

January 22, 2009

Geoff Browne, Sponsorship Manager  
Pedigree  
6885 Elm St.  
McLean, VA 22101

Dear Mr. Browne:

Dogs in our nation are facing a crisis, and you are in a unique position to help. The American Kennel Club (AKC) actively promotes dangerous and unhealthy breeding standards in dogs shown at the annual Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, of which Pedigree is a sponsor.

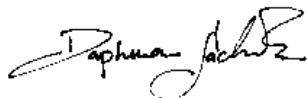
Since dog breeders routinely use incestuous inbreeding and genetic manipulation to achieve a certain “desired” trait—like a slanted back or a concertina face—it is not surprising that as many as one in four purebred dogs is plagued with a serious genetic problem. Beagles like Uno, last year’s winner of the AKC’s “Best in Show” category, have a significantly higher risk of hypothyroidism, demodectic mange (a condition that occurs when a dog’s immune system cannot combat the proliferation of mites living in the dog’s hair follicles), and epilepsy. Poodles, like contestants Vikki and Remmy, who were just edged out by Uno in the competition, are prone to cataracts, progressive retinal atrophy, allergies, and ear infections. Labrador retrievers—America’s most popular dog—are prone to bone disease, hemophilia, and retinal degeneration, and almost 60 percent of golden retrievers end up with dysplasia that may cripple them. The list is long, and all the problems stem from deliberate genetic manipulation.

The British Kennel Club (BKC) has now revised breed standards for over 70 breeds in light of the fact that English bulldogs, for example, have been bred to have an exaggerated jowly face, stubby legs, and powerful shoulders, which makes it hard for them to breathe and walk. The new BKC standards allow dogs to breathe, walk, and see freely, which previous breeding standards prevented. Unfortunately, the AKC has refused to take even the smallest step to allow American dogs these same basic freedoms. The BKC even has additional regulations requiring dog-show judges to choose the healthiest dogs as winners.

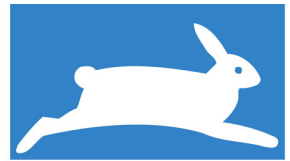
**On behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals and our more than 2 million members and supporters, we ask that you pull your company’s sponsorship of this event until the AKC revises its breeding standards so that it is, at the very least, in line with the BKC’s standards, which would reduce the likelihood that purebred dogs will needlessly suffer from diseases and disorders. You will then be following in the footsteps of Pedigree UK, which ended its sponsorship of the Crufts dog show last year.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Daphna Nachminovitch, Vice President  
Cruelty Investigations Department



**PETA**

**PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL  
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