

Ethical breeding and the education of the general public.

**Why is ethical breeding in today's world so important?**

Currently we have an epidemic and overpopulation of domestic cats, shelters are filled to capacity and the fight for loving homes for both domestics and pedigree cats is on the rise.

Ethical breeders should be aware of this and so too the general public should be made aware of why supporting back yard breeders and those that advertise domestic kittens on “free advertisement” boards as well as pet shops selling kittens should NOT be supported. The unethical breeding of cats should NOT be encouraged and by purchasing from these “breeders” a demand is created and the circle continues.

The general public needs to be aware of what goes on behind an ethical breeder and why / how they breed. They need to be made aware that waiting for a new family member from an ethical breeder is the ONLY option if they are looking for a specific breed, have done their research and are willing to be a responsible owner.

**Be VERY wary of breeders that seem to have too many breeding cats, more than two UNRELATED breeds, cats that all live in a “cattery” with kittens not being born with in a home environment and raised inside the home. More than two or three litters of the same age with in the home at one time. Kittens available year round and advertised “ready to go”. Kittens sold under 12 weeks, not having received at least 2 sets of inoculations & deworming. Another big push is for the ethical breeder is to sell kittens de-sexed called Early Neuter / Spay (ENS) as well as micro-chipped. “Designer breeds” or crossing one breed with another to produce a “new breed”. Check with the registrar SACC to ensure that the breeder you are purchasing from is REGISTERED. Check with the registrar how many litters are registered by the breeder per year. Do NOT be scammed and protect yourself and the ongoing love poured into pedigree breeds by ETHICAL breeders.**

South African Cat Council Tel: 011 616 7017  
<http://www.tsacc.org.za/>

**\*DO NOT BUY AND ENCOURAGE SUPPLY\***

**What is an ethical breeder?**

An ethical breeder breeds for the love of the breed pure and simple, not for money, not for the glory of the show bench. They have a breeding strategy and their aim is to improve the breed (health, temperament, type etc). They have a breeding plan that ensures genetic diversity and are happy willing and proud to share these plans, healthy kittens are born and their breeding cats are kept in a

clean, stimulating and loving environment. They keep only as many cats in their breeding home as they are able to take care of and all should be considered pets first and foremost. An ethical breeder \*does not breed for money, their money goes into ensuring their cats health and happiness, their kittens health and socialisation, the promotion of their breed.\* An ethical breeder should only be breeding as many pet kittens as there is a demand for and only willing to sell to responsible owners. Breeding queens are bred a maximum of every 8 months (3 times in a 2 year period) this ensures that the queen has time to recuperate between litters and ensures that kittens are born strong and healthy. Blood testing for Aids & Leukaemia virus's is VITAL. Genetic testing should be done if there is a health issue with in the breed and ethical breeders need to be aware of this as well as keeping inoculations up to date and regularly treating for parasites including protozoa (Giardia etc) with in their cattery. An ethical breeder will be proud and willing to show you their health reports / blood testing / vet inoculation books.

The ethical breeder should also be ensuring that kittens sold from their cattery cannot contribute to the over population and thus spay / neuter before permitting a kitten to leave them. This ensures no accidental litters are produced. Also please be aware that the spay neuter of a kitten is NOT in any way detrimental to their health or temperament. There is absolutely NO reason a female cat needs to have a litter of kittens for temperament reasons and absolutely NO reason for a male to keep his pom poms in order to grow. An ethical breeder should only be selling entire cats to other ethical breeders.

### **What is a responsible pet owner?**

Firstly you are adding a valued family member to your home, a living breathing creature that will share your life for the next 15+ years. The purchase of ANY animal should not be on a "whim"- time, effort and research should be put into your decision. You should be willing to care and take responsibility for this pet for its lifetime. Do NOT purchase a kitten as a gift, do not purchase a kitten as a child's "toy". You and you alone are responsible for this family member and as much care and consideration should be put into this decision as that of adopting a child. Get to know the breeder ask questions and be prepared to answer questions from the breeder, take the time to research the breed and understand what motivates the breeder to breed. Ask questions of the breeder, ask how often girls are bred from (check websites for litters) ask for ages of breeding queens if not on the website. This is incredibly important as the responsible purchaser should NOT be motivated by "feeling sorry" for the animal(s) or to "get them out of the situation" if a purchase is made from this type of breeder all you are doing is encouraging the breeder to continue (and this includes pet shops and non-breeders of either un-registered "breeds" or domestics that sell kittens!!!!). The purchase should also NOT be based on the latest trends of "designer cat" the combination of breeds is an abomination and done for money. When two mutant genes ie Scottish Fold and Munchkin are combined there are serious health risks - an ethical breeder would NEVER even consider this.

