

Exhibiting
Flowers, Fruits,
and
Vegetables

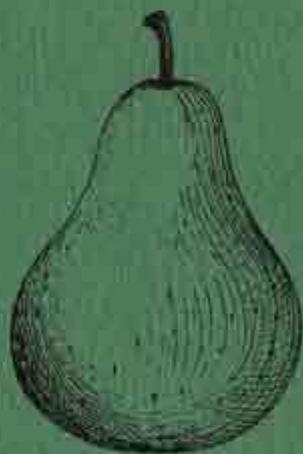


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Exhibiting Flowers, Fruits, and Vegetables

Exhibiting horticultural produce at fairs is fun. Through this process we gain much knowledge. First, we learn how to produce a good specimen through approved cultural techniques. Second, we learn how to prepare and transport produce. Third, through exhibiting at the fair we have an opportunity to share with others the knowledge we have gained and to see what our friends have produced. Lastly, when the produce is judged, we learn how well we have met approved standards and what we have to do another year "to make the best better."

General Comments

Certain rules are basic to the exhibiting of all garden produce. Exhibitors who follow these rules have won half of the battle before even considering the requirements of a specific exhibit.

You as an exhibitor should familiarize yourself with the terms "type," "uniformity," "maturity," "freedom from damage," "substance," and "cultural perfection." These are the bywords of all exhibitors and judges.

Type

All specimens shown should be true to type. The type of flowers, fruits, and vegetables will be discussed in the following pages; but, basically, when you are exhibiting a snapdragon, make sure that the flower spike is long and

tapered rather than short and clubby. A clubby snapdragon is not true to type. Cucumbers with curled ends are not true to type either, nor is a one-sided apple. Type means the ideal for a particular variety.

Uniformity

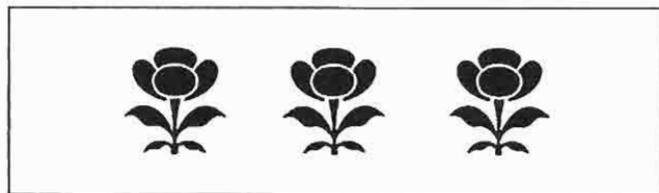
This refers to uniformity of size, shape and color. If your premium list calls for a single specimen your main obligation is to show one that is true to type. But a large percentage of the produce shown must be in lots of three or five. When this is the case all three of the lot members should be uniform in every respect.

Let us take zinnias as an example. It is relatively easy to find three zinnias of the same diameter, but it becomes

more of a problem to select three of the same depth of flower head. Even within a variety this is hard to do. The judge, if you have ever watched one, will look at the specimens from the top down and then turn and look at them from the side to make sure that they conform in size in every respect. Each zinnia specimen should be of the same shape. Keep the type in mind and select only specimens that conform.

Unless the premium list calls for a lot of three flowers in mixed colors you had better make sure they are uniform in color. Some judges allow much leeway in this respect, but most judges will mark off points if the flowers within a lot are not of the same color.

It is taken for granted that exhibitors know that all members of a show lot should be of the same variety. It is wrong to mix varieties within a lot. When a judge spots this he looks no further. This automatically means—"no award."



Maturity

All produce exhibited should be mature. Zinnias that have not fully opened should not be shown, nor should marigolds, dahlias, or any other produce. Often a premium list will specify a class of immature material such as green tomatoes or strawberries. This is done especially when a show is early for late maturing material. Unless a premium list specifies that it is all right to show immature material, never assume that you can pass the critical eyes of the judge if you do.

Perhaps more of a problem is the showing of over-mature specimens. This is so easy to do when you have planned to show a certain product and because of warm weather it came along too fast. However, don't downgrade your reputation as an exhibitor by showing over-mature material. Many points will be taken off by the judge when he sees a dahlia with curled, browning lower petals or a tomato with skin which has begun to shrivel.

