



## International Federation of Rottweilerfriends

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Dear Rottweiler Friends,

We refer to some posts on social media that seem to reproach the IFR for not communicating on the genetic disease JLPP. In principle, the IFR-Board can only communicate with the Delegates from the Memberclubs and not with individual Rottweiler lovers. Some may find this regrettable, but we can and will not enter discussions on Facebook or other social media nor will we answer complex issues by manner of Facebook posts.

This message intends to avoid all misunderstanding : **it is totally wrong to assume that the IFR is ignoring the problem of JLPP and/or would suggest it to be a national German problem !** To the contrary, we have referred to the high prevalence of JLPP in the German Rottweiler population as to be understood as a warning and as a wake up call for all ! The closed German population was tested and this high prevalence of 21 % of the tested dogs was established. If other national Rottweiler populations show this same prevalence is still unknown as these were not yet tested and so there is no documentation on this. Still, not only as an example, not only as a warning for what may already be or what may come if we are not conscious of the danger but also because we all sip from the German Rottweiler's genepool, the IFR-Board has explicitly issued a clear warning to all and has announced its awareness :

*"The call for awareness and for testing on JLPP is loud, accutely and will be part of the agenda of the next IFR-Meeting of Breed Wardens as one of the hereditary diseases that are present in the breed."*

This cannot seriously be misunderstood as ignoring the problem, to the contrary : we announce that the issue is worked upon and will be decided upon !

Frustrating as this may seem or be, the IFR-Board does not have the power to decide upon or to impose tests nor to decide upon measures or regulations or even recommendations ! The IFR is a Federation of Memberclubs and only the Meeting of Delegates has the power to decide on regulations or recommendations that Memberclubs must follow. An option to improve the proces and speed of communication and decision-taking, might be considered to be on the agenda of the next Meeting of Delegates.

The prevalence of genetic diseases and the possible measures to remediate, are high on the agenda of our Federation. An initiative was announced years ago, was even started to be worked upon, but unfortunately not put into practice after the Meeting of

Delegates in 2015. This is even one of the reasons why an extra-ordinary Meeting of Delegates was organized on 22.09.2016 and a new Board was elected.

The current Board is now working on the issue by collecting information on existing tests and regulations (breeding regulations and breed suitability tests, tests on genetic diseases, ...). This information will be analysed and discussed at the Meeting of Breed Wardens that will be organized on 04.05.2017, the day before the Meeting of Delegates dd. 05.05.2017. This will include the genetic health of the breed. JLPP is only one of those genetic diseases. Unfortunately there are many more, some also with a high prevalence but that are still not obligatory tested for in some countries, this even incl. HD and ED. This cannot be ignored neither.

Therefore, instead of publishing posts on social media that would only repeat what is already widely published and that may very well satisfy the flare of the (highly appreciated) interest and concern of all individual Rottweiler lovers but that would be ineffective in the context of the Federation and that may possibly not even be supported by a majority in the Meeting of Delegates, the Board prefers to work – even if silently - on the organization and information of the Meetings dd. 2017. We want to make a meaningful discussion of measures possible. These must be effective, not only on the short but also on the long term and not only for one disease but also for the problem in general.

I will not elaborate on this now, but believe me that the more one learns about the problem of genetic diseases, the more complex questions and answers become. Not all is as easy to understand or to act upon as a autosome recessive disease like JLPP.

Encountering the problem on a wider front, in particular the problem of a too closed genepool and of breeding policies that are too much based on (often not limited or controled) inbreeding or linebreeding with the same matador-dogs (popular breeding dogs) and to study of the instruments to recognize and control this, means that we must first collect information. This must be followed by a wide and careful discussion among Memberclubs, hoping above all else for a concrete willingness to work towards effective and more homogeneous breeding regulations even if this means imposing unpopular regulations.

The Board will do what it can within the limits of its powers and the short time given until the Meetings in may 2017. This will be a first step of many steps to follow, during which scientific guidance and support will probably have to be called for and for which a budget will be asked.

With friendly greetings,

On behalf of the Board,

D. Vandecasteele  
President.