

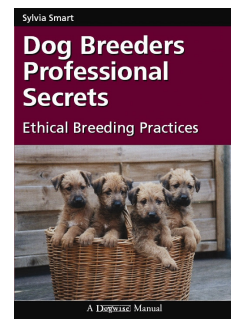
An excerpt from

## ***Dog Breeders Professional Secrets***

### Chapter 1 Doing the Right Thing

by Sylvia Smart, Dogwise Publishing. 800-776-2665, www.dogwise.com

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### **Doing the Right Thing**

Purebred dogs are incredibly popular, and there is strong demand for healthy, socialized, and intelligent purebred puppies. This is illustrated by the fact that there are many people who are willing to wait months or even years to acquire a high-quality, healthy puppy sold under a written warranty contract. Often, these prospective owners have to put their names on a waiting list and be pre-qualified by professional breeders before they are allowed to purchase a puppy! In fact some dedicated breeders require the buyers to attend a “Puppy Training and Care” seminar before they will hand over their puppies. Despite these obstacles and restrictions, people are lining up for superior puppies—in 2006 close to a million dogs were registered with the American Kennel Club (AKC) in 155 recognized breeds; the United Kennel Club (UKC) registers over 300,000 dogs annually; and there are many more “pet” purebred puppies that are never officially registered and so aren’t included in the basic statistics.

People who want an exceptional purebred puppy have made an intelligent and conscious choice to obtain a dog with a known, quantifiable set of traits and characteristics. And, of course, the best way to accomplish this is to purchase a specific, AKC-recognized breed from an ethical and knowledgeable breeder. These customers don’t want to rely solely on luck. It is therefore your responsibility as a breeder to ensure that they are getting what they want and need—consistently tractable, easy-to-train dogs with natural intelligence and a friendly, out-going temperament combined with superior physical condition and a sound genetic foundation.

### **Ethics and Integrity**

My basic philosophy is that breeders who develop expertise in the field and who consistently follow the high road in all aspects of their business can make owning and operating a breeding kennel a successful business. The key to “doing it right” is based on knowledge and the ability to apply what you learn with integrity. When you lay the correct foundation, consistently put ethics and morality in the forefront, and make a point to incorporate basic proven business practices into your kennel operation, your dog breeding business success is assured.

Quality and ethics go hand-in-hand. To become a successful professional breeder you must be meticulous about details, and fanatically clean about your facility, your dogs, and yourself. You have to behave ethically

with the public, fellow breeders, employees or contracted helpers, as well as with your veterinarian and his or her staff. Some of the questions that this book will force you to examine include:

- What is best for your dogs?
- What is best for your family? Will you put them first, and will you set an ethical example for them?
- Can you treat others with respect and integrity? Are you an empathetic person? Can you help people who are grieving the loss of their beloved dog?
- Do you have “zero-based” tolerance for deception and omissions—not just for lies and deceit—but also for cover-ups and silence in the face of injustice and blatant greed?
- Can you say “No” to unethical offers from unscrupulous people?
- Will you stand behind your puppies 100%? Will you do it throughout their lives?

To live within the framework of any community in a harmonious and peaceful co-existence is to accept the responsibilities and rules of that community. We live in a society where certain behaviors are considered unacceptable and harmful to the group. These include lying, stealing, cheating, gossiping, and physically or verbally assaulting a person or animal. Some of these unacceptable behaviors are even punishable by law. In the very specific world of dog breeding and related activities, the rules are less “clear cut.”

As inside any business or sub-community, there are subtle differences between honesty and being silent when one should speak up, observing violations of rules and regulations but failing to report them, failing to disclose all of the pertinent facts in a business transaction, and going along with unscrupulous activities in order to “not rock the boat” or bring unwanted attention to oneself. The lines between honesty and self-preservation/promotion can become blurred if you are not careful and vigilant. Being ethical means doing the right thing even when no one is watching. Only *you* can protect your good name, your self-esteem, and your kennel reputation.

Sylvia Smart has owned, trained and exhibited Champion Labrador Retrievers. Sylvia has bred numerous qualifying hunting, therapy, and S&R dogs. She is the author of the DVD *Whelping Healthy Puppies* and now focuses on mentoring and advising other professional breeders. She lives with her Lab and Poodle in Arizona.