

DATE: MAY 17, 2011
TO: INTERNATIONAL KENNEL CLUBS, IR&WS BREED CLUBS,
BREEDERS AND OWNERS OF IRISH RED AND WHITE
SETTERS
FROM: THE IRISH RED AND WHITE SETTER CLUB OF CANADA
RE: INTERNATIONAL OUTCROSS PROGRAMME FOR IR&WS

Having discovered the intent of the Irish Red And White Setter Club (Ireland) to proceed with an outcross programme for the Irish Red and White Setter (see copy, attached), we protest most strongly the plan that has been proposed without regard for the significant international consequences of such an action. Although outcross programmes in dog breeds may have rarely occurred with the goal to preserve breeds with severely low numbers worldwide, or with such severe genetic problems that genepools have nowhere else to go, such is certainly not the case with the IR&WS. Numbers and variety of genepool within the breed are secure and there are no serious genetic problems known at this time, as monitored by breed clubs worldwide.

We find the current proposal for the Irish Red and White Setter to be short sighted and seriously flawed.

Did this programme pass the test of necessity? Nowhere in the outline provided by the Outcross Committee is there any evidence that this program is necessary—beyond any other means—to preserve the integrity of the Irish Red and White Setter. Any outcross plan is a drastic measure to be applied only as a last resort. If there are concerns about genetic variability within Ireland itself, dialogue with other countries' breed clubs would allow breed clubs and individuals to provide legitimate genepool. Where are the details that must be a foundation for the proposed action? Who was consulted?

The authors of this programme have a responsibility to the breed to demonstrate a respect for the concerns of breed clubs and kennel clubs, of breeders and owners who will be affected by the decisions of the Outcross Committee. Consultation and discussion with breed clubs and kennel clubs should have been a crucial first step in the process. Breed Clubs in Canada, Great Britain, and the USA did not receive invitation to discuss the merits or deficiencies of the proposal. Were other countries denied the courtesy of preliminary consultation on such an important matter?

The rationale for the program is unconvincing and the outline of the “rules” presented by the committee is deeply flawed. A weak attempt to “justify” the programme—retroactively-- is the committee's suggestion that a “canine geneticist” be appointed to report on “the genetic diversity of the breed”. According to the Committee, this geneticist “should produce” a yearly report to indicate “how the breed is progressing”. The Committee also suggests “that the Geneticist should have an understanding of the culture of breeding pedigree dogs” (a reasonable requirement, one might think, for a “canine geneticist”). The broad statements as written contain many equivocations: “should

produce”; ‘should have’. Instead of specific detail of the application of the programme, we are given vague suggestions of what may (or may not) happen.

A canine geneticist, showing impartial due diligence, might well ask FIRST where there might be legitimate existing genepool that would address the problem of health or genetic variability, or any other perceived problem with the IR&WS's in Ireland. It would be hard to imagine a geneticist NOT reporting that any outcross program had widened a genepool; however, such a conclusion would be misleading. It would seem that the direction of the outcross program (and the development of the breed itself) would rest with a geneticist's assessment, effectively removing the responsibility from conscientious breeders and other concerned lovers of the Irish Red and White Setter around the world. Indeed, what tools would such a geneticist to assess the worldwide genepool? We suggest this would be an impossible task.

The suggestion of “yearly reports” raises another significant issue: the power of the Outcross Committee. At what point does the Committee stop the program; at what point does necessity become expediency (it's easier to continue the programme with no end in sight)? The power and responsibility of the Committee extends to the selection of approved dogs to be used. Who will do the choosing? On what basis will the members of this committee decide? What will be the criteria for the selection of dogs to be used? There have been no answers to these, and other, pressing questions.

There are no guidelines suggesting how such an F1 generation dog should be chosen to be included as part of the new genepool beyond its owner's satisfaction of the dog in the field. Will otherwise good and healthy specimens of the breed be rejected by an owner (within the two-year “trial period” in the field) and cast off as of no worth? How does this help in the expansion of a viable and vigorous genepool?

Dogs in the F1 generation that are deemed to be “mis-marked red” are designated Irish Red and White Setters, whose pedigrees would read as IR&WS, regardless of whether the dog is Red And White, or Red. As it is stated, any dog in the program that is mated with an Irish Red setter (committee approved), becomes an Irish Red and White Setter even if its parent, the Irish Setter, does not hold particolour as a recessive. The F1 generation is a mixed-breed and should not be considered "IR&WS" in any way. Nor should its progeny. Registering the offspring as IR&WS would give an F1 generation cross-bred the same rights as a purebred IR&WS, should it be exported to another country. The Irish (Red) Setter and the Irish Red and White Setter are two separate breeds, and have differing standards.

According to the proposal, the only qualification an Irish Setter would require to be included in an outcross programme is a hip X-ray and a DNA CLAD test. There are many problems found in Irish Setters, some of which might be tested through phenotype, but many more which impact their breed genotypically. Many of these problems do not have

a known mode of inheritance. There is no doubt that these outcrosses would bring in genetic detritus, and much of that would not be known for generations to come. The lack of understanding that Irish Setters come with a large array of genetic problems, must be addressed. One dog's hip evaluation and a DNA test for CLAD is woefully insufficient. How is this a positive step forward?

