we are privileged to have these opportunities, and each judging appointment is special, but some, like this one, are that little bit more memorable.

Happy showing. 🐾

Lavina Diamanti

Breeding with Purpose

The art of building a legacy, not just producing puppies

I have thought long and hard about addressing this topic since I have spoken to many new people over the years about it, and I feel it is hard to get them to understand the importance of breeding from a holistic perspective.

- It isn't just about your dog being healthy and passing all health tests — although that is a huge help!
- It isn't just about your dog being a pedigree from generations of champions, since with some breeds it can be very easy to become a champion.
- It isn't just about the prospective sire or dam being top winners in their breed or group or all breeds.
- It isn't just about the dog coming from a pedigree full of dogs from top-producing kennels.

All of the above helps, but it is finding that sweet spot that takes all of the above into consideration, as well as a huge amount of research which can take you years to understand and really get to grips with.

I have written this article to start people thinking about what it has taken for a top breeder to get where they are with their breed. Be warned: it does not happen overnight!

Where to start

If you are new to a breed, I always recommend the following:

1. Research: read as many books as possible on your breed; talk and listen to long-term breeders; and understand the Breed Standard theoretically and visually.
2. Find as many books as possible and magazines with photos with your breed in and take a note of the pedigrees. Draw an outline of those dogs you like and save the photos.
3. Review those pics and pedigrees until you know them off by heart.
4. You should now have an eye for what you feel your breed should look like and what style you like.

Now what?

1. Go back to a breed mentor/s to discuss what you have done and which dogs you like and why. Question them and allow them to question you! Be prepared to justify why you like those dogs.
2. Go back and research the pedigrees. Is there a common denominator or denominators behind all the dogs you like or common kennel? Invariably you should find a common dog behind those you like the style of.
3. Are they known for health testing and are any available in your country? If not, your job is to research breeders with a common interest in the lines you like, and do health testing, and establish a relationship with them.

Above all:

1. Be patient! With yourself, your dogs and breeders. Wanting instant gratification will only set you on the wrong path of settling.
2. Be open! If you want to start right, and do it right, show the breeders this by being open to a partnership or mentorship or helping them show their dogs.
3. Don't take the easy route. It is too easy to get suckered into that cute puppy a breeder has. But that cute puppy may not grow up to be what you want it to be as it does not fit within the criteria you have been researching.
4. There is an old saying that you cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. But you do have to start somewhere. If you do, make sure that is with a well-bred female as close to your ideal as you can, as this gives you a base to start with.
5. But you do need to be ruthless with puppies and only breed with something that is better than her.
6. And be ruthless in selecting the right sire for her, not just because it is the only one available, is a champion and health tested. Ask yourself whether it has what she needs; complements her as well; is a proven sire of the parts you want to improve on her; is sound? At the same time remember, the penis is not a magic wand!

Above all, stay true to the standard and ideal you pitched and worked hard to establish when you first started your research.

A good kennel is based on a foundation of good bitches, not dogs. If you breed a mediocre dog to a mediocre bitch, you will only get mediocre results. You might fluke something — a 'flyer' — but that is likely where it will end and it is highly likely that it won't breed on.

Building to where you want will take time and very carefully researched selection. Once you get the head you want, don't then use a dog with a poor head and so on. Getting what you want is easy, keeping it is the hardest part!

Establishing your line is all about line breeding (working back to a particular dog on both sides of the pedigree) and keeping focus on the dog or dogs you loved in the beginning, and which lines they were from.

Remember, if you want to take breeding seriously, you need to focus on what it takes to be a true guardian of the breed with full comprehension of the breed standard and all the ancestors behind your pedigrees, not just a winner in the show ring.

Hope this helps and gets you thinking, whether you are new to breeding, at a crossroads or just interested. 🐾

Nicole Harrison

Devine & Rosdhu Boston Terriers





Crufts

THE KENNEL CLUB

2025



Agility Competitions

Pure Breeds & Crosses Thriving in Agility Across NZ

by Robyn Fargher



Molly, Papillon, Sarah Collins, photo Lionel Benjamin Photography

Dog Agility is taking off in New Zealand, offering an electrifying blend of athleticism, obedience, and teamwork between dogs and their handlers. These trials test a dog's ability to navigate tricky obstacle courses quickly and accurately. While any dog can take part, some breeds and crosses consistently shine thanks to their intelligence, agility, and enthusiasm. Many handlers start with their family pets before moving on to breeds better suited for Agility as their love for the sport grows.

