

The difference between Reputable Breeders and Puppy Mills....

I've often encountered interested buyers in my pups who, after being given the question male or female look at me and say female. When I ask if they plan to breed, the usual answer would be, "Doc, babae na lang para at least pwede manganak." Which I, of course, always translate as "might as well make some money on the side" or "Let's have the pup pay for its own". Oh, I'm not saying that these people aren't animal lovers or that they don't want a pup, but they usually don't realize how much work and finances "breeding" really takes. Before you buy a pup and tell the breeder you're looking for a female, thinking about this first. Can you maintain the bitch throughout its gestation? Can you finance the extra food it has to take during its pregnancy along with the proper medications and medical check-ups? Are you capable enough to handle the whelping (birthing)? Are you willing to shell out extra dough in case there are problems with the pregnancy? What about the pups? Can you handle the feed expense, medications, vaccines, etc? Before you answer all of this, let me give you a rough estimate of how much proper breeding would cost. Bear in mind, this is how a "REPUTABLE BREEDER" should be going about it...

In this case, let's take a Golden Retriever breed. Bear in mind that prices will vary depending on the size of your breed of choice. Assuming that you have gone through the regular medications and check-ups for your growing pup, here are the some extra considerations you will have to take. A bitch should preferably be mated over a year of age, although some breeds are recommended to be bred at 2 years instead of a little over a year. If females are bred at first heat, they are not mature enough to take proper care of their pups.



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First of, you must find a suitable stud dog for your bitch. When I say suitable, this would mean a good purebred quality stud with no faults or disqualifications to the breed. Such a stud would cost about P5,000 to P15,000.00. Once you find the stud of your choice, you should take into consideration some of the following: Is he cleared of hip dysplasia? Patellar subluxation? Brucellosis? TVT or any sexually transmitted disease? Are there any heritable eye problems in the family history? Any heritable endocrine problems in the family history? Most stud dogs that are cleared for all this will probably cost even more than P15,000.00; or having them checked for all of these will cost this much. The same tests are to be done on your bitch. That's an additional P15,000.00 spent. Aside from which, you will have to have a vaginal smear done on your bitch once in heat. Either way, having your bitch mated could be expensive.

Once the mating has been done, you'll have to go to your local vet to have your pregnant dog's regular check-up. You may opt to have an ultrasound done. This may cost around P2,000.00. If your bitch has not been vaccinated for some time, you may need to vaccinate her and deworm her in preparation for the upcoming birth. Let's assume that vet's fees, along with the needed vitamins and increase in feed intake will add up to a total of P5,000.00.

After the pups are born, your bitch's food intake will increase. It may increase to up to 300% more than usual by the time the pups are about 8 weeks old. Aside from which, the pups will need milk supplements at 3-4 weeks (or earlier if you have a big litter or your bitch is unable to provide for the pups). Also, they will begin to eat solid food, another additional expense. Deworming and vaccinations will also cost money, and the amount depends on the number of pups you have. Let's assume that your bitch produced 10 pups. A good breeder would not release pups too early or without immunization. Each DHLPPi vaccination costs at least P350 at your local vet and your pups should be vaccinated for DHLPPi at least 3 times before sale which should make them about 3 months more or less. This doesn't even include the Bordetella and Rabies vaccination. Ideally, antibody titer should be checked before and after vaccination as well. Each of the titer test would cost about P1,000.00 each. So here's the breakdown of all the expenses

Stud Fee P 15,000.00

Bitch check P 15,000.00

Pregnancy expense P 5,000.00

Pup immunization P 10,500.00 (for approx. 10 pups)

Pup Deworming P 2,000.00 (for approx. 10 pups)

Titer Check P 20,000.00 (for approx. 10 pups)

Pup Dogfood P 18,000.00

Pup ID chip P10,000.00 (for approx. 10 pups)

Total P 95,500.00

Surprised? Bear in mind, I'm not bloating expenses. This is how it should be done. It's not an easy task nor is it a cheap one. We've gone through the finances of breeding, and this isn't even close to the work involved in taking care of the pups and the dedication you must give to your growing little "babies". Remember this, before you decide that you want to "breed" pups. Remember this also before you buy a pup from a supposed breeder because you think its cheap. With the breakdown I gave you earlier, do you really think a breeder can sell his/her pups at P8,000-P10,000? Is the guy you're buying from a breeder or a puppy mill? Remember this because for him to sell you a cheap pup, he must have skimmed on a lot of the stuff that your prospective pet should have had. Don't go for the cheaper pup just to save a buck or two because you might end up as less of a bargain that you thought it to be.....Let the buyer beware.

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