



English Springer Spaniel Field Trial Association, Inc.

MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB / PARENT CLUB OF THE BREED

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Randy Capsel
586 – 190th Street
Ogden, IA 50212

Field Vice President

Beverly Matthews
495 Mulberry Street
Windsor Locks, CT 06096

Show Vice President

Kathryn Hawkins
1413 E. Gordonville
Midland, MI 48640

Treasurer

Kathy Nestor
9800 Seven Mile Road
Northville, MI 48167

Corresponding Secretary

Barb Granatir
364 Old Wilmington Road
Coatesville, PA 19320-1167

Membership Secretary

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1160 Nash Ave
Kanawha, IA 50447

AKC Delegate

Susanne Burgess
8018 N. 178th Avenue
Waddell, AZ 85355

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ESSFTA HEALTH STATEMENT

The English Springer Spaniel Field Trial Association, Inc. (ESSFTA) recommends the selection of a breeder who conducts testing for the clinical and genetic diseases identified in this breed. While English Springer Spaniels are generally healthy and long lived, health issues may occur. The ESSFTA strongly recommends that breeders test all dogs considered for breeding, and also recommends certain tests for puppies. The recommended clinical and genetic tests are utilized to maintain and preserve the breed's health and positive characteristics.

While a genetic test may be positive for a disease trait, the trait may not express itself clinically. Therefore, genetic tests should be considered indicators of risk for a disease. Breeders should, at minimum, conduct screening tests for the following inherited conditions: progressive retinal atrophy (PRA), hip dysplasia, elbow dysplasia, and phosphofructokinase (PFK) disorder.

PRA: Parents of puppies should be genetically tested for Cord1 PRA.

EYE HEALTH: At minimum, a Diplomat of the American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists (DACVO) should conduct an ophthalmology examination within twelve months prior to breeding, with results recorded and reported. It is further recommended that both parents of puppies be examined annually by a DACVO. All puppies should be examined by a DACVO for the presence or absence of eye problems.

HIPS AND ELBOWS: Hips and elbows should be x-rayed by a veterinarian and sent to the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) for interpretation by, and a report from, OFA at 24 months of age or older. Alternatively, PennHIP may be used for hip examinations with the same minimum 24-month age requirement.

PFK DISORDER: Parents of puppies should be genetically tested for PFK disorder.

NOTE: When both parents test normal on a genetic test, there should be no need to test first generation offspring for that specific condition unless OFA registration is desired. Because of the possibility of new mutations, or as yet undiscovered genetic disorders, this exemption only applies to first generation offspring.

Results of screening tests for hip dysplasia, elbow dysplasia, PFK, PRA, and DACVO eye examinations are to be recorded in the online OFA database.

Additional specific information related to health testing, disease risk, and other health conditions found in the breed can be found at the parent club website at www.essfta.org and on the web site of the English Springer Foundation, www.englishspringerfoundation.org. The English Springer Foundation has also identified epilepsy, cancer, bloat, and autoimmune disorders as health concerns reported by owners and breeders. This health statement has been approved by the ESSFTA Board of Governors and reviewed by the officers of the English Springer Foundation.

Randy Capsel
President, ESSFTA
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