Top Breeds in Agility

Border Collies are agility superstars worldwide, and it's the same in New Zealand. Their intelligence, speed, and ability to read their handler's cues make them standout competitors. However, they need plenty of mental and physical stimulation to stay happy and out of trouble.

Australian Kelpies are known for their stamina, agility, and independence. Their herding instincts help them focus and respond quickly to commands, making them a favourite in New Zealand's Agility scene.

The Huntaway is a breed unique to New Zealand, traditionally used for herding but gaining traction in Agility. They may not be as fast as some lighter breeds, but their intelligence and strength help them power through courses with ease.

Jack Russell Terriers are small but energetic dogs that are built for Agility. Their compact bodies, endless energy, and quick learning abilities make them fierce competitors. Their high prey drive can be a challenge, but with the right training, they thrive in the sport.

Poodles (Standard and Miniature) are smart, athletic, and eager to please, making them great Agility dogs. Standard Poodles cover ground quickly with their long strides, while Miniature Poodles are experts in precision and manoeuvrability.

Shetland Sheepdogs, small herding dogs often called Shelties, are fast, smart, and agile. They're especially good at weaving through poles and making sharp turns, making them a popular choice in smaller dog categories.

Crossbreeds in Agility

Crossbreeds are thriving in New Zealand's Agility scene, often combining the best traits of two breeds to create exceptional competitors. Some of the most successful Agility crosses include:

- **Border Collie x Kelpie:** A mix of intelligence, endurance, and enthusiasm, creating highly athletic dogs.
- **Heading Dog Mixes:** New Zealand's Heading Dogs, similar to Border Collies, are often crossed with other working breeds for Agility success.
- **Terrier Crosses:** Small but determined, terrier mixes are known for their drive and competitiveness.
- **Sport Crosses:** Purpose-bred sport crosses, such as Spaniel x Border Collies, or Papillon x Border Collies, are gaining recognition for their speed and work ethic.

What Makes a Great Agility Dog?

Regardless of breed or mix, the best Agility dogs have a few key traits:

- **Intelligence:** They learn fast and follow commands precisely.

2024 Top 20 Competition Winner

Raewyn Muir &

OB GR CH JALAIN SEAKA WINA CDX TCQ

The Top Obedience dog award for 2024 goes to Raewyn Muir and her Border Collie, OB GR CH JALAIN SEAKA WINA CDX TCQ. Congratulations to Raewyn and Seaka for this achievement and thanks to sponsor Purina Pro Plan for their generous prize.



I am very honoured to have achieved Top Obedience Dog for 2024 with Seaka, who comes from a long line of Jalain Champions.

Seaka is my ninth Obedience Champion and my fifth Obedience Grand Champion.

Seaka was born on 15 December 2016 from OB GR CH Jalain Caramel Flyer CDX TCQ and a little help from AGGRCH & JGRCH Seaquest Black Magic ADXG JDXG. She achieved her Gr Ch title on 14 March 2021.

We have to date gained 80 challenge certificates, two of which have been on full points, with 21 first placings in 2024.

From the time I started training her, Seaka displayed honesty and enthusiasm and continued this right through the Obedience Tests although we have had our whoopsies along the way like everyone else.

Seaka is a sensitive little girl and likes to get things right! 🐾

Raewyn Muir



Looking Into Our Crystal Ball

Preparing for our breeding future...

It feels like there are seismic changes abroad affecting political alignments and societal attitudes. Dogs New Zealand's Canine Health & Welfare Committee has dusted off its crystal ball and peered into our murky future as breeders and conformation exhibitors. The time is now to prepare for the future. Relying on past practices and habit, and an unwillingness to change, will leave a poor legacy and outlook for the future of pedigree dogs. Let's take a look at what needs to change and what the future will hold.

Without a doubt the biggest issue facing pedigree dog breeders today is genetic health and close breeding related disorders.

