

DNA and Breed I.D.

Advances in DNA testing illuminate the world of dogs.

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An area in which the implications may be mixed is that of breed identification for dogs in which breed-specific legislation is involved. Owners could use DNA to prove their dog is not a member of a target breed. However, outside entities might also use DNA to prove a dog was in fact a member of a target breed.

Evolutionary findings may prove troublesome to breeds targeted for breed-specific legislation, as it could conceivably be argued that progenitor breeds are "wolf-like." However, the fact that breeds such as the Pekingese are in this progenitor group, and that they are not exactly considered a menace to society, should help in any debate based on DNA sharing with wolves.

The complete report, "Genetic Structure of the Purebred Domestic Dog," originally appeared in the journal *Science*, and can be accessed through the AKC Canine Health Foundation.