A responsible owner will ensure that their family member is kept safe. This includes keeping them on their property either by indoor only with supervised outdoor on harness and leash time OR electrically fenced property. There are too many reasons to list as to why a kitten & cat should NOT be permitted to “free roam” cars, dogs, disease, fighting and becoming a nuisance to neighbours are just some. A little run in with any of these can cost the life of your beloved family member or run up super high vet bills.

Your purchase price is an investment in a family member, “recouping the cost” by wanting to have one litter is insanity. Would you expect your daughter to produce babies for you to sell to recoup the cost of raising her? Leave breeding of pedigree cats to ethical breeders who ensure that their kittens are bred and raised with love, have done the research behind the genetics and health of the breed and only sell to responsible people for the love of the breed.

Remember to show interest and follow up with your breeder, the more interest you show and more you interact with the breeder, the happier the ethical breeder will be to share their beloved babies with you.

**HAVE PATIENCE when purchasing your family member, realise that waiting is the RESPONSIBLE thing to do. SUPPORT ONLY ethical responsible breeders and boycott / report Back Yard Breeders!!!!**

**Why NOT buy from a Back Yard Breeder?**

A BYBer breeds for money, they cut corners to ensure that their profits are highest. By supporting a BYBer you are ensuring that breeder stays in business.

A kitten needs to be kept with it's mother to at least 12 weeks, this is to ensure that the kitten receives all that it needs to grow into a strong healthy and emotionally balanced adult. A BYBer will want the kitten to leave as soon as possible as every week a kitten remains with the breeder it costs money and the sooner the kittens leave the sooner their mother can get pregnant again.

Kittens should receive their first (done at 7-8 weeks) and second (done at 11-12 weeks) inoculation to ensure their immunity is ready for a change in environment and old enough to cope with the stress of leaving the birth home, their mother and siblings. A kitten should come to you as a spay or neuter – a BYBer would not even consider this as it takes up time, ensures the kitten stays with them longer and costs money. The cost to the breeder to ensure the kitten is spayed and neutered is less than what you would pay to your vet at a later stage so not only are you saving money if the breeder does this but you are supporting a breeder that cares for their breed and not wanting to contribute to the domestic population (accidents DO happen).

A BYBer does not care about the genetic health of their cats, diversity of pedigree or put the effort into researching and money into testing for health. This means you could be purchasing a kitten that is inbred which can result in FIP or have inherited fatal virus ie FeLV (Feline Leukemia) / FEV (Feline Aids) or genetic issues HCM (heart disease) PKD (kidney

disease).

As we all have a responsibility to our environment and the animals that share this planet with us we have been made aware of things like “free range” .... Is it any different for those that breed our companion pets? Is it fair to the parents of your new family member to sit in cages for their entire lives never knowing love and attention? BYBers do not see their breeding cats as pets, they are money making machines and these people should be STOPPED for their cruelty to animals, the only way to stop them is via their pockets, if you don't support them, they will stop breeding. A BYBer will breed their queens as many times a year and for as long as possible, this has a direct impact on the health of your prospective family member. A BYBer does not feed expensive Vet recommended food to their breeding cats, this results again in unhealthy kittens as the mother needs to be strong and healthy to feed her babies the nutrients that will support their immune system for the rest of their lives. The more breeding queens a breeder has the more profit they can make, too many cats kept in an environment causes stress, stress causes lowered immunity, lowered immunity causes sick kittens.

**A BYBer shuts ethical breeders down as a hobbyist as it is costly for the ethical breeder to breed but a business and a profit to the Back Yard Breeder. Ethical breeders cannot sell kittens for the lower prices because they DON'T cut costs.**