



THE WORKING KELPIE COUNCIL OF AUST INC.

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Dog Breeding Science' CA TESTS

Members recently drew our attention to an announcement on Face book that an Australian Company is now offering Kelpie DNA testing for Cerebella Abiotrophy 'CA' and query why there was no mention made in the November News Bulletin. That there was no mention in the Bulletin was because we were not aware or informed of a DNA testing service being offered.

We have no idea why the Working Kelpie Council was not given prior advice of the service now being offered especially when you take into account the extent of the active financial and 'in kind' research support which has been given since 'CA' was first recorded by J B Thomas, Murdoch University WA and Don Robertson Muresk Agricultural College, WA and published in the Australian Veterinary Journal , Vol.66 # 9 September 1989. Without WKC support it is highly unlikely that research would have continued to the stage where tests could be offered.

Concerns are raised about the value of the testing and we asked Prof Claire Wade to help and she kindly explained:

'There seem to be at least three different disorders that result in the disorder that people label as CA. They all behave as recessives, but the early onset one seems to have a big range of severity so that some 'affected' or 'at-risk' animals by genotype might appear to be nearly entirely normal, while others have the symptoms that most people associate with CA. The late onset form has higher penetrance, meaning that most dogs that will test as 'affected' or 'at-risk' will demonstrate disorder symptoms. The European version also appears to have reduced penetrance as one member of that family was reported to be normal but had an 'affected' or 'at-risk' genotype.

When I say either 'affected' or 'at-risk', I mean that the animal has two copies of the risk variant. Animals that have only one copy are normal. There may yet be another disorder that shows these symptoms too, as we observed one family that had a different gene'.

'Dog Breeding Science' is a private company that is owned by a former PhD student from our faculty - Dr Kao Castle '

'If the mapping paper(s) get published then the tests will become more widely available. We understand that because these disorders are not simple, that people will likely think that the tests do not work, but the statistical support for them is very very strong.'