Why is this a Major Problem?

1. Inherited Health Conditions

Many pedigree dogs suffer from breed-specific hereditary diseases due to limited genetic diversity. Conditions such as hip dysplasia (in German Shepherds, Labradors), brachycephalic airway syndrome (in Bulldogs, Pugs, French bulldogs), and progressive retinal atrophy (in many breeds) are common and have genetic predispositions to varying extents.

These conditions not only reduce a dog's quality of life but also increase veterinary costs for owners, impacting breed reputation and desirability.

2. Inbreeding and Loss of Genetic Diversity

Many breeds have small gene pools, leading to higher rates of inbreeding. This increases the likelihood of recessive genetic disorders becoming prevalent and reduces overall breed vitality.

Co-efficient of Inbreeding (COI) levels in some breeds are dangerously high, leading to weaker immune systems, lower fertility, and shorter lifespans. Some breeds, such as Dobermanns, commonly have COIs between 20-60%, with many falling around

25% or 50%. Other breeds, like Mastiffs, Rottweilers, Labradors, and Golden Retrievers, also have high COI levels and are more prone to health problems

3. Ethical and Welfare Concerns

Increasing scrutiny from animal welfare organisations and the public puts pressure on breeders to prioritise health over appearance. Extreme breed standards (such as overly flat faces or exaggerated body structures) are being challenged for their negative impact on canine health.

Countries such as the Netherlands and Norway have even banned the breeding of certain extreme brachycephalic breeds under animal welfare laws.

4. Legislation and Regulation

Stricter breeding regulations are emerging worldwide, requiring breeders to conduct health testing and meet higher welfare standards.

In some countries, pedigree breeders face competition from commercial breeding operations that prioritise profit over health, leading to poorly-bred dogs and buyer distrust.

5. Public Perception and the Rise of Crossbreeds

With increasing awareness of health issues in purebred dogs, many pet owners are turning to crossbreeds (like Cavapoos, Labradoodles) in misconceived hope of avoiding hereditary problems.

This shift threatens the future of some pedigree breeds if their health issues are not addressed.

How Can Breeders Address These Challenges?

- Genetic Testing & Responsible Breeding: Using DNA tests, COI calculations, and health screening programmes to reduce



Being an advocate

For your dog's safety & well-being



'Where are our Manners?' was the title of my first blog post on my Pet Health Awareness website back in 2019, when I started a passion for animal health awareness and education. Little did I know the drive to educate would morph into 100+ YouTube videos, a kids' animal care course, workshops on pet health and hunting dog first aid, and more. Real cases and experiences were so important to document, for me, but it was also useful to share these stories with others experiencing the same conditions.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, public manners have become less considerate as we find ourselves in this changing world. I've noticed this in our vet clinic, with less notice for bookings and higher expectations to be seen the same day, which adds pressure when only one of me! Since health and safety was introduced, no-one takes responsibility for themselves as much, and we are all too quick to blame others. I have also seen a rise in dog attacks and constantly hear of frightening dog altercations. It takes just one careless person to ruin it for others and spoil their day. No wonder there is more anxiety and anger!

Not above the law

When I was showing Holly, there was more control and manners at dog shows and Agility events compared to being out in public, when loose dogs would be frightening. Everyone is entitled to walk a dog in public but please be mindful of others. According to the Dog Control Act 1996 (see www.legislation.govt.nz), owners are obliged to ensure that **a dog does not injure, endanger, intimidate, or otherwise cause distress to any person, animal or property.** (Owners are also

obliged to **protect dogs from, and seek rapid diagnosis of, injury and disease, and overall must alleviate pain and distress.**)

Councils now providing beautiful off-leash dog parks is never an excuse to ignore the laws. Dogs should still be under control: if they don't have a solid recall, they should not be off lead. If they do get away from you and run up to others, then acknowledge it and apologise.

Unspoken rule

Some have realised there is an unspoken rule in dog ownership, which is if **you see a dog on lead, put yours on a lead.** We seem to be so focussed on ourselves that we don't think of others as much. It might actually be a dog sitter walking an unfamiliar dog. Maybe the dog or human has just recovered from surgery and wants a no-fuss, easy walk to get their confidence back. Maybe the person or dog is getting older and is not so quick on their feet or strong. A person may be trying to walk two+ dogs to save time. I've even talked to a jogger that frequently gets bitten while running on tracks: she becomes a moving target for unleashed dogs.

