

WELSH SPRINGER SPANIEL AKC LITTER AND REGISTRATION STATISTICS

By Richard Rohrbacher, WSSCA AKC Delegate

As requested by several WSSCA members, I present the following AKC Litter and AKC Registration Statistics for Welsh Springer Spaniels. Statistics are presented based on availability from the AKC— earlier years have some incomplete statistics. Overall, I am pleased to see how well Welshie litter and individual dog registrations rebounded from the 2009 low to more typical ranges, and that litter production and puppy counts have rebounded and on upward trend to 2020 and 2021 highs.

FIGURE 1: WSS BREEDERS*

Year	WSSCA Member Breeders	Non-Member Breeders	TOTAL BREEDERS	% WSSCA Members
2016	22	21	43	51%
2017	15	24	39	38%
2018	14	23	37	38%
2019	15	21	36	42%
2020	10	29	39	26%
2021	21	26	47	45%
2022	22	25	47	47%
2023	26	29	55	47%

*Primary breeder = listed first on litter registration

FIGURE 2: WSS LITTER COUNTS BY YEAR**

Year	Litters Bred by WSSCA Members	Litters Bred by Non-Members	TOTAL LITTERS	% Litters Bred by Members
2016	25	26	51	49%
2017	15	30	45	33%
2018	18	29	47	38%
2019	16	32	48	33%
2020	13	36	49	27%
2021	29	33	62	47%
2022	26	32	58	45%
2023	29	10	39	74%

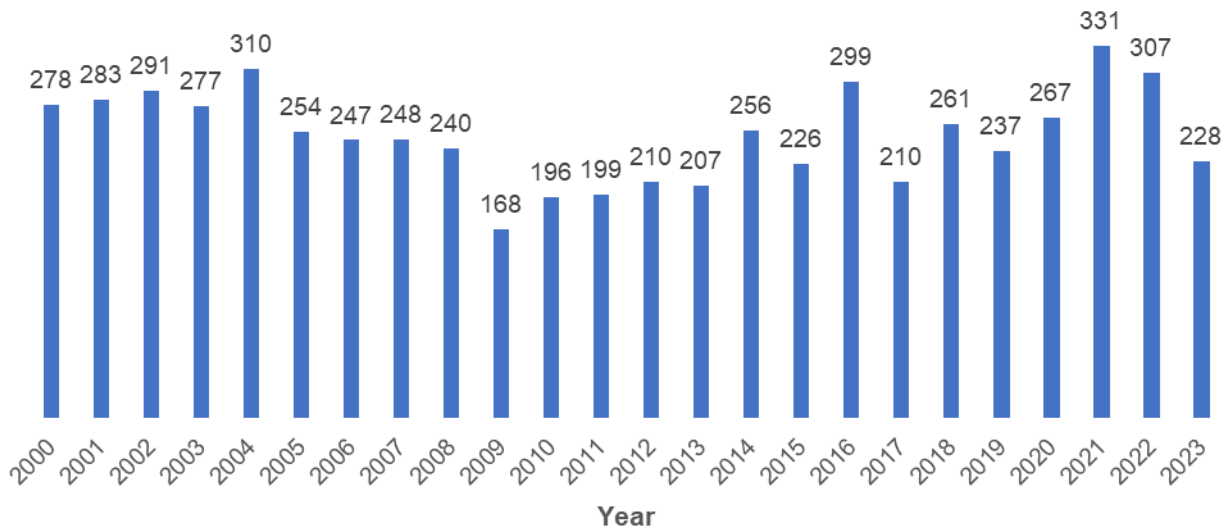
**Unique litters and primary breeder

I received the same charts for German Shepherds, Pugs, and Irish Setters. In comparison, Welsh Springer Spaniels exceed all three of the noted breeds in the

