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Animal Crackers

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Pot-Bellied Pigs

Miniature potbellied pigs have become a popular (and expensive) household pet. They can be fragrant shy by television and in the news media. There are three registries, a newsletter and even a book, “The Pampered Pig.”

These miniature pigs are about 15” to 19” tall and weigh from 40 to 70 pounds. They do not require the same veterinary care as all swine and the same diseases affect all pigs, small and large.

If you are considering a pig as a pet, it’s important that you “piggyproof” your living area. It is said that pigs can destroy housebold products and chemicals, just be stored.

It’s quite evident that dogs and cats are firmly established as America’s favorite pets. In 1989, over 54 million dogs and 54.5 million cats were registered in the United States and 54.5 million cats. The International Cat Association (TICA), each federation has a Standard of Perfection for the breeds it recognizes and makes its own interpretation of thyroid function tests is somewhat controversial. Clinical signs include abnormalities of the skin and haircoat. Hair loss without itching usually occurs. Desiccated thyroid and synthetic preparations are used for treatment. Most affected dogs have improvement after about a month or six weeks. It is reported that the use of thyroid hormone results in hair regrowth in some nonthyroidal diseases.

The disease is reported more frequently in certain breeds of dogs and most cases occur in adults. Reproductive problems are another sign of hypothyroidism. These include absence or abnormal heat periods along with reduced conception rates. Weight gain and changes in behavior may be noticed.

The canine press recently has had numerous articles about the possibility of inherited thyroid deficiency and its relationship to a depressed immune system. This raises the question whether or not an animal with a confirmed diagnosis of hypothyroidism should be used for breeding.

Many of the signs associated with thyroid deficiency may occur in other diseases. If the condition has been diagnosed correctly, treatment may be required for a lifetime.

Book Review


This book covers all you need to know if you are interested in showing your cat. There is information about the major cat federations which register cats and sanction cat shows. These are the American Cat Fanciers’ Association (ACFA), Cat Fanciers Association (CFA), Cat Fanciers’ Federation (CFF) and The International Cat Association (TICA). Each federation has a Standard of Perfection for the breeds it recognizes and makes its own rules governing activities. Cats may have titles from each federation. Complete information is given about registering cats and entering shows.

Preparation and grooming for a show is clearly explained. Bathing and drying the cat, cleaning the ears, removing tear stains from the eyes, tooth cleaning, clipping, combing and brushing are discussed. Important reminders include never using any product that has not been made specifically for cats and never using bleach or hair dye; this is not condoned by any cat federation.

Show awards are explained and there is an excellent glossary. A Kitten is under eight months old and at least four months old the day of the show. A Household Pet is a non-pedigreed cat usually required to be neutered by a certain age. Premier refers to altered cats.

At a show, cats in competition are caged in the judging ring. The owner stays at ringside and the judge handles and places the cats, rating them against the Standard of Perfection for the breed.

This is a good reference book for any cat fancier, spectator or exhibitor.