There is a lot going on that we may not realise and can't express. A South End dog trainer on Facebook is an advocate for standing up and protecting your dog, even if it means shouting at the other person to control their dog and keep it away.

Everyone has the right to walk dog in peace. However, other people may not have control of their dog and think yelling out "It's okay they are friendly" is acceptable or an excuse for not training. "My dog isn't!" was a reply one of my clients yelled back.

Not every dog wants to meet others, and this becomes a problem at free-for-all unleashed dog parks. The rules still mean 'under control'! And how can they get confidence and become settled if they are not taken out to the public park for exercise and exposure? Their owners then become nervous, which adds to the stress through the lead.

In Picton, people are getting accustomed to the traffic light coloured



Pet Health
Awareness



Understanding Inherited Diseases in Dogs

Dr Becky Murphy BVSc BSc
TCI GlenBred www.tcivets.com

Breeding healthy dogs means understanding how genetics affect inherited diseases. Some conditions are passed from parents to puppies through their genes. Breeders can help reduce these diseases by making informed choices.

How Inherited Diseases Work

Dogs inherit two copies of each gene — one from each parent. Some diseases are caused by a single gene mutation, while others involve multiple genes and environmental factors.

Simple autosomal recessive diseases occur when a dog inherits two mutated copies — one from each parent. Carriers, who have only one mutation copy, don't show symptoms but can pass the gene to their puppies. Autosomal dominant diseases only need one mutated copy for a dog to be affected. Complex diseases involve multiple genes and environmental influences, making them harder to predict.

Recent research by Adant et al. (2025) highlights the importance of genetic counselling in veterinary medicine, and the need to create an evidence-based definition of genetic counselling in dogs and cats. Genetic counselling helps breeders understand the risks associated with inherited diseases and make informed breeding decisions. This process involves explaining how genetic diseases are passed down and how different breeding strategies can reduce risks while maintaining genetic diversity.

Why Genetic Testing Matters

Genetic testing helps breeders make better choices by identifying dogs that carry disease-causing genes. This helps prevent a mating that could produce affected puppies.

DNA tests can confirm if a dog is clear, a carrier, or affected for simple autosomal recessive or dominant disease. Some diseases don't have a single genetic test, so breeders should also use health exams like hip and elbow scoring and eye exams. Some diseases don't have simple inheritance and so knowledge is required on how the mutation relates to the disease.

Genetic counselling, as described in the study by Adant et al. (2025), also plays a key role in interpreting test results and advising breeders on how to balance genetic health with maintaining a diverse gene pool. Veterinary professionals trained in genetics can help breeders

use test results effectively rather than making overly restrictive breeding decisions that may harm long-term genetic diversity. Unfortunately, veterinarians trained in genetics are lacking in New Zealand, with the genetics component of the BVSc being minimal.

Using Genetic Knowledge in Breeding

Responsible breeding isn't just about avoiding diseases — it's also about keeping a healthy gene pool. Removing too many dogs from breeding due to genetics can shrink the gene pool, increasing the risk of other inherited problems.

Breeders should test their dogs when reliable DNA tests are available, avoid mating two carriers of simple recessive diseases, and consider genetic diversity when making breeding decisions. Pedigree analysis and expert advice can also help with planning.

The findings from Adant et al. (2025) emphasise that genetic counselling should be an ongoing process, incorporating both genetic test results and broader health considerations. Since 73% of cases in the study involved referrals to other veterinary specialists, it's clear that managing genetic health is a team effort involving veterinarians, geneticists, and breeders.

The Role of Breeders in Canine Health

Breeders play a key role in reducing inherited diseases while keeping bloodlines strong. By using genetic testing and responsible selection, they can help create healthier generations of dogs.

With the right knowledge and tools, breeders can make informed decisions that benefit their dogs and the breed as a whole. Genetic counselling, as outlined by Adant et al. (2025), supports breeders in making these decisions by providing evidence-based guidance on genetic health and disease prevention.