There are two general rules that you can follow in determining whether or not your material is at the right stage of maturity. For the round-headed flowers such as marigolds, zinnias, dahlias, and the like, the flowers should be opened enough so that the outer petals begin to turn down and are still in good, fresh condition. For the spike-type flowers, such as gladioli, snapdragons, and salvia, as many of the florets on the spike should be open as much as possible without the bottom ones over-mature or having fallen off.

Freedom from Damage

This term is broad. Mechanical injury is one consideration. Mechanical injury refers to any damage on a specimen made by man or machine. If we are not careful in picking the product we can injure a leaf, stem, or fruit. Also, most of the mechanical injury is caused in transit from the garden to the fair. The last section of this leaflet discusses the transportation of material to the fair in a way to avoid damage.

Another type of damage is caused by insects or diseases. Judges will greatly mark down insect-riddled exhibits. This to me means not only that the exhibitor has poor gardening practices, but that he has no business trying to exhibit his inferior material.

Spraying or dusting will control pests, but evidence of pesticide residue on the foliage, flower, or stem will take off many points from your score.

Soil or dirt on the specimen is inexcusable. Judges will deduct many points from the total score. Fortunately this is not much of a problem at fairs. It occurs more often on vegetables than on other produce since so many of the vine crops grow on the ground. But on crops like petunias, verbenas, and the other low-growing plants, it can be a problem. A mulch on the fair garden floor will eliminate most of the rain spatter of soil onto plants and the remainder can be washed off.

Substance

A flower with good substance is turgid. This means that it is not wilting, that the cells within the plant are full of water, and that the specimen will hold up well on the fair table.

Also, a flower of good substance is at the peak of maturity as discussed above. So often the exhibitor will select a flower of good substance in the garden, but through improper hardening and preparation, the specimen deteriorates in substance. If your specimen is not tall, erect, turgid, and glistening, do not enter it in the fair.

Cultural Perfection

An exhibit that shows signs of nutrient deficiencies, crooked or weak stems, flowers placed at an improper angle on the stem, weather-spattered areas on the leaves or flowers, and foliage burn due to high light intensities or sprays, bleached areas on the underside of the fruit, or sunburn (there are countless other defects) lacks cultural perfection. In other words, this means that the gardener did not give the specimen the culture it needed to develop into a good entry.

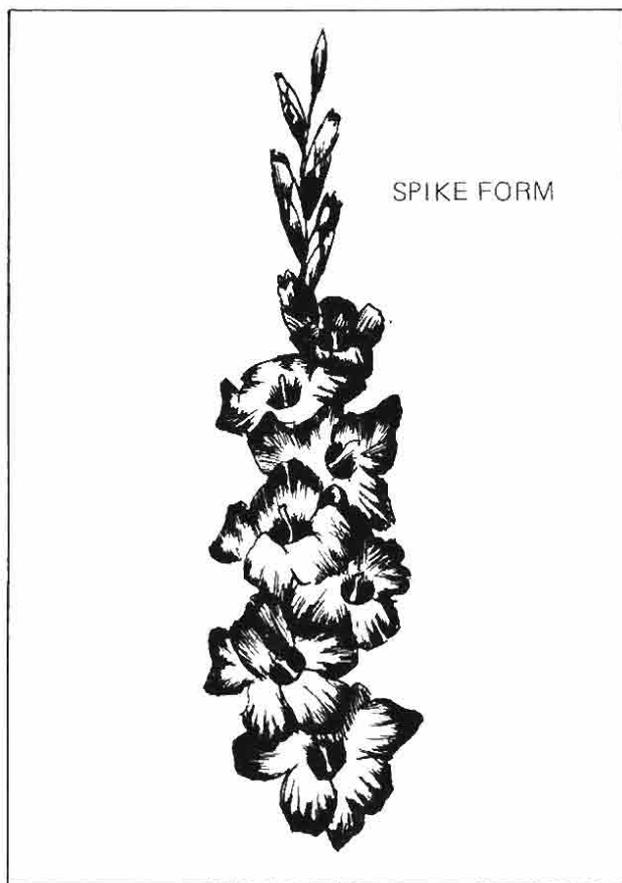
Specific Pointers for Flowers

The flowers to be discussed in the following pages will be divided into two main categories. We will call the flowers that produce a spike "spike-form" flowers and those that do not, "round-form" flowers.

