

# The Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier Fanciers' Association of Ontario Buyer's Guide



## What Is A Quality Breeder

1. Is a member in good standing with one or more breed clubs.
2. Cares about the future welfare of their puppies and will thoroughly screen all buyers.
3. Sells their puppies under Canadian Kennel Club Non-Breeding Contracts. Signing this contract as part of the condition of sale does not mean your puppy is inferior - it is simply an effort made by serious breeders to stop thoughtless breeding.
4. Properly socializes their puppies. They will be available to guide you should you have any questions about your puppy/dog.
5. Provides a fair and clear written guarantee detailing the conditions and circumstances under which they will refund the purchase price or replace a puppy.
6. Provides the Canadian Kennel Club registration for each puppy without extra charge.
7. Treats their dogs humanely. People who truly love the breed have great respect for their breeding dogs and treat them with exceptional care.

Once you have found a reputable and responsible breeder, be prepared to be placed on a waiting list until puppies are available. Unlike a retail business, breeders seldom have "stock on hand," and produce litters very selectively. You may have to wait a few months to get your special Wheaten, but anticipation is half the fun! Use this time wisely by purchasing the equipment you will need, finding out about training classes and reading all you can.

Remember! The Wheaten you choose can be expected to be part of your family for 12 to 15 or more years - choose wisely!



## Quality Hobby Breeder

Breeding a quality puppy is a serious labor of love, dedication and responsibility. The quality puppy is the result of the breeder's love of dogs, a dedication to the breed and a responsibility to the dogs for as long as they live. The quality puppy comes from a breeder who acknowledges responsibility for every puppy produced. A quality pet begins with a careful breeding program in which the characteristics and temperaments of the puppy's ancestors are known to the breeder. Animals being bred undergo careful evaluation and medical screening. A quality breeder tries to produce a pet who is as close as possible to the breed standard (the blueprint of what a Wheaten should be). Once the puppies are born, the quality pet is the result of careful socialization and human bonding by the breeder. A well socialized, "people-oriented" pup is the result of positive contact with humans from the first days of its life. Since

puppies learn a tremendous amount from their mother, the temperament and socialization of the dam is of primary importance to the personality of the pup. A quality puppy comes from a quality breeder.



### **Pet Shop, Commercial Kennels and Puppy Brokers**

Purebred puppies sold by pet shops, brokers or commercial puppy selling operations generally originate from U.S. based, mass-production kennels of purebred dogs. Commonly known as puppy mills or farms, these large breeding establishments can be found throughout Canada and the U.S., but are primarily located in Nebraska, Missouri, Oklahoma, Kansas, Iowa and Arkansas.

Individuals acting as puppy brokers, purchase litters from puppy mills or farms and sell them privately.



### **Some disadvantages of purchasing a mass-produced puppy from a commercial source are:**

#### **Unknown Background of Dam and Sire:**

It is unknown whether breeding stock of commercial breeding kennels is screened at all for heritable abnormalities, however, mass-produced puppies do not have supporting documentation of parents' clearances. There is absolutely no way of determining the temperament, health and conformation faults of the dam and sire (all of which can be passed on to puppies), therefore, it is impossible to predict if the puppy will likely be a good representative of the breed.

#### **Unknown Rearing Practices:**

Puppies destined for retail trade are bred and sold as a commodity. It is virtually impossible for the operators of these businesses to give an individual puppy the human socialization required to ensure normal temperament and behaviour development as there may be many hundreds of puppies produced in a year. It is common for a mass-produced puppy to have its first exposure to humans as it is being picked up and crated for shipment. Commercially bred puppies are usually removed from their dam and litter mates at far too young an age in order to be shipped to a brokerage and arrive at their final retail destination at the most "marketable" age of 6-7 weeks.

#### **Canadian Kennel Club Registration Difficulties:**

Canadian Kennel Club registration is not automatically granted to dogs, but must be applied for and certain conditions met. Not all U.S. imported dogs are eligible for registration. Each puppy must be individually identified by microchip before arriving in Canada.

## **THE SOFT-COATED WHEATEN TERRIER**



The Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier (Wheaten) was bred as an all-purpose farm dog and family companion in his native Ireland.

He was confined to the farm, and used for hunting vermin and herding the domestic farm animals. He became a valued member of the family, which may account for his gentleness when compared to other terriers.

The Wheaten shares a common ancestry with the Irish Terrier and the Kerry Blue Terrier, but is distinguished by his soft silky coat and merry disposition.

The Wheaten is a medium sized, hardy, well-balanced sporting terrier, square in outline, covered with a soft,

wavy coat of clear, warm, wheaten colour.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE SOFT-COATED WHEATEN TERRIER



**Physical Attributes** (for more information see the Breed Standard)

**Size** - Wheaten males should be 18 1/2 in. (47 cm); and females 17 1/2 in. (44 cm). Ideal weight for males is 35-40 lbs.(16-18 kg); for females 30-35 lbs.(14-16 kg) It is acceptable for these heights and weights to vary.

**Coat** - A distinguishing characteristic of the breed which sets the dog apart from all other terriers. An abundant single coat covering the entire body, legs and head; coat on the latter falls forward to shade the eyes, soft and silky texture with a gentle wave. In both puppies and adolescents, the mature wavy coat is generally not yet evident.