Breeders and owners who are interested in maintaining the integrity of their breeding programs should be very concerned with the outcross proposal and its international implications. Those who decide to import from FCI countries, and Ireland in particular, would expect to be buying an IR&WS, not a mixed Irish Setter/IR&WS. Our CKC requires a three-generation pedigree containing only one breed. Coming from a culture of purebred meaning only one breed since a breed was established as a breed, not many people would understand that they would need to ensure that was the case with the IR&WS. An F1 generation cross-breed, including an "Irish Red And White Setter (Mis-marked red) having full Irish Kennel Club IR&WS registration on a three-generation pedigree, is not acceptable to our IR&WSCC.

There have already been three outcrosses since the IR&WS became a continued breed. These have already been integrated into the IR&WS genepool through the Irish Kennel Club and the FCI. People have imported dogs to North America that they have not known at the time contained Irish Setters past the third generation. Even worse, someone has recently imported a dog to the USA that they had not known contained an Irish Setter on the third generation within the pedigree. The problem will only get worse when more and more Irish Setters are used in an open-ended programme such as this, which makes it easy for the Irish breeders to cross-breed internationally, through the auspices of the Irish Kennel Club and the FCI. The lack of communication from the IR&WSC in Ireland, and the Irish Kennel Club to the breed clubs internationally, suggests they have not understood the international implications their outcrosses have on our breed clubs, and the continued existence of IR&WS as a purebred.

We urge the IKC to recommend further review and thoughtful consideration of the input provided by all interested parties after vague suggestions or options are replaced by specific details and sound judgement.

We urge the Canadian Kennel Club to pursue this issue and the concerns it generates. We ask that the CKC, in consultation with the IR&WSCC, ensure that the results of this ill-advised outcross programme not be eligible for registration with our CKC. We ask the CKC to take any necessary steps not to recognize any results of the outcross programme, should they be imported and registered through any country worldwide.

We, the members of the IR&WSC Of Canada find the Irish Outcross Programme unacceptable.

Sincerely,

INTERNATIONAL OUTCROSS PROGRAMME FOR IRISH RED SETTERS & IRISH RED & WHITE SETTERS

It is envisaged that any Irish Red Setter or Irish Red & White Setter from an FCI Country and a National Kennel Club which the IKC approves of could be used in this programme. The reason the club suggests that this programme be confined to FCI countries or such National Kennel Club is that agreement in regards to an Outcross Programme would have to be a binding document. As this is an International Outcross Programme the Irish Red & White Setter Club recommends that this would be run with the co-operation of the Irish Red Setter Club and the National Kennel Club of that Country, the Irish Kennel Club and the Irish Red & White Setter Club.

A formal agreement between the two participating Kennel Clubs.

Rules & Regulations for an International Outcross Programme.

- All Irish Red Setters and Irish Red & White Setters, which are proposed to be included in this Outcross Programme would have to be approved by the Outcross Committee.
- All Irish Red Setters included in this programme would have to have the appropriate health certificates in regards to Canine Leucocyte Adhesion Deficiency, CLAD and a Hip Dysplasia certificate.
- All Irish Red & White Setters would require the same certificates plus a certificate in regards to being von Willebrands free.
- In regards to testing Irish Red & White Setters for von Willebrands disease, CLAD & Hip Dysplasia the Irish Kennel Club will recommend a Veterinary Surgeon approved by them to carry out this procedure.
- The details of all the dogs' pedigrees, health certificates and all other relevant documents must be presented to the committee four months prior to any mating. Any deviation on this matter must have the approval of the committee.

- The Irish Red & White Setter Club is aware that some ‘Irish Red Setters FDSB’ were imported from America and were mated with Irish Red Setters in Europe . This American Red Setter breeding is not recognised by the American Kennel Club as Irish Red Setters or by the Irish Kennel Club and the Irish Red Setter Club is totally opposed to having dogs with such breeding being introduced to the Irish Red Setter gene pool. We are aware that these dogs were crossed with English Setters in the past. Under no circumstances can any dog with such pedigrees be used in any part of the Outcross Programme.
- The Irish Red & White Setter Club proposes that all dogs participating in the Outcross Programme would be micro-chipped for identification. It is also proposed that any resulting pups may be DNA tested at the request of the Outcross Committee. This would have to be part of any signed agreement entered into by all participants in the Outcross Programme.

Registration of Resulting Pups from Outcross.

We would propose that any Irish Red & White Setter bitch from Ireland , which is mated to an Irish Red Setter outside Ireland or inseminated with imported semen, could have the litter here in Ireland and the resulting pups would be registered by the Irish Kennel Club as Irish Red & White Setters. This would be of great help to the breed as we would not have to wait at least ten months to have the pups rabies vaccinated etc before they could be imported here to Ireland to have them registered under the reciprocal registration agreement between FCI countries. If there are no pups with red and white markings the club would propose that some of the pups could be registered as ‘Irish Red & White Setter - mismarked red’. These dogs will be micro-chipped and recorded by the Irish Kennel Club. The breeder has up to two years to assess the dog for breed type/working ability and within that time may decide to have the dog registered as an Irish Red & White Setter-mismarked red. This would only be allowed in the first generation of the outcross to ensure that the new bloodline can be included in the Irish Red & White Setter gene pool. These dogs may not be exhibited at shows but will be allowed to enter a Confined Breed Stake field trial.

- The Irish Red & White Club endorses the proposal that a Canine Geneticist be appointed so they can report on the genetic diversity of the breed. They should produce a yearly report on how the breed is progressing in regards to this matter. They could also inform the committee when they feel there is no further need for an outcross programme based on scientific fact. We also feel that the Geneticist

should have an understanding of the culture of breeding pedigree dogs.

I the under signed agree to bound by the above rules governing this programme.

Signed

Address