



Health Standards Committee



RECOMMENDED CODE of PRACTICE for the PREPARATION and TRANSPORTATION OF KOI TO SHOWS

1. All Koi should be in good health, and to enable an accurate assessment should have been in the pond for a number of weeks.
2. All Koi should be observed over a period of time to ensure that their general behaviour is normal, i.e. they are swimming correctly, not hanging in mid water, sat on the bottom with fins clamped or constantly gasping for air at the surface.
3. The external condition of the Koi should be observed to ensure they have no body damage, swelling, redness or excessive mucus. Check also the condition of the fins, gills, mouth, eyes, scales and skin.
4. The Koi should not be actively fed for at least 5 days prior to travelling to the Show or moving to another pond where they will be in the bag for more than 40 minutes (20 minutes floating, 20 minutes preparation and travelling). This should help to reduce the amount of toxins in the transport bags and also significantly reduce the Ammonia levels in your show vat and consequently the amount of stress your Koi may have to endure.
5. There should have been a reasonable period since the last time the Koi was shown; it is recommended that this be 30 days. This should have allowed the Koi to recover from its last outing, and thus reduce the likelihood of stress.
6. Before the actual show day, make sure you have all of the equipment required to hand, i.e. suitable sized containers and bags for the size of the Koi concerned and extra bags to be taken in case of damage, plenty of spare elastics bands (cello-tape or similar tapes, cable ties etc are not recommended to secure the bags containing water and Koi), enough oxygen, a suitable sized catching net and handling sock net if required. The Koi should be doubled bagged to reduce the possibility of leakage and damage during transit. Exhibitors should ensure that their Koi are not overcrowded in the bags, 1 Koi to 1 bag is recommended. Overcrowding causes stress and damage to your show Koi in many cases.
7. When catching the Koi they should be closely examined to ensure they are fit and healthy before bagging — this should include checking for body damage, swellings, redness, excess mucus and the visible parasites i.e. Argulus, Anchor worm and Leech. The condition of the fins, gills, mouth, eyes, scales and skin should also be included. For the smaller sizes of Koi, it may be easier to carry out the checks while the Koi is in the bag. If at the end of the checks you are in any doubt as to the suitability of a particular Koi to fulfill the health requirements for entry into a show then leave it in the pond and you will avoid the embarrassment of being refused entry for that Koi into the show.
8. When the Koi is placed into the bag, the water should at least cover the gills, and be from the pond where the Koi is normally kept. The bag should then be filled with oxygen to reduce stress and help respiration. If oxygen is not available then use an airline from your air pump to fill the bag.
9. The bagged Koi should be placed into a suitable container (e.g. cardboard container) with the lid closed and be carefully placed into the vehicle to minimise potential movement during transit and to exclude light where possible. The bagged Koi should wherever possible be placed parallel across the vehicle axle so that the Koi will roll from side to side rather than front to back in case the vehicle has to brake suddenly. However, the placement recommendation does not apply to a bag that contains Koi that can turn around freely within the bag because Koi of that size are not constrained by the width of the bag and will find their own position.
10. Exhibitors must not leave the Show until their Koi have been benched and signed for and a telephone contact number in case of emergencies with their Koi has been left with the Show Chairman / Benching team.
11. If anyone has any doubts or concerns about how to implement any of the advice above, then they should seek help from the relevant Show Committee or Show Organisers.

**Taken from the Show Rules & Guidelines (v.12) (currently under revision) of the British Koi Keepers Society –
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