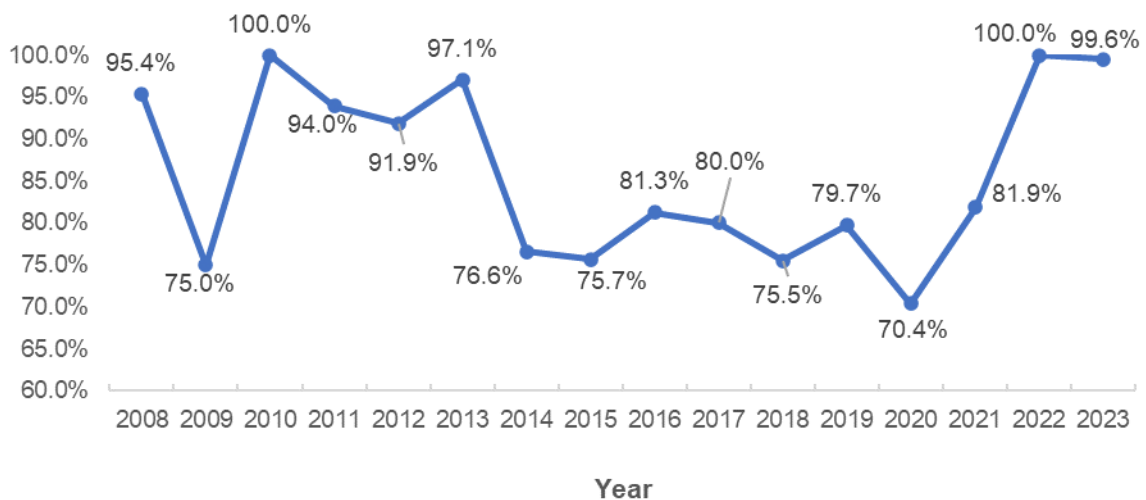
number of Parent Club members breeding and the number of litters bred by members. The three listed breeds were all well under 10% for both the status of breeders and litters bred. Figure 1 and Figure 2 demonstrate the way WSSCA members protect the breed in their use of the Limited Registration option for puppies sold as pets (non-show, non-breeding).

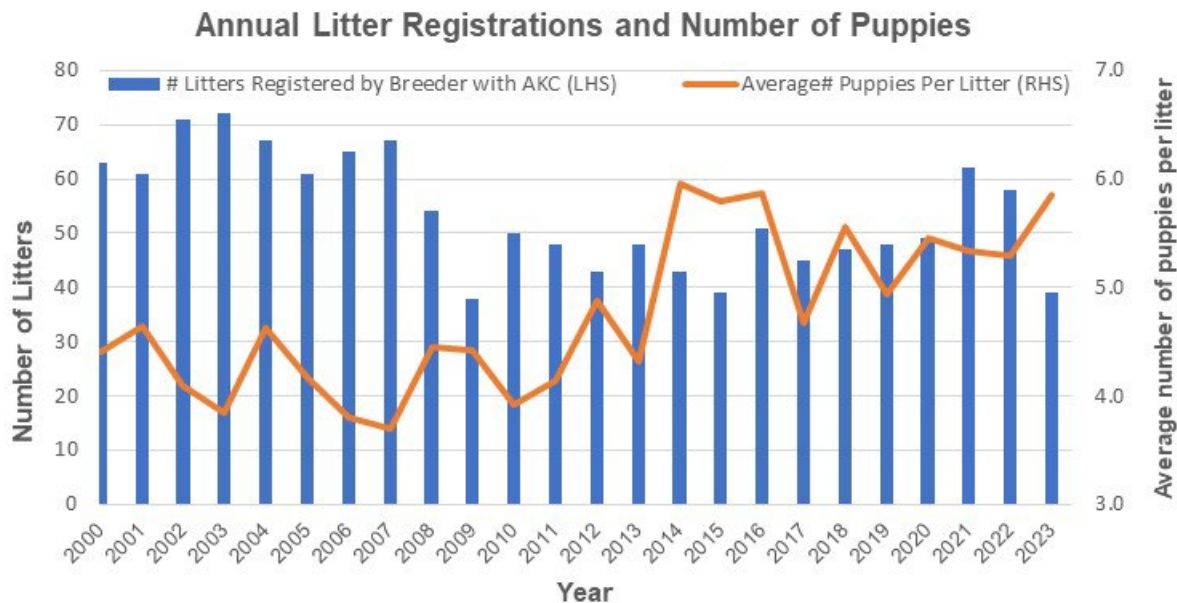
The charts below and Figure 3 and Figure 4 provide metrics of Registered Litter counts and Total Registrations. 2008 is the first year more complete registration statistics are available from the AKC.

