

Guidelines for the Exhibiting of Fruit, Vegetables, Flowers and Preserves

These are guidelines only. The Judges decision is final

You do not have to be a professional to exhibit in our show. Our show is for all those with an interest in gardening and we welcome all entries. Above all exhibiting should be fun! So we have put together the following guidelines to help any potential exhibitors stage their produce. You may be pleasantly surprised as to how much fun it is and even win a prize!

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Read The Schedule - there is lots of information already in there.

Note the requirements of each Class i.e. the number and size of exhibit.

Aim for uniformity in size, length and appearance.

Pick/cut your exhibits as late as possible but allow time for preparation, cleaning, etc.

Discard damaged flowers and leaves and misshapen fruit and vegetables.

Where appropriate, a small length of stalk must be retained e.g. on beans, cucumbers and fruit.

Soil should be washed away, but no attempt must be made to polish specimens.

Where possible, retain the natural 'bloom'.

Small vegetables and fruit can be displayed on a plate, in a dish or on a doily.

Root vegetables, after cleaning, must be displayed with their roots intact.

FRUIT

Pick as near to Show time as practicable - retain stalks. Do not polish fruits - leave the natural bloom. Do not select over-ripe fruits.

Apples - Select large, solid unblemished fruits of shape and colour typical of the cultivar with

stalks intact. Stage with eye uppermost and stalk end downwards, placing one fruit in the centre and the remaining around it. The centre fruit can be raised by placing a cushion of white tissue beneath it.

Blackcurrants - Select large strings with plenty of berries. Berries should be large, ripe and

uniform on fresh stalks. Display on a plate, own foliage may be used for decoration.

Gooseberries - Select large ripe fruits of good colour with stalks. Stalks should look green and fresh and all point one way when staged.

Raspberries - Select large ripe fruits of good colour with stalks. Stalks and calyces should look green and fresh and all point one way when staged.

Redcurrants - Select large strings with plenty of berries. Berries should be large, ripe and

uniform on fresh stalks. Display on a plate, own foliage may be used for decoration.

Pears - As for apples, except that best arranged around the perimeter of a plate with stalks

towards the centre.

Plums - Select large ripe, but firm fruits of good colour, carrying bloom and with stalks. Best laid out in lines across the plate.

Strawberries - Select large ripe fruits of good colour with stalks. Stalks and calyces should look green and fresh and all point one way when staged.

VEGETABLES

Wash root vegetables carefully to remove soil - use soft cloth and plenty of water. Brushing will damage the skin. On other vegetables, retain the bloom wherever possible.

Beetroot - Select uniform size beetroot (not too large, between 50 and 70mm) with smooth skin. For cylindrical cultivars, root approximately 150mm in length. Retain full length of tap root. Judge may cut beetroot to check that flesh is uniform colour.

Broad Beans - Select fresh pods of uniform colour. Stage a uniform-sized exhibit with pods

arranged on a plate or directly on the bench; stalks at one end, tails at the other.

Cabbage - Select good shape with fresh, solid heart. Retain surrounding leaves intact with

bloom but remove outer discoloured leaves. Stage with approximately 75mm of stalk and head towards the front.

Carrots - Select full length roots of good shape, colour and size - free from side shoots and from green at the crown.

Cauliflower - Select heads with symmetrical, close, solid, white curds, free from stain or

frothiness. Prior to judging exclude light from curd. Normally staged with approximately 75mm of stalk and leaves trimmed back to the level of the outside of the curd.

Celery - Select only heads that have no diseased or pest-damaged foliage and that have been damaged by slugs. Reject specimens with heart rot or with flower heads forming. Place a tie round the base of the leaves to prevent breaking and clean by a continuous flushing with water; ensure all pests are removed. Before staging, neatly trim off the roots, leaving a pointed butt end.

Courgettes - Select young, tender uniform fruit of 100-200mm in length or if round approximately 75mm. Display flat, with or without flower still attached.

Cucumbers - Select fresh, young, straight fruits of uniform thickness, with short stems and

flowers still attached - retain waxy bloom.

Leeks - Select solid, thick, long-shafted, well blanched, tight collared leeks with clean, blemish free skins and no bulbing. Avoid excess stripping of outer leaves.

Wash carefully. Stage with roots to the front.

Lettuce - Lift with roots intact in the evening or early morning when the leaves are turgid. Fresh heads of uniform and attractive colours are essential. Roots should be washed, wrapped in moist tissue, inserted in a plastic bag and neatly tied. Wash, avoiding soil particles collecting between the leaves. Remove only markedly damaged outside leaves, and stage laid on the show bench with the hearts facing the front.

Marrows - Select young, tender uniform fruits which should be less than 380mm long, or if round less than 500mm in circumference. Stage directly on the bench after wiping clean.

Onions - Select uniform well-ripened bulbs of good colour. Avoid removing too much skin.

Necks should be firm and thin. Tops should be tied with uncoloured raffia or string. Trim roots to the base of the onion. May be staged on rings or soft collars.

