



THE CAT FANCIERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.

World's Largest Registry of Pedigreed Cats

Why Do We Need Breeders?

Diversity

We need reputable breeders for every kind of domesticated animal. One can go to a large county or state fair and see the genetic diversity of cattle, sheep, horses, goats, rabbits, hogs, and fowl. The diversity develops particular traits that the breeders are striving to reach, be it as a milk-producing animal, a woolly-coated creature, or a beautiful performance animal.

In the dog world, the diversity leads to dogs that serve many and varied purposes for their owners, from hunting, retrieving game, guarding, hearing or seeing assistance and simply being beautiful and loving companions. Each dog breed was developed or refined to its own standard of appearance and performance.

In the cat world, the diversity can be more subtle, as we don't have the enormous variety of size, shape, and purpose for our cats that they have for dogs. Cats in the wild are hunters, and as farm animals, cats are invaluable as mousers and ratters; perhaps less appealing as a threat to squirrels or birds. Because of their historic importance to humans as a means of vermin control, we don't particularly need to have so many sizes of cats.

Special characteristics

Through the centuries cats became the semi-domesticated creatures we love. Humans gradually became aware of particular characteristics they admired in cats, such as unusual colors, patterns, sleek bodies or husky type. So they have developed, through selective breeding, their picture of the "ideal" cat. Some prefer large and powerful like a Maine Coon, the elegant flowing coat of a Persian, or slim and graceful like a Siamese. Personality traits can be captured with selective breeding as well so that families with children can enjoy a high-energy bold cat or a quiet person may take pleasure in a more placid cat.

If all cats were set free to go forth and multiply, the beautiful diversity would disappear. The dominant genetic characteristics would eventually overwhelm the recessive genes that produce the pointed cats, the long-haired cats, the straight-tailed, the tailless, the folded ears, the curly coats, the lavender coat color, and hundreds of other charming characteristics. Yes, those characteristics would pop up from time to time in the random breeding of cats, but with no control of the breeding, the truly unique feline traits would disappear and hide for generations.

Breed preservation

With intelligent, thoughtful, and careful breeding, many different types of cats can be developed to be healthy animals with good temperaments to serve their greatest purpose - companions for humans. There is no question that having animals as household pets is a benefit to humans at all stages of their lives. Scientific research supports that.

Another aspect of being a pedigreed cat breeder is that ancient breeds can be perpetuated through the centuries and still resemble the cats depicted in historic drawings and paintings. Many of the breeds have been refined and their original traits enhanced, but they still resemble their ancestors.

Reputable breeders will follow written and unwritten rules for managing their breeding programs. They will strive to produce healthy and people-oriented kittens and to place those kittens and cats into loving homes, keeping a sufficient number of unaltered males and females in order to progress towards their goal of eliminating unwanted characteristics and producing even more lovely kittens in the future.

Cat shows are the public proof that humans are working hard towards producing various interpretations of the "purr-fect" cat; one that will be the best example of that particular breed. This endeavor takes time, devotion and money. It is the cat loving public that benefits from the results of conscientious pedigreed cat breeding.

By Ann Segrest

Breeder of Korat Cats that date back to the 1300s.

June 2004

CFA Breeder Code of Ethics

Passed, by resolution, at the Cat Fanciers' Association Annual Meeting, June 2000; ratified by the CFA Board of Directors, October 7, 2000 and June 23, 2004.

As a breeder who uses the services of the world's largest registry of pedigreed cats, I understand I have certain responsibilities to pedigreed cats and to the Cat Fanciers' Association (CFA).

I am aware that I am representative of CFA breeders in my community. I will breed my cats with the intent of improving the breed and to produce healthy, happy kittens. I will deal honestly with the purchasers of my kittens and cats. To the best of my knowledge and ability I will not, without prior disclosure, sell any kitten/cat that is sick or has been exposed to an infectious disease. I will not sell or place kittens prior to their attaining a proper level of immunity against common infectious diseases.

I will strive to house my cats in a manner exceeding the CFA Minimum Cattery Standard. I will ensure my cats are kept in a healthy environment and I will ensure they receive the proper veterinary care as needed.

I will maintain appropriate cattery records and will correctly register litters and cats.

I will work honestly with my fellow breeders and provide timely and correct litter registration information to those who use my cats for breeding.

I will mentor new breeders to ensure they have a solid information foundation.

I will place cats directly with the new pet owner or in a manner that will enable contact with the ultimate owner to provide on-going education and advice.

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