

PBGV-COMPREHENSIVE BREED HEALTH SURVEY

(UPDATED 3/2010)

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INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

A convenience survey of PBGV owners was conducted through the internet. A total of 512 dogs and 470 owners were represented in responses to the survey.

Only 134 of 449 owners (30%) were members of a breed organization. A majority of the owners (65%) had owned PBGVs for 1 to 10 years. Primary interests in owning PBGVs were as a pet and for show (92% and 21% respectively). One owner responding to the survey indicated “performance entertainer” as a reason for ownership and “watchdog” and “therapy” were also mentioned once. Forty-four (44) of the breeders indicated frequency of breeding and 80% indicated that they bred their dogs either occasionally or once. Eight bred their dogs 2 to 4 times and only 1 bred the dog more than 4 times. Responses to the question about contact with puppy buyers were interesting. There were 141 responses to the question indicating that a large number of owners who sell puppies do not consider themselves “breeders”. Fifty-nine (42%) indicated that they always maintained contact and 32 (22%) indicated that they never or rarely maintained contact with buyers.

TABLE 1. YEARS OF OWNERSHIP FOR 470 PBGVs

Years of ownership	Number	Percent
Less than 1	76	16
1 to 5	183	37
6 to 10	120	25
11 to 20	81	17
Greater than 20	10	2
Total	470	100

Table 2. Number of PBGVs owned

Number owned	Number	Percent
1 to 5	440	94
6 to 10	23	5
11 to 20	4	1
Greater than 20	3	1
Total	470	100

Table 3 Primary interests in breed for 470 owners reported in the survey.

Interest	Number	Percent
Pet	433	92
Show	111	24
Agility	63	13
Breeder	67	14
Assistance	53	11
Obedience	58	12
Field	47	10
Tracking	35	7
Rescue	14	3

Two hundred thirty one (231, 45%) of the dogs were female and 281 (55%) were male. Most (476; 93%) of the dogs reported in the survey were AKC registered. Ninety six percent (96%;394) of the dogs represented in the survey were born in the United States. Other birth countries represented in the survey were the Great Britain, Wales, Holland, Scotland, France, Finland, Denmark, Canada and Australia. Three hundred ninety-nine (399) of the dogs lived in the United States. One hundred sixteen (23%) of the dogs in the survey are in the DNA Bank at the University of Missouri.

An average height of 14 inches (minimum 10; maximum 30) was reported for 314 adults at least 2 years of age. Three hundred five (305) adults at least 2 years of age were reported to weigh an average of 32 lbs (minimum 14; maximum 63).

Owners of 477 (93%) of the dogs either obtained the dog from a breeder or bred dogs themselves. Fifty eight percent (58%) of the respondents to the survey maintained contact with the breeder. Interestingly 15 (3%) of the dogs reported in the survey were obtained from shelters. Most of the dogs (395; 77%) represented in the survey were obtained before they were 6 months of age.

Table 4. General health of 511 dogs reported in the survey.

Health	Number	Percent
Excellent	377	74
Good	72	14
Fair	38	7
Poor	24	5
Total	511	100

Table 5. Age at which general health began to decline

Age of health decline	Number	Percent
0-6 months	7	8
6-12 months	6	4
1-4 years	17	20
4-7 years	21	26
Over 7 years	32	38
Total	83	100

PARASITE CONTROL

Use of flea prevention was reported in 310 (61%) of the dogs. Only 8 reactions were reported to flea prevention products and these were: sluggishness, hair loss, and seizure. Flea treatment was reported on 31 (6%) of the dogs and no reactions to flea treatment were reported. Use of products for tick prevention was reported in 210 (41%) dogs and 5 reactions (sluggishness and burning or discomfort) were reported. Nineteen dogs (19; 4%) were treated for ticks and no reactions were reported.

Use of heartworm prevention was reported in 285 (56%) of the dogs and reactions to the preventive were indicated in 10 (2%). Few described the reaction, but the two who did indicated sluggishness or vomiting of 1 form of the medication. Heartworm treatment was reported in 11 (2%) of the 486 dogs and no reactions to the treatment were indicated.

Giardia treatment was reported in 11 (2%) dogs. Diarrhea and vomiting were reported as a reaction to treatment in one of the dogs; however this reaction would be difficult to distinguish from the effects of the giardia alone.

VACCINATIONS

Owners of one hundred seventy-six dogs (34%) reported changing vaccination protocols within the last year. One hundred sixty-eight vaccinated less and 7 vaccinated their dogs more. Titers were used in 72 dogs (14%). Twenty-four owners (24) used titers yearly, 8 every two years, and 36 every 3 to 5 years. Five reported using titers only once in a lifetime. Use of nosodes (homeopathic alternatives to vaccination) was reported in 11 dogs.

Vaccination reactions were reported rarely in the survey and were mild.

Table 6. Use of vaccines in 511 dogs reported by the survey.