Genetic Counselling in Practice

The study by Adant et al. (2025) defines genetic counselling as "the process of helping animal owners and breeders understand — and adapt to — the medical, psychological, and familial implications



Dogs NZ Insurance

by pd.co.nz



PD Insurance Spotlight:

CHOCOLATE AND GRASS SEED CLAIMS

Chocolate Easter eggs are very likely on the menu for many of us this April. But as luck would have it, our dogs tend to be good at finding hidden food items, often before we do. With PD claims data highlighting chocolate ingestion as a common and potentially serious health risk for dogs, keeping them safely away before, during and after the egg hunt is complete and any stray eggs are packed away is well worth the effort.

The risks of chocolate

As you may already know, chocolate contains theobromine and caffeine, both of which are stimulants—neither of which our dogs need. In addition to having naturally occurring energy levels that tend to far surpass our own, dogs also can't metabolise these ingredients.

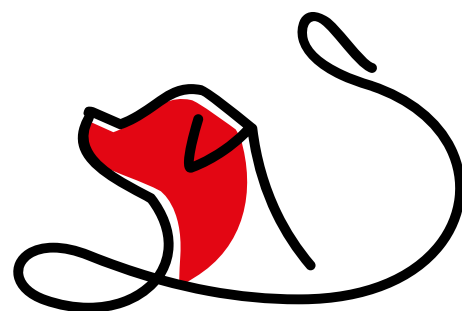
Sadly, this means chocolate is highly toxic to dogs and depending on the levels consumed, it can sometimes be lethal.

The level of danger will depend, of course, on how dark the chocolate is, as well as on the size of the dog. Dark chocolate poses a far greater risk than milk or white chocolate due to its high cocoa content. Symptoms of chocolate poisoning can include vomiting, diarrhoea, tremors, and in severe cases, seizure or death.

Ingestion ranks as the #1 claim type for dogs

PD's claims data shows that ingestion is the most common type of claim for dogs (chocolate is the third most ingested substance, after foreign body and poison ingestion). Here's a roundup of the 10 most common claim types for dogs from 2024:

TAKE THE LEAD



Adopt Take the Lead for your club and sport

Pioneered by Agility Committee the Take the Lead programme is now available to be adopted by ALL Dogs NZ Clubs including those who participate in breed/conformation and dog training sports.

Take the Lead is a campaign to drive a conscious change of behaviour in dog sports by creating a safe and supportive culture for both dogs and their owners.

Encourage your club to adopt the six core values that will ensure the future of Dog Sport is positive and kind.

Find out more about #taketheleaddogs.nz

Visit the website www.taketheleaddogs.nz.org.nz

How can I access Take the Lead material for my club?

The Dogs NZ Tool Kit site has all six core value posters available for download and use as well as a summary core values poster.

Download Take the Lead material for your club by using your club login and password to access the club page on the Dogs NZ website.

Step 1: Use your club login and password to access the club page and click on the Club Show Tool Kit in the sidebar.

Step 2: Click on the POS Maker link to access the Dogs NZ Tool Kit site.

Step 3: Download the posters from the Take the Lead page found on the 4th tab.






Exclusive to **Dogs NZ Breeders** – protect your puppies
and earn rewards!

GIVE YOUR PUPPIES THE BEST START WITH




UP TO 4 MONTHS FREE COVER!

Join our Breeder Programme

Here's how it works:

-  **4 WEEKS FREE Starter Cover*** – Activate \$1,000 in accident & illness protection for every puppy you send home.
-  **Up to an additional 3 MONTHS FREE*** for your customers on a paid PD Insurance plan (on top of 4 weeks FREE = 4 months) for pets between 6 weeks and 1 year.
-  **Cash Rewards for You** – Earn a breeder referral bonus when your customers continue with Dogs NZ Insurance.

Why join?

-  Show your commitment to responsible breeding by ensuring every puppy goes home with starter cover.
-  Give new owners peace of mind knowing their puppy is protected from day one.
-  Earn rewards for every successful referral—because responsible breeding should be rewarding!

Let's get started!

Hi, I'm Jacqui, your dedicated support for the Dogs NZ Breeder Programme and these are my dogs, my Labrador Gin and my German Shorthaired Pointer, Cinder. ”

Scan the QR code now to sign up!

