



American Ferret Association, Inc.

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AFA Ferret Breeders And Breeding Position Statement

Guiding Principles:

- ◆ The breeder should have personal knowledge of each ferret within his/her care.
- ◆ The breeder should respect each individual ferret and respect the ferret as a domestic species.
- ◆ The breeder should strive to provide each ferret with the best possible existence, through good husbandry, and the appropriate sale and adoption programs, and education of others.
- ◆ The AFA further believes that because we, as humans, are entirely responsible for the control of the gene pool of ferrets (*Mustela furo*), that once we take a hand in the creation of life (i.e.; breeding ferrets), we are responsible for that life for its lifetime.
- ◆ The AFA recommends that the practice of breeding ferrets not be undertaken without careful consideration of the responsibilities involved.

Breeders Responsibilities:

The following criteria should be met before undertaking the breeding of pet ferrets.

1. The breeder should have a thorough knowledge of ferret husbandry.
2. The breeder should have a breeding plan. The plan should be geared toward improving the ferret as a pet species, as follows:
 - a. Preservation and enhancement of the species genetic diversity without greatly modifying the original design of the species.
 - b. Documenting and maintaining documented lineage of breeding ferrets.
 - c. Avoidance of using ferrets that are genetically deficient.
 - d. Promotion and enhancement of pet qualities, such as a gentle temperament.
3. The breeder should be prepared to assume the financial and moral responsibilities for housing, maintenance, nutrition, medical and social needs according to established species parameters.
4. The breeder should have an appropriate location and facilities for the breeding operation.
5. The breeder should be prepared for and committed to spending a substantial amount of time overseeing the breeding, raising and socialization of young ferrets.
6. No breeder should conduct his breeding program in a vacuum. He/she should have established relationships with other reputable ferret breeders for advice and support.

7. The breeder should have the ability to implement a regular veterinary health maintenance program for all ferrets including a vaccination program, according to established guidelines.
8. The breeder must be prepared to undertake the maintenance and care of all animals resulting from the breeding activities until a proper home can be found. This includes the willingness to take back ferrets that are returned to the ferretry and placements that did not work out.

The AFA would further recommend that its members (hobbyist breeders) not knowingly be involved in the sale of pet ferrets through pet stores, or any other type of wholesale outlet, including mail order, agents or federally licensed dealers of commercial pet ferrets, individuals or institutions involved in research.