Vaccination	Number	Percent
Puppy series	463	91
Rabies	441	86

Distemper	389	76
Bordetella	262	51
Parvo (killed)	271	53
Hepatitis	176	34
Leptospirosis	135	26
Coronavirus	135	26
Parvo (live)	119	23
Lyme disease	64	12

Table 7. Change in vaccine protocols

Protocol	Number	Percent
No change	283	55
No longer vaccinate	52	11
Vaccinate for fewer diseases	21	4
Vaccinate less frequently	147	30
Vaccinate more frequently	7	2

Table 8. Frequency of vaccination for selected diseases. Values in table given as percent of number reporting. N/A=not applicable

Frequency	Rabies	Distemper	Bordetella
Number reporting	454	321	234
Every 6 months	N/A	1	23
Yearly	29	58	62
Every 2 years	5	N/A	N/A
Every 3 years	70	26	6
> every 3 years	N/A	14	10

EXPOSURE TO COLORANTS AND PESTICIDES

Only one dog in reported in the survey was exposed to colorants and 23 of 312 (7%) were exposed to pesticides.

REPRODUCTION

Two hundred seventy-five (275) of the 511 dogs (54%) were reported to be neutered (spayed or castrated). Twenty six dogs were neutered at 7-9 years of age. Birth control was used on only 2 dogs reported in the survey.

Table 9. Age at neutering for 271 dogs reported to be neutered in the survey.

Neuter age	Number	Percent
< 6 months	25	9
6 months – 1 year	118	44
> 1 year	128	47
Total	271	100

Table 10. Reasons for neutering in 225 dogs reported in the survey.

Reason for neutering	Number	Percent
Personal preference	117	52
Medical	48	21
Breeder requirement	27	12
Unsuitable	15	7
Behavioral	5	3
Adoption requirement	3	2
Age	10	4
Total	225	100

Thirty-six dogs in the survey were reported to have whelped. Natural breeding was used in 43 of 54 breedings (80%) and AI with fresh semen was used in 10 (18%). The sire was registered by the AKC (40) or the CKC (1) in 76% of the breedings.

The 36 dogs in the survey were responsible for 54 litters. A C-section was conducted in 10 of 54 (18%) whelpings. The average litter size born alive was 4.5 (median 5) with a minimum litter of 1 and a maximum of 9. The number of puppies weaned was reported for 34 whelpings and the average weaned was 3.8. Stillbirths occurred in 9 of 54 whelpings (17%). The number of stillbirths ranged from 1 (6 whelpings) to 3 (2 whelpings). Two hundred thirty-four puppies were born alive and 128 were weaned (55%).

HEALTH STATUS

MORTALITY

Sixty (60; 9%) of the dogs reported in the survey were dead. The average age of death for 41 of the dogs was 9.7 years (minimum-5 months; maximum 17 years). The median age of death was 12 years. Of the dogs that died from an accident, 2 were hit by a car and 2 were attacked by another dog. When illness was the cause of death the diagnosis was confirmed by a veterinarian in 22 of the 23 dogs. A necropsy (autopsy) was performed on 26 of 29 dogs (90%) that died. Thirty-eight of the 57 dogs (67%) that died were euthanized. One dog was euthanized because of biting and aggression.

Table 11. Cause of death in 59 dogs reported in the survey.

Cause of death	Number	Percent
Illness	40	68
Old age	13	22
Accident	6	10

Table 12. Fatal disease conditions reported for 37 dogs.

Disease	Number	Percent
Cancer	14	35
Cushing's disease	5	12
Lyme disease	3	8
Bloat	1	2
Congestive heart failure	4	8
Bleeding problems	3	8
Kidney failure	2	5
Hydrocephalus	1	2
Vestibular disease	1	2
Whelping (toxicity)	1	2
Epilepsy	2	5
Cardiomyopathy/endocarditis	2	5
Pancreatitis	1	2

PATHOLOGY

General disease conditions / organ systems affected are given in Table 13. Respondents to the survey indicated that disease diagnoses were made either by a veterinarian or laboratory in 91% of the cases.

Table 13. General disease conditions reported in the survey.

Disease / organ system	Number	Rate / 100 dogs
Eye	35	7
Endocrine	28	5
Coronary	25	5
Skin	16	3
Neurological	16	3
Reproductive (female)	13	3
Cancer	14	3
Orthopedic	14	3
Gastro-intestinal	16	3
Ear	10	2
Urinary	8	2
Immune system	8	2
Behavioral	6	1
Birth defects	5	<1
Teeth / mouth	3	<1
Hepatic	4	<1
Reproductive (male)	2	<1

Table 14. Top fifteen definitive pathological diagnoses indicated by the survey.

Pathology	Number	Rate/100 dogs
Hypothyroidism	20	4
Persistent pupillary membrane	15	3
Idiopathic epilepsy	9	2
Heart murmur (no diagnosis)	9	2

Allergic dermatitis	7	1
Ear infections (yeast)	6	1
Immune mediated meningitis	5	1
Sebaceous adenoma	5	1
Glaucoma	5	1
Hip dysplasia	5	1
Hyperadrenalcorticism	4	1
Inflammatory bowel disease	4	1
Mitral insufficiency	4	1
Pancreatitis	4	1

HIP DYSPLASIA AND ELBOW PROBLEMS

Sixty dogs were reported to have had their hips x-rayed. Of 51 dogs with reported OFA status 2 (4%) were graded excellent, 23 (45%) were graded good and 24 (47%) were graded fair. Twelve dogs were reported to have either mild (10) or moderate (2) dysplasia. [NOTE: only 5 dogs were reported with dysplasia in the above table from the file on pathology]

Only 33 of the dogs in the survey were reported to have had their elbows x-rayed. There were very few owners who indicated elbow problems.

SUMMARY

The survey this year includes an additional 26 dogs and 21 owners. This small number of additions resulted in no significant changes from last years survey.