Parsnips - Select well-developed, well-shouldered, smooth skinned white roots. Roots should be full length and free from side roots.

Peppers - Select fresh, brightly coloured fruit - stage with stalk.

Potatoes - Select equally matched, medium sized (between 170g and 225g) tubers with shallow eyes. Should be free from skin blemishes. Stage on plate. Cover to exclude light until just before judging.

Radishes - The body of the radish should be fresh, firm, medium sized, young, tender and

brightly coloured. It should be free from blemishes and with foliage retained and tied in a

bunch.. Dig at the last possible moment to retain maximum turgidity.

Rhubarb - For show purposes this is a vegetable. Select fresh, straight, thick stalks. Trim leaves back to approximately 75mm. Cut off any bud scales at the bottom and wipe clean.

Runner Beans - Select straight tender pods of even length and good colour with no sign of

seeds. Exhibit with stalk intact.

Shallots - Bulbs should be well ripened with thin necks. Remove loose skins and roots. Tie or

whip tops neatly with uncoloured raffia or string. Stage on dry sand in saucer or tray.

Tomatoes - Select medium-sized (approximately 65mm diameter), ripe but firm richly coloured fruit, stalks attached. Avoid overripe fruit or those with "greenback". Stage on plate with stalk uppermost.

FLOWERS

Select flowers in good fresh "condition", i.e. in the most perfect stage of its possible beauty and free from damage due to weather, pests and diseases. Flowers should be displayed in a plain container (vase) having a greater height than the width measurement of its mouth. No account is taken of the container when judging the material shown in it.

Dahlias - are subject to the rules of the Dahlia Society. Select clean blooms with florets intact, firm and free from blemish. Stem should be straight and

proportionate to the size of the bloom and the bloom held at an angle of not less than 45 degrees to the stem. Stage with blooms all facing in the same direction, not touching and with balanced effect. Retain some foliage on the stems if possible.

Delphiniums - Spikes are preferably shown with side shoots removed. Spikes should be in good condition, long, tapering or columnar in shape, with at least two thirds of florets open, and staged with a minimum of 100mm of stem visible below

the bottom florets. Florets should be of good substance and colour, whether of self, contrasting colour or striped, showing good placement. Presentation is important, with staging carried out to present an upright spike with clean foliage inserted to conceal packing.

Chrysanthemums - are subject to the rules of the Chrysanthemum Society. Select clean blooms with florets intact, firm and free from blemish. Stem should be straight and proportionate to the size of the bloom and the bloom held at an angle of not less than 90 degrees to the stem. Stage with blooms all facing in the same direction, not touching and with balanced effect. Retain some foliage on the stems if possible.

General Flower & Plant Classes - Select flowers in good fresh "condition", i.e. in the most perfect stage of its possible beauty and free from damage due to weather, pests and diseases.

Gladioli - are subject to the rules of the Gladiolus Society.

Select straight, well balanced spikes still carrying bottom floret. Ideally one third in full flower, one third with buds in colour, and one third in green bud. Remove secondary spikes.

Pot Plants - (indoor and outdoor). See maximum size of pot in Show Schedule.

Roses - Select blooms with a well-formed centre, free from blemished and with strong stems and healthy leaves.

Sweet Peas - Select strong spikes with well-spaced blooms, each one fully open and fresh.

Large flowers with erect standards, rigid wings and keel closed, free from colour-running, spotting or scorching and of a bright colour with a silken sheen. Long, straight stems in proportion to the size of the blooms.

PRESERVES

Jams and Marmalades

The flavour, consistency and colour are all judged, and some account is also taken of the jar,

which should be well polished with a clean cloth, then wrapped to avoid fingerprints.

Labels should be of suitable size for the jar and state the contents and the day, month and year of making.

Jellies should be brilliantly clear and of even colour, with no scum, haze or air bubbles.

Marmalades should be based on citrus fruits, but other ingredients may be added unless the

schedule states otherwise; label accordingly.

Jars filled to within 3mm (1/8") of the top of the jar.

Sealing Jars - Use either a wax disc (smooth side down and carefully trimmed to fit the rim of the jar) and a cellophane top. However, fruit curds should be covered with a wax circle and cellophane. Avoid honey jars with screw tops, as the thread does not produce a good seal.

Pickles and Chutney

Pickles contain large pieces of vegetable or fruit.

Chutneys - the ingredients should be boiled down to a uniform consistency.

Pickles and chutneys should be kept for at least two months before showing.

Fill jars with chutneys leaving a 12mm (½") headspace.

Fill jars with pickles plus 12mm (½") of vinegar over the pickle and leaving a 12mm (½")

headspace.

Sealing Jars - Use either a wax disc (smooth side down and carefully trimmed to fit the rim of the jar) and a cellophane top or a twist top/press on cover to seal preserves. However, fruit curds should be covered with a wax circle and cellophane, and pickles and chutneys with a twist top with an integral plastic lining, or with a plastic press on cover. Avoid honey jars with screw tops, as the thread does not produce a good seal.

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