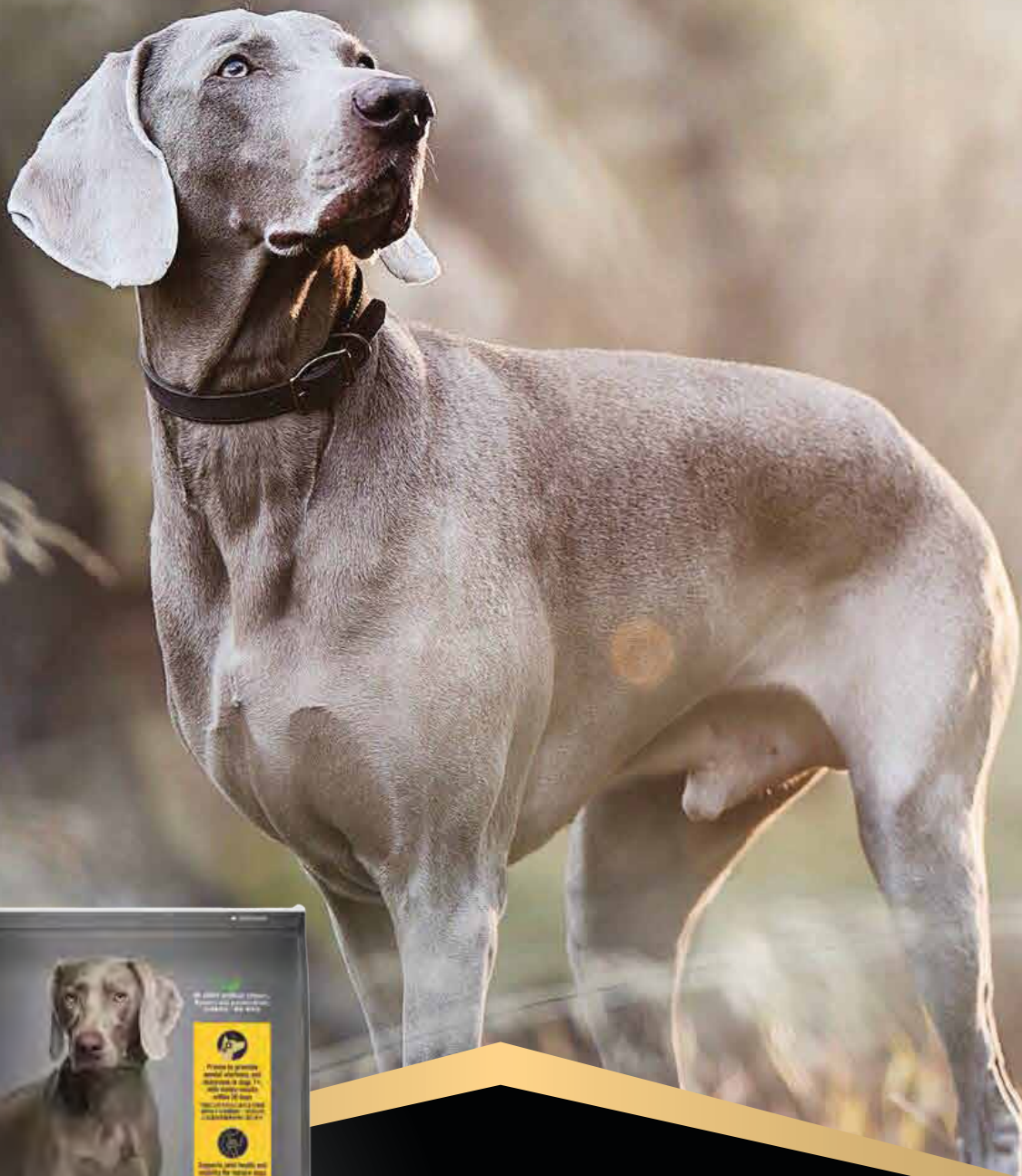
Or call me, **Jacqui Whelan**, on
027 286 8355 to get started.
Learn more at:
www.dogsnzinsurance.co.nz



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