

Flat-Coated Retriever Society of America
Code of Ethics
(Revised 6/2010)

Since the inception of the Flat-Coated Retriever Society of America, Inc. in 1960, members have been dedicated to preserving the character, working gun dog abilities, and type and soundness — both physical and mental — of the Flat-Coated Retriever. The breed standard, created by the FCRSA and approved by the American Kennel Club, is the only standard of excellence by which Flat-Coated Retrievers shall be judged.

Every person who owns a Flat-Coated Retriever has an inherent responsibility to protect our breed. This Code of Ethics is put forth to further that objective. It articulates our shared expectation of the highest integrity and ethical conduct by our members. Therefore,

FCRSA members agree that they will:

1. Remain in good standing with the American Kennel Club and comply with all rules and regulations pertaining to pure-bred dogs; the Constitution, Bylaws, and regulations of the Flat-Coated Retriever Society of America, Inc.; and this Code of Ethics.
2. Adhere to the AKC Code of Sportsmanship and conduct them-selves in a manner that will reflect its principles and bring credit to the FCRSA, the AKC, and the breed.
3. Provide a high standard of overall care for each dog in their keeping, which includes providing the following:
 - a. Proper shelter in a safe environment and a secure area for keeping their dogs when they are unsupervised
 - b. Appropriate nutrition, exercise, and companionship
 - c. Routine and emergency veterinary attention
 - d. A permanent form of identification for each dog, with the microchip as the preferred method of identification
4. Provide appropriate training so that their dogs are well mannered.
5. Ensure that every dog they place goes to a home they have personally approved. Accordingly, members will ensure no dog is ever brokered through a third-party agent, pet shop, health organization, or laboratory; sold or given for auction, raffle, or prize; or otherwise indirectly transferred.
6. Accurately represent facts relating to the breed or any individual dog as well as ensuring that any advertising is factual and honest in both substance and implication. Accordingly, members will not falsely represent their experience and standing, or the experience and standing of any other person.
7. Sponsor a new member(s) to the Society only after being satisfied that the prospective member is committed to the charge of responsibility for protection of the breed.

Members who wish to breed Flat-Coated Retrievers should do so with the full understanding of the responsibility they bear to the future of the breed. The Flat-Coated Retriever Society of America, as well as its affiliated local clubs, have espoused the following goals regarding breeding: to produce a multi-purpose, practical working animal possessing hardiness, longevity, and the character of the breed as defined in the breed standard. Breeders are expected to understand the breed standard, the traits in a breeding dog's immediate and extended family, and the application of the principles of genetics. Additionally, breeders should have a practical knowledge of mating; care of the bitch in whelp; the rearing of a litter; and the time, effort, and resources to engage in this activity.

FCRSA members who breed Flat-Coated Retrievers agree to:

1. Adhere to AKC rules applying to litter and individual registrations, ensuring that any litter that they produce is eligible for AKC registration. The breeder must supply the purchaser with registration paperwork in a timely manner, preferably within one month of the purchase of a puppy unless otherwise stated in the purchase contract.
2. Use for breeding only those animals that are in good general health and exhibit Flat-Coated Retriever type and character. This includes the ability to serve as family companion and a working hunting retriever.
3. Consider for use in a breeding program only those dogs that are physically sound and of good temperament. Dogs demonstrating aggression must be eliminated from a breeding program. *Aggression, as defined by the breed Standard, is "Unprovoked aggressive behavior toward people or animals."*

4. Obtain, prior to breeding, documented clearances for hip dysplasia and patella abnormalities from the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) or the board-certified veterinary equivalent, and a documented CERF number or board-certified ophthalmologist equivalent. A foreign-born dog must have its clearances or its country's equivalent of these clearances and must meet the age requirements necessary for evaluation. *A preliminary report does not constitute a clearance.*
5. Breed only Flat-Coated Retrievers with the clearances specified in No. 4 above and that are also believed to be clear from other serious hereditary defects.
6. Understand that dogs being considered for breeding cannot be fully evaluated in terms of temperament, health, conformation, and working ability until they have reached a minimum of 24 months of age.
7. Remove from a breeding program any dog or bitch that is known to have repeatedly produced any significant condition that affects the physical or mental soundness of the progeny. This information can be gained only through active involvement and life-time interest in all dogs produced.
8. Breed a bitch no more than once in a year or more than twice in any two-year period, if bred on consecutive seasons. Under most circumstances, a bitch, in her lifetime, would not be expected to produce more than three litters of normal size.
9. Realize the potential impact of their stud dogs and satisfy them-selves of the suitability of any breeding. In consideration of the small gene pool, stud dog owners must use restraint and judgment in the repeated use of a stud dog.
10. Take care to prevent any accidental breeding from occurring. In the event of such a breeding, if health clearances are not already in place, they must be obtained promptly. Progeny from such litters will be given a limited registration or be co-owned by the breeder until the health of the parents can be documented. Repeated accidental breedings indicate poor kennel management.
11. Mentor and counsel owners who are receiving breeding stock as decisions made by these owners will have a lasting effect on the breed. Novice breeders should actively pursue assistance from experienced breeders. All members should assist the breeders of their dogs by keeping them informed of their dogs' development throughout life.
12. Not release puppies to their new homes before the 49th day of life, unless there are compelling reasons. As permanent and accurate identification is essential, FCRSA recommends that all puppies are microchipped prior to going to their new owners.
13. Provide purchaser with a written contract specifying, at least:
 - a. The pedigree of the dog
 - b. That the breeder must be contacted if the purchaser no longer can or wants to keep the dog
 - c. That the dog and any of its offspring will never be given or sold to any person or party as described in No. 5 above of the member agreements
14. Provide the puppy or dog purchaser with information regarding the breed and recommendations for general care, nutrition, training, and health, and a copy of this Code of Ethics.
15. Maintain an active interest in each puppy produced for the lifetime of that puppy and take back or assist in rehoming any Flat-Coat they have sold at any point in the dog's life.
16. Make all breeding decisions based on considerations that will best benefit the breed.

As a member of the Flat-Coated Retriever Society of America, I agree to abide by this Code of Ethics dated June, 2010.

Signature

Signature

Date
(Revised---approved 6/09/10)