The Wheaten does not shed nor smell. These qualities often make the Wheaten suitable for families with allergies. He is a "high maintenance" breed. Considerable frequent grooming is required to keep his beautiful coat clean and free of mats. He should be trimmed to keep his coat within bounds and to preserve his terrier image.

**Colour** - The coat colour is wheaten, which means it has a warm golden hue. Puppies go through several phases before the adult coat stabilizes at 3-3 1/2 years of age. Newborn puppies range in colour from blonde to pale brown, deep red to dark mahogany. Both the brown and red may have dark tipping. Most puppies, except the blonde, have black on the muzzle and ears. It is difficult to predict adult color, since it is possible for any colour of newborn to become any colour of adult.

**Activity needs** - The Wheaten enjoys his daily walk and will self-exercise when securely confined in a fenced area or inside your home.

### Temperament

**General** - The Wheaten temperament is unique, combining the alert intelligence of the terrier with the steadiness of the working dog. A quick, lively affectionate dog, the Wheaten retains his puppy exuberance all his life. Anxious to please, he is easily trained. Many Wheatens have achieved obedience titles. A good traveler, eminently adaptable, he can enjoy life in the city or the country, just as long as he is close to his people. Most are especially fond of children. The non-shedding, non-odorous Wheaten can make a fine pet for the family who enjoys the traditional "Wheaten Welcome" - jumping and kissing. However, the Wheaten is not everyone's perfect pet. The Wheaten is wonderfully exuberant and spirited, and while they are not as aggressive as other terriers, they have a mind of their own. Their training must be accomplished by consistent but gentle discipline, and by frequent human contact. He is best trained with positive affirmation of good behaviour; harsh treatment may make him stubborn. Most Wheatens will bark an alarm when people approach, but generally they are quieter than the smaller terriers. He must be carefully fenced or walked on a lead.

**With Adults** - Generally Wheatens get along with adults.

**With Children** - Great care needs to be exercised when acquiring any puppy of any breed with children under four (4) years of age in the family. Children enjoy the Wheaten's playful personality.

**With Elderly** - With elderly people in the family, the Wheaten's bouncy nature needs to be taken into account. Their natural exuberance may make the elderly uncomfortable.

### Care:

**Training** - There is nothing more pleasurable than living with a well-behaved dog. An obedient dog is under the owner's control at all times. The dog will sit, stay and come on command. Puppies would benefit from "puppy kindergarten" or "puppy party" classes starting prior to 18 weeks of age.

**Grooming** - Wheatens should be combed every other day, bathed every other week and trimmed every other month. Who's Responsible? Grooming is an adult task. Discuss the grooming requirements with breeders.

**Veterinary** - Regular veterinary care is required. Adult dogs need annual examinations and vaccinations. Immunities are not usually complete when a puppy goes home and require boosters to complete their immunities.



## HEALTH OF THE SOFT-COATED WHEATEN TERRIER

Like all dogs, Wheatens are subject to hip and eye disorders. In order to reduce the incidence of these abnormalities, ethical breeders have all breeding stock screened by veterinary specialists before their dogs are bred. These dogs will be issued a certificate of examination. The Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier Fanciers' Association of Ontario outlines, in their Code of Ethics, the tests required and their frequency.

A hip certificate is issued by the Ontario Veterinary College (at 18 months of age) or the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (at 24 months of age) to any dog with pelvic x-rays showing no sign of hip dysplasia. Hip dysplasia means literally bad development of the hips. The hip is a ball and socket joint and normal function depends on good fit of the ball within the socket. In hip dysplasia, the fit of the joint is loose and thus the harmony of the joint movement is disturbed.

Like all dogs, Wheatens may develop protein losing disease which affects kidney and liver function. Some Wheatens have allergic reactions to environment and food.

It is important to remember that breeding "clear" dogs does not absolutely guarantee puppies will not be affected. It is not always possible to determine which genes the dam and sire carry and if the combination of genes will express abnormalities in offspring. However, there is no doubt that breeding non-affected animals greatly increases the chance of producing non-affected offspring.



## Is a Wheaten the Right Dog For You?

We think Wheatens are just about perfect, but there are a few people who should think twice before buying one. Be aware that Wheatens are terriers and as such may need to be trained not to dig.

If you feel you need a guard dog, another breed might be a better choice. A Wheaten may bark when strangers arrive; however, these dogs tend to be "friendly marshmallows." Wheatens need to be exercised on a daily basis. A fenced yard is a bonus.

All dogs are social animals and Wheatens are more social than most. They need human companionship and attention! If you work outside the home all day and are gone most evenings and weekends, please consider carefully if it is fair to keep any dog at all. You may expect to pay \$350.00 to \$450.00 per year for feed as well as about \$200.00 for basic annual veterinary costs. If this is your first dog, be aware that Wheatens require more trimming and grooming than other breeds. Grooming equipment and supplies are necessary. The cost of these should be evaluated before purchasing a puppy. Contact your local veterinarian for the cost of spaying/neutering.

## "But I Just Want A Family Pet"



It is a popular misconception that private breeders of purebred dogs produce only "show dogs." The fact is that the vast majority of puppies in breeders' litters are placed in carefully chosen homes to become companion/pet dogs.

You may hear puppies in a litter described as "pet quality" or "show quality." A minor fault only noticeable to the most experienced fancier (e.g. coat texture or colouring) may make an otherwise outstanding puppy non-competitive in the show ring but extremely suitable as a family dog.