

## A kitten under 10wks old

Written by Melanie - Last Updated Friday, 30 April 2010 05:38

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We receive many enquiries from people wanting to purchase and take home kittens at 9, 8 or 7 weeks old and sometimes even younger! Firstly if you are purchasing a kitten from a Registered Breeder they are NOT allowed to let kittens go home under 10 weeks of age as registered breeders sign contracts and agree to a number of terms and conditions and a Code of Ethics that are put into place to protect the animals, breeders and buyers. ♦

The code of Ethics that breeders must abide by is put in place by the NSW Cat Fanciers Association which registered breeders in NSW must be a member of. The Code of Ethics is below and will give you an idea of what you should expect from a responsible registered breeder. ♦ If ANY registered breeder is prepared to let you take home a kitten under 9 and 1/2 weeks old I would strongly recommend you DON'T purchase a kitten from that breeder for a number of reasons..... ♦

Firstly this would tend to indicate that the breeder may be looking to just turn the kittens over as quickly as possible which would obviously be a financial advantage for them. The longer the breeder keeps the kitten/s the more it is going to cost them and the more work is involved as they will have more cleaning to do and they will need to pay for food, litter, additional worming treatments, visits to the vet and possibly additional vaccinations if they are due etc etc

Secondly this would indicate that they don't have the kittens health and welfare at heart. A kitten is not only still at an important time of development health wise under 10 weeks of age but between 6 and 10 weeks of age they are still learning so much from their mother including using litter trays, cleaning and grooming, behaviour and socialisation skills and so much more. ♦

**It is really in the buyers interest to NOT get a kitten this young. ♦**

In my opinion the longer the kitten is with its mother the better off for both the kitten and the new owner. Recent studies have shown that animals that are removed from their mother early are more likely to developed behavioural problems including inappropriate elimination, biting and aggressive behaviour as well as possible health related issues.

A good responsible breeder should evaluate each kitten individually before confirming that the kitten is ready for a new home. There are a number of developmental and health goals that need to be reached before going to a new home. Some of the factors that should be considered may be:

**1. Has the kitten reached an appropriate going home age? (eg about 10 - 12 weeks)**

**2. Is the kitten at a suitable weight? At 10 week old a kitten should be about 1kg (different breeds can vary). I would not recommend taking home a kitten much under 1kg.**

**3. Is the kitten familiar with and eating a wide range of top quality vet recommend foods and foods suitable for human consumption?**

**If you get a kitten that has been raised on only 1 type of food this may not be a brand that you can get hold of easily and may mean the kitten will be a fussy eater. Also what**

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are you going to do if that brand is sold out or discontinued.

**4.** Is the kitten confidently using the litter tray.

**5.** Has the kitten been well socialised and is he/she friendly and affectionate? The kitten should NOT be fearful.

**6.** To the breeders knowledge: Is the kitten healthy and flea free?

**7.** No nasal discharge

**8.** Clean Ears and Skin.

**9.** Bright Eyes with no pussy discharge.

**10.** Pink gums and correctly aligned teeth

**11.** Well-proportioned body

**12.** Shiny coat

**13.** Good eyesight and hearing-check this by jingling your keys and seeing if the kitten responds. ?? Always have your new kitten examined by your veterinarian as soon as possible. If there is a medical problem, you should be able to return the kitten to the breeder.

**14.** Has the kitten been vet checked?

**15.** Has the kitten been vaccinated at least 14 days prior to going home?

**16.** Has the kitten been wormed regularly (at least 4 times by 10 weeks) and are all medications and inoculations/vaccinations up to date.

**17.** Is all the paperwork in order to pass onto the new owners. Eg, Vaccination certificate, Microchip information, Kitten care info, Diet info.

**18.** Is the breeder prepared to guarantee the health of the kitten for A MINIMUM of 14 days after the kitten goes home?

