

Swiss Run Greater Swiss Mountain Dogs

Breeding View Points

Breeding dogs is a huge responsibility and a lot of work. It isn't easy, and it isn't for everyone. There are always risks involved. Bitches can die, puppies may not be viable, and certainly the whole thing can be a financially draining experience. Not every puppy produced turns out exactly how we planned, and no breeder can guarantee that bad things won't happen to any puppies. Breeding can be a trial and error process. You never really know until you try it whether a breeding decision was a good idea or a bad experiment.

That being said, why do we do it? Why face the risk, the heartache and the ever tight finances?

We have a true love for the breed and the competition. We have the knowledge, the desire, the ability to breed dogs the right way, and the responsibility to share that knowledge with others. Breeding the best dogs you can to produce the best puppies possible is the objective.

Here at Swiss Run Swissys our top goal is to maintain healthy dogs with sound minds and temperaments. They are structurally sound, look like the breed they are, and follow the breed standard for conformation. A good breeder studies pedigrees and follows health research of their breed to make the best decisions possible, weighs the potential good vs. bad and hopes for a little bit of luck in between. Breeding quality puppies means you put thought into your breeding pairs and you focus on breeding the highest quality dogs possible.

The first thing we look for is temperament of our breeding dogs. Dogs at Swiss Run Swissys receive a tremendous amount of attention, training, and care. All breeding decisions in reference to temperament are done with an open state of mind. Temperment is key to the GSMD and if the dog doesn't have a quality temperament that would lead it to be a wonderful pet, if it is difficult to train, or cannot be trusted around children, people, and other pets then that dog will be removed from the breeding program. Though some dogs are bred for specific purposes every show dog, working dog and family companion should have a sound temperament. Temperament is genetic and most definitely is inherited. While behavior and manners can (and must) be trained, a dog's underlying temperament is determined by its parents 50% from both. Dogs don't inherit good manners, but they certainly do inherit the sound mind that allows you to train them.

Our second focus is structure, type, and conformation. A breed should look like it is supposed to look that is why we have breed standards. While no dog is perfect and every dog has some conformational faults, we focus to limit those faults and to constantly improve from one generation to the next.

Once we have a dog that has a good mind and is structurally correct they are ready for their health clearances. Most health clearances are done around 2 years of age. This gives us plenty of time to evaluate our breeding stock. Our breeding stock is evaluated for health through the most excepted organizations, including OFA (Orthopedic Foundation for animals), CERF (Canine Eye Registration Foundation), and Penn Hip. While there is never any guarantee when it comes to breeding, starting with healthiest parents possible is the first step. Health is an important consideration, but it needs to be combined with all aspects of the breeding pair.

What to look for in a breeder and their facility. When choosing a breeder you should be able to go to their facility and meet their dogs. Whether the dogs live in the home or in a kennel facility, the dog areas must be clean and in good repair. Dogs should have plenty of room to run and play and should not spend the majority of their time in crates. Dogs that spend the majority of their time crated in the house are not better off than dogs that have kennel runs in a separate building.

Quality breeding programs can be recognized by...

- Usually they maintain more than just one or two dogs.
- Clean facilities in good repair with special areas for whelping that allow the bitch privacy.
- Up to date health, training, and show records on each dog.
- Routine medical exams and health care provided on a regular basis.
- Health clearance testing on all breeding stock and voluntarily offer to show you all results and AKC DNA certification.
- Purebred, registered litters only, no mixed or “hybrid” litters.
- Breeding stock is shown at AKC dog shows with the majority of breeding stock achieving the status of AKC Champion (the exception to this would be dogs registered through other reputable registries (AKC does not register every breed), and dogs bred for service or working purposes, in which programs will have set standards for breeding stock selection).

- Breeder fully intends to keep a puppy from the litter to continue their lines and litters are bred to improve the program, not just to produce puppies.
- High quality in the puppies produce and the standards the breeder uses to determine what dogs are bred.
- Every dog is exercised and attended to every day and receives one on one attention on a daily basis.
- If a breeder maintains a large number of dogs, they also have the staff to dedicate appropriate time to each dog.
- Breeders do not hesitate to allow visitors into their facility to see and meet the dogs.
- Every dog receives appropriate socialization and the breeder does not allow dogs with questionable breed temperament to remain in their breeding program.
- Dogs are happy, healthy and eager to meet visitors and do not avoid contact.
- All puppies are sold on contract, with registration paperwork and a spay/neuter requirement for all non-breeding puppies.
- Breeder is a member of local dog clubs, national dog clubs and demonstrates a true breed dedication along with time and history in the breed.
- Stud dogs may or may not be on premises.
- Breeder is reachable for questions and concerns and offers advice to help you through problems and issues as well as advice to get you off on the right foot.
- Litters are rarely evaluated to be all show quality.
- Breeder carefully selects homes for suitability and no puppies are sold to brokers or pet shops for resale.

Here at Swiss Run Swissys we take pride in our dogs and breeding program. We are always here for our puppy buyers and work on improving the breed.