SPIKE FORM FLOWERS

Besides the pointers mentioned already, there are a few other rules that are basic to the selection of all spike-form flowers for the fair. Your object should be to select as long a spike with as many open florets as possible and still have the bottom florets in perfect condition. In other words, the basal portion should show no signs of overmaturity in the form of browning around the edges, shriveling, or fading of color. You will find that this is one of the first considerations the judge gives a spike-form flower.

The spike should be straight and the stem that supports it also straight, and strong enough to support the weight of the flower head. Spike-form flowers should be just single spikes with no secondary side shoots. These should be removed so that one good single spike will develop.



Cockscomb (Celosia)

Both the crested cockscomb and the plume cockscomb are popular at fairs today. Either species can be grown easily in the garden in properly prepared soil. Here is a plant, however, that would indicate the absence of good, rich soil and plenty of moisture. Drying out of the roots can cause leaf drop in cockscomb which, of course, is detrimental to the production of fair specimens.

Foxglove, Delphinium and Gladiolus

Select long, strong, and straight spikes with as many open flowers as possible and with the bottom florets in prime condition.

Since foxgloves self-sow quite readily, you should be warned against growing these self-sown seedlings for exhibition. You are better off to use new seed for the production of fair specimens.

Salvia

The pointers mentioned for spike-form flowers apply to this flower as well, but I find that the hasty showman sometimes exhibits specimens in which the actual floret has dropped and only the colored calyx remains. This is easy to do unless we study the spike. When only the calyx is present and the floret has dropped, the judge realizes that the specimen is overmature.

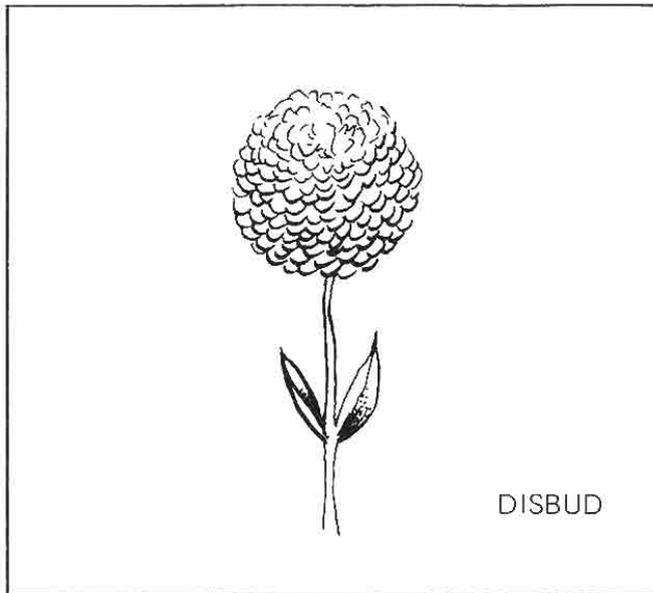
Snapdragons

Even though snapdragons are easy to grow, the matter of selecting a good fair specimen is not quite so easy. Some snapdragon spikes are clubby and short rather than long and tapered. These must be avoided. Other spikes may not have a well-filled spike but instead have many skips. Spikes with skips might best be left at home.

ROUND-FORM FLOWERS

Just as in spike-form flowers, there are a few peculiarities of round-form flowers that we must take into consideration before going into the specific members of the group.