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class="Apple-style-span" color="#008000"><img alt="diamond symbol" data-bbox="115 95 130 110"/></font></p><p> </p><p><span style="color: #000080; font-size: 16px; line-height: normal" class="Apple-style-span"><table border="0" width="700px"><tr><td style="font-family: Tahoma; color: #000080"><h1 style="text-align: center; font-size: x-large; font-weight: 400"><font face="Arial">CODE OF ETHICS</font></h1><p style="font-size: 12px; font-family: Tahoma; color: #000080; text-align: justify; font-weight: normal" class="style4"><font face="Arial"><font class="Apple-style-span" color="#000000">The NSW Cat Fancier<img alt="diamond symbol" data-bbox="115 200 130 215"/>s Association has issued a Code of Ethics as set out below:</font></font></p><font size="2"><p align="JUSTIFY"><font face="Arial"><font class="Apple-style-span" color="#000000">Each member shall :-</font></font></p><ol><li><font face="Arial"><font class="Apple-style-span" color="#000000">Ensure that all cats and kittens in their care are hygienically housed, properly fed, watered, groomed and receive prompt veterinary attention when required.</font></font></li><li><font face="Arial"><font class="Apple-style-span" color="#000000">Observe the Rules and Procedures of the NSW Cat Fanciers<img alt="diamond symbol" data-bbox="115 325 130 340"/> Association Inc and in particular the procedures pertaining to the treatment and control of infectious disease.</font></font></li><li><font face="Arial"><font class="Apple-style-span" color="#000000">Not knowingly misrepresent the characteristics of a breed, nor falsely advertise nor mislead any person regarding the pedigree or performance of any cat or kitten.</font></font></li><li><font face="Arial"><font class="Apple-style-span" color="#000000">Not allow any entire cats under the member<img alt="diamond symbol" data-bbox="115 430 130 445"/>s care to roam free, except under supervision, to prevent accidental matings.</font></font></li><li><font face="Arial"><font class="Apple-style-span" color="#000000">Ensure that the Certificate of Registration is transferred to the new owner<img alt="diamond symbol" data-bbox="115 535 130 550"/>s name when a cat or kitten has been sold for showing or breeding.</font></font></li><li><font face="Arial"><font class="Apple-style-span" color="#000000">Not mate or breed pedigreed cats unless the member becomes a breeder member by obtaining a Breeder<img alt="diamond symbol" data-bbox="115 640 130 655"/>s Prefix issued by the association. The breeder<img alt="diamond symbol" data-bbox="115 745 130 760"/>s prefix will be noted on the member<img alt="diamond symbol" data-bbox="115 850 130 865"/>s membership card.</font></font></li></ol><p align="JUSTIFY"><font face="Arial"><font class="Apple-style-span" color="#000000">Each Breeder member shall :-</font></font></p><ol><li><font face="Arial"><font class="Apple-style-span" color="#000000">Not mate a female under 10 months of age nor overbreed a queen, ensuring that she has not more than 2 litters each 12 months. It is recommended that a queen not have more than 3 litters in any 24 month period.</font></font></li><li><font face="Arial"><font class="Apple-style-span" color="#000000">Ensure that a pedigreed cat is not mated to a pedigreed cat of another breed unless such mating is approved by the Association.</font></font></li><li><font face="Arial"><font class="Apple-style-span" color="#000000">Not sell or transfer a kitten under the age of 10 weeks, and vaccination must be commenced at least 14 days before the date on which the new owner takes possession of the kitten. It is recommended that the first vaccination be administered by a qualified Veterinary Practitioner.</font></font></li><li><font face="Arial"><font class="Apple-style-span" color="#000000">Ensure that before sale each kitten is fully weaned, healthy, vaccinated, microchipped and litter trained. Unless agreed otherwise by the breeder and purchaser, breeders shall accept reasonable financial responsibility for the health status of a kitten for 2 weeks after the date on which the new owner takes possession of the kitten.</font></font></li><li><font face="Arial"><font class="Apple-style-span" color="#000000">Provide all purchasers of cats and kittens with written details of all dietary, grooming, worming, and vaccination requirements. The pedigree

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and vaccination certificate are the birthright of the cat or kitten and must be given to the new owner. Information to contact appropriate breed clubs should also be supplied.

- Not sell cats or kittens to commercial cat wholesalers, nor to non PIAA accredited retail pet dealers, nor allow a cat or kitten to be given as a prize or donation to a contest of any kind.
- Ensure, when selling or transferring a cat or kitten to another person for breeding or showing, that all documents required by the NSW Cat Fanciers Association Procedures are provided to the purchaser or the transferee on completion of the sale.
- Ensure, when selling or transferring a cat or kitten to another person for breeding, that the new owner is a member of a recognised controlling body and has, or intends to have, an approved breeder's prefix.
- Breed cats for the purpose of improving the standard of the breed and not primarily for the pet market.