

Why do our kittens cost what they cost?

A common question I receive often is can I take less for a kitten. On some occasions we have given a small discount but this is the exception and not the norm. In these cases, people have asked all the right questions and have demonstrated that they are making a well thought out decision to purchase their kitten.

Breeding done ethically, responsibly and with the goal of producing healthy, well socialized lifelong companions is not a cheap endeavor. The costs and time begin long before you take home your new furbaby. It begins with the investment in our breeding stock and carries on with a solid nutrition program, a respectful partnership with a trusted vet, maintenance of our home conducive to raising animals, fostering relationships with potential purchasers and finally properly caring for and nurturing your soon to be companion. It does not end there for us. We provide life time breeder support and an extensive health guarantee.

There is a lot that goes into raising a healthy, well adjusted, socialized pet. This initially starts with the purchase of quality and healthy breeding cats that possess all the qualities that we are promoting within our breeding program. We find a breeder who also does all the health testing on their breeding cats, who also breeds to produce well balanced kittens and aims to breed to breed standard. The time and money that this takes them is reflected in the price of the cats we purchase. Once home with us we introduce them to our vet who follows them along for life and immediately start feeding them a superior quality diet to ensure proper growth. Our home is set up with an enriched environment and they are well socialized from the day we bring them home. As the initial socialization is crucial to the off spring they will produce. We take responsibility for the animals we purchase not just for the duration of their breeding years but into when the time comes to spay or neuter and provide them with a comfortable and well-deserved retirement.

Over the last 20 years we, in conjunction with our trusted vet, have established a solid nutrition plan for all our animals. Different stages of their lives require different feed programs. All of these feed regimens are of top quality and therefore are of top cost. Our home is set up with designated birthing areas, nurseries once the kittens start exploring and a playroom once they have graduated from weaning. Newborns require that the nursery be kept at a consistent temperature of 32 degrees in addition to a proper heating pad kept at 85 degrees. All these spaces work together to provide them with confidence in their environment and enrichment for their brain and social development. Moms and dads have their own areas complete with climbing trees, comfy beds, scratching posts, toys and outdoor catio space. Litter is changed daily and dishes are washed with every feed. Beds, blankets, toys and environments are laundered and cleaned frequently.

Health is of top most priority for our entire breeding program. Health testing starts with a full DNA panel. Then at 10-12 months of age our cats have their first annual heart echocardiogram done by a board-certified cardiologist. When all that is clear, we then proceed with hip X-rays that are submitted to OFA for grading. This is considered the top standard of health testing in this breed. It helps to eliminate potential health problems known to occur in this breed. When starting your search for your Maine Coon I welcome you to check out "Maine Coon Canada" on Facebook as they offer a full comprehensive list of ethical breeders and lists the health testing each provides in their program. I have continued to educate myself and take courses such as PawPeds, specific to breeding healthy, genetically superior Maine Coons. Passing all the health testing is only a part of the ongoing veterinary and other associated costs.

Cats at all life stages require preventative vaccines and internal and external parasite control. Vaccines begin at 8 weeks followed by vaccines at 12 weeks, parasite control begins at 3 weeks and external parasite control begins at 6 months. All 3 protocols are ongoing maintenance throughout the life span of our animals. Diligent grooming includes brushing, bathing, clipping, cleaning ears, nail trims and even teeth cleaning. This is not only for health reasons but for the comfort of our animals.

Fostering a relationship with perspective adopting families is extremely important and time consuming. When we are approached by purchasers, we engage in a two-way dialogue that assures both parties that this is the right fit. We require an adoption form to be completed and in exchange we are open to answering any and all questions we may be asked. We are transparent in our policies and procedures and provide any additional information asked. Once we enter into a contract we understand the importance of early bonding with your pet. While it is not feasible nor safe to have people frequenting the premises due to the threat of possible disease being carried in, we do what we can to facilitate early bonding. This is done through frequent updates, pictures, and the occasional face time call so the kitten becomes familiar with your voice. Once the first round of vaccinations are done, we encourage an in person visit when possible. This early relationship fostering continues through the life time partnership with your pet. Each new life stage will bring questions, concerns and celebrations of milestones. We are here to offer advice, support and encouragement the whole way through.

Our role as a breeder is all consuming. We work hard morning to night, every day. There are no vacations, no sick days, no days off. Our cats receive constant care and catering to their needs, mental and physical. Breeding for us, is not about profit. We have a strong love and belief in our breed and work towards bettering the health and keeping the integrity of the breed alive. Anyone who has had the privilege of knowing this breed, knows how loving, unique and remarkable this breed truly is.

Now that you have made the decision to purchase a Maine Coon you will no doubt find a huge variance in the advertised purchase prices. We encourage you to do your research. There are reasons for health testing to be completed. There is a broad spectrum in the type and quality of breeders advertising. While some may sell their kittens for less, their profit margin is no doubt higher than ours. While those breeders may choose to cut corners initially in order to be able to offer you a lower purchase price, you undoubtedly will be the one to incur those costs down the road. This may be due to health issues and or behavioral issues or nutritional deficiencies. Our guarantee is that we have done our very best to give your pet the best possible chance at a long, healthy and happy life.