Dogs in Litters Registered with AKC By Breeder



% Dogs in Litters that were AKC registered





Years 2002-2004 show the most litters produced. I presume the steady drop-off in litters and puppies produced year-to-year to long time breeders retiring or breeding less, if at all. 2009 showed a precipitous drop in litters produced and dogs registered at the AKC. I presume that the economic environment of that time in recent past probably impacted Welsh Springers and the AKC litter and dog registrations. The years 2020 through 2022 saw a huge demand for Welsh Springer puppies and increased puppy production. The pandemic and the aftermath of the pandemic pushed demand as more people were working from home and/or deciding to retire. We also see an upward trend in the average number of puppies per litter since the early 2000s--possibly due to more advanced breeding and related practices (e.g. progesterone testing, semen evaluation, artificial insemination, surgical insemination, etc.) being leveraged more frequently in recent years.

These metrics do not highlight the litter production rate by unique primary breeder (i.e. some breeders produce multiple litters per year and others produce litters less frequently or may have fully retired from breeding Welsh Springer Spaniels). Nor do they highlight the age demographic of the breeders themselves to assist us to understand the risk we face in our US-based WSS population, especially as more breeders who were actively producing litters decide to retire their programs, and the up-and-coming generation of WSS breeders must carry-on in the future.

FIGURE 3: WSS LITTERS & DOG COUNTS BY YEAR***

Year	# Dogs in Litters Registered by Breeder with AKC	# Litters Registered by Breeder with AKC	# Dogs Registered	% Dogs in Litters that were AKC registered	Average# Puppies Per Litter
2000	278	63	N/A	N/A	4.4
2001	283	61	N/A	N/A	4.6
2002	291	71	N/A	N/A	4.1
2003	277	72	N/A	N/A	3.8
2004	310	67	N/A	N/A	4.6
2005	254	61	N/A	N/A	4.2
2006	247	65	N/A	N/A	3.8
2007	248	67	N/A	N/A	3.7
2008	240	54	229	95%	4.4
2009	168	38	126	75%	4.4
2010	196	50	196	100%	3.9
2011	199	48	187	94%	4.1
2012	210	43	193	92%	4.9
2013	207	48	201	97%	4.3
2014	256	43	196	77%	6.0
2015	226	39	171	76%	5.8
2016	299	51	243	81%	5.9
2017	210	45	168	80%	4.7
2018	261	47	197	75%	5.6
2019	237	48	189	80%	4.9
2020	267	49	188	70%	5.4
2021	331	62	271	82%	5.3
2022	307	58	307	100%	5.3
2023	228	39	227	100%	5.8

***Unique litters and Dogs by Year

FIGURE 4: WSS REGISTRATIONS** BY YEAR**

Year	AKC Dog Registrations	Foreign Registrations	Total Dogs Registered
2008	234	6	240
2009	166	2	168
2010	190	6	196
2011	194	5	199
2012	201	9	210
2013	204	3	207
2014	182	7	189
2015	195	5	200
2016	243	6	249
2017	178	4	182
2018	196	2	198
2019	185	4	189
2020	210	0	210
2021	273	1	274
2022	250	1	251
2023	177	10	187

**** Number of AKC+Foreign Individual Dog Registrations Processed in Year

August 21, 2024