

Abyssinian & Somali (ABY – SOM)

Breeding programme 17/05/2025



Note: the most recent updates can be found at: [Breeding Decision – Breeding Programmes Cats | Vlaanderen.be](https://www.vlaanderen.be/cats)



Other names

Somali is sometimes also called Abyssinian Longhair (CFA)

Abyssinian and **Somali** are sister breeds that share the same standard, except for coat length. Somali is long-haired. Abyssinian is short-haired. Free crossbreeding is always possible. No additional permission is required.

Aim of the programme

The breeding programme aims to reduce the most common hereditary disorders without excluding too many cats, in order to maintain genetic diversity within the breed population.

Instead of systematically excluding animals, we have drawn up breeding recommendations based on carefully considered combinations. The physical health of the animals is of course taken into account, and cats suffering from one of these disorders are excluded from breeding.

Performance tests

CONDITION	RECOMMENDATION	SCREENING METHOD	AGE	FREQUENCY
Pyruvate Kinase Deficiency (PKDef)	Mandatory	DNA test <i>PKLR</i> : c.707-53G>A	From birth For the ^{1st} mating	One-time
Progressive Retinal Atrophy (PRA rdAc)	Mandatory	DNA test <i>CEP290</i> : c.7584+9T>G	From birth For the ^{1st} mating	One-off
Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM)	Recommended	Echocardiography	From 12 months	Valid for 2 years
Polycystic Kidney Disease (PKD)	Recommended	Ultrasound	From 12 months	One-time
Patella Luxation (PL)	Recommended	Palpation of the kneecap	From 12 months For the ^{1st} mating	One-time

*For DNA testing:

Free by descent: when both parents of a breeding animal have been tested free of an affected or abnormal allele by means of DNA and parentage verification has shown that they are the parents, the breeding animal does not need to be tested again, but it can be assumed that the breeding animal is also free of the affected or abnormal allele in question.

Breeding advice per performance test

Breeding advice is given here (schematically and in table form) for every possible parent combination.

- **Positive advice** or green means that this is a suitable mating based on this test.
- **A conditional positive recommendation** or orange means that this is not an ideal pairing based on this test, but that the pairing is permitted. Such combinations are permitted in order not to compromise the genetic diversity of a breed.
- **Breeding ban** or red means that this is not a suitable pairing based on this test. These animals may not be combined.

Animals suffering from autosomal **recessive disorders** may only be used if the welfare of the animal and its offspring is assured.

CONDITION	POSSIBLE SCREENING RESULT	BREEDING ADVICE					
		Male	Free	carrier	sufferer	No result	
Pyruvate Kinase Deficiency (PKDef)	<p>This is an autosomal recessive inheritance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Free Carrier (1 normal and 1 affected gene copy) Affected (2 affected gene copies) No result 	Female					
		free					
		carrier					
		sufferer					
Progressive Retinal Atrophy (PRA rdAc)	<p>This is an autosomal recessive inheritance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Free Carrier (1 normal and 1 affected gene copy) Affected (2 affected gene copies) No result 	Female					
		free					
		carrier					
		sufferer					
Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Normal: no signs of HCM are visible on echocardiography. suspicious: there are signs visible on echocardiography that may indicate HCM. The cat must be retested after 1 year. Affected: clear signs of HCM are visible on echocardiography. No result: no echocardiography was performed. 	Female	Male cat	Normal	Suspicious	Affected	No result
		Normal					
		Suspicious					
		Affected					
		No result					

CONDITION	POSSIBLE RESULT OF SCREENING	BREEDING ADVICE					
		Male	Female cat	Nor mal	Sus pici ous	Affe cted	No res ult
Polycystic Kidney Disease (PKD)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Normal: no signs of PKD are visible on the ultrasound. Suspicious: very minor abnormalities are visible on ultrasound that may be consistent with PKD. However, these are not sufficiently specific. Affected: there are signs of PKD visible on the ultrasound scan. No result: no ultrasound scan of the kidneys was performed. 	Normal		Normal			
		Suspicious					
		Affected					
		No result					

CONDITION	POSSIBLE SCREENING RESULT	BREEDING ADVICE							
		Male cat	Female cat	G r a d e 0	G r a d e 1	G r a d e 2	G r a d e 3	G r a d e 4	No res ult .
Patella Luxation (PL)	<p>The degree of the most severely affected knee is considered the final degree for the animal</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Grade 0: Normal. Grade 1: The patella can be luxated manually, but returns to its normal position when released. Grade 2: Patella luxates during knee flexion or manual manipulation and only returns to its normal position after knee extension or manual reduction. Grade 3: Patella is continuously luxated and can be manually replaced, but will spontaneously luxate again when manual pressure is removed. Grade 4: Patella is constantly dislocated and cannot be manually repositioned. No result: no examination was performed 	Grade 0							
		Grade 1							
		Grade 2							
		Grade 3							
		Grade 4							
		No result							

General breeding advice

The **mandatory tests** must be carried out in accordance with the specified conditions and frequency. If one or more of these results is a 'breeding ban', this combination may not be carried out.

Depending on the number of clinical examinations that may result in a **conditional positive breeding recommendation (orange)**, a maximum number of conditional positive results is permitted:

- 1-2 examinations: max. 1 conditional positive
- 3-4 examinations: max. 2 conditional positives
- 5 or more examinations: max. 3 conditional positive results

In such cases, **further follow-up** by the breeder is required before repeating such mating.

The **inbreeding coefficient** in the FBe database is calculated using Wright's formula **over 5 generations** (if known).

The inbreeding coefficient (COI) of an offspring may **be a maximum of 1% higher than the average COI of both parents**.

If **fewer than 3 generations** of the parents are known, the combination is only permitted if there are no common ancestors on both the father's and mother's side. All breeding recommendations for the mandatory tests must then be positive. A female cat may not be mated with her grandfather, her father, her brother, her half-brother, her son or her grandson.

To prevent disease-causing mutations from spreading too widely within the breed or population, it is essential not to allow a male cat to mate too often (popular sire effect). In this way, we limit the spread of harmful genetic variants and contribute to the long-term health of the breed.

Our website:

<http://www.felisbelgica.be/>

Our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/Felis-Belgica-255959984470978/>

Our Instagram page:

<https://instagram.com/felisbelgica>