The matter of overmaturity and immaturity is a problem with this group. In exhibiting round-form flowers, a good general rule to remember is that in most cases the outer petals reflex gracefully. The center petals must not be so tight and immature as to be green, but they should be

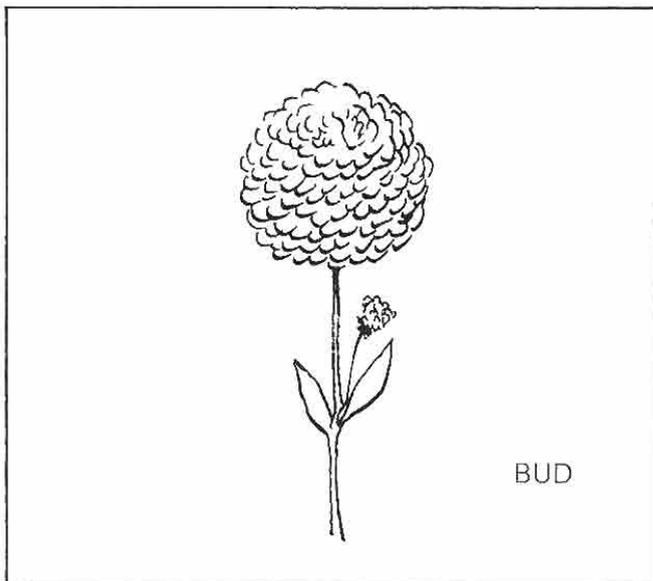


tighter than the outer petals. When the outer petals begin to shrivel and fade, this is your signal that the flower should be discarded rather than exhibited.

Round-form flowers should be exhibited as single-stem disbuds. This means that there should be only one flower at the tip of the stem and all others along the stem should have been removed. This removal should be done in the bud stage. Sometimes the premium list calls for a spray. Sprays are formations of flowers with many stems. These are not disbudded.

Day Lilies

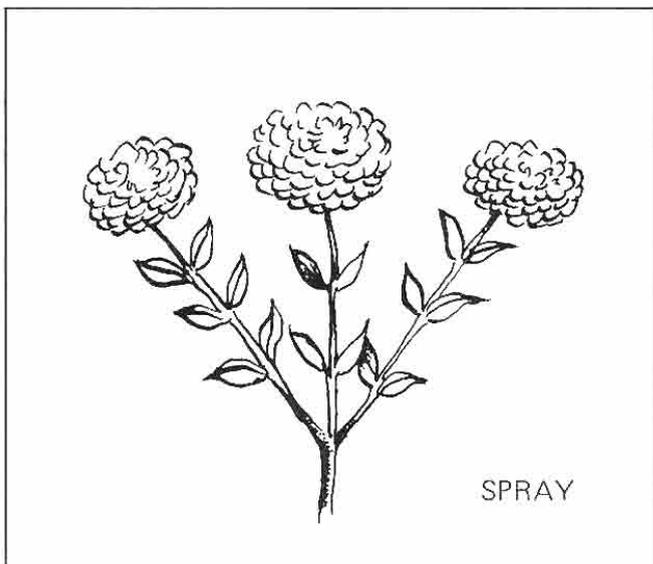
For exhibition you should select a scape with as many open flowers as possible. Those scapes with many open flowers will be judged over those having just one. It is permissible to have a few flowers dropped from the scape. The scape supporting the flowers must not exceed 36 inches, and it must be in proportion to the flowers in height and thickness.



Lilies

You should select a stem of lilies with as many flowers open as possible. The lowermost flowers should be open and in prime condition. Flower placement on the stem is important and the flowers should spiral vertically up the stem so that they do not interfere with one another. Each petal must be in good condition and have good substance, not wilted, shriveled, or bruised.

The form of the individual flower must be typical of the standard for the variety in question. Flower parts should be uniform in their respective arrangement and no part can be out of line with the rest. For example, a twisted or malformed petal can throw the whole specimen off many points.



Roses

The American Rose Society specifies that blooms of teas, climbing teas, hybrid teas, climbing hybrid teas, hybrid perpetuals, and climbing hybrid perpetuals must be exhibited as disbudded specimens. Side buds will cost the exhibitor points. Single hybrid teas like Dainty Bess and Innocence, and polyanthas, hybrid polyanthas, floribundas and climbers (other than those mentioned above) may be exhibited as naturally grown without disbudding.

It is hard to describe just what developmental stage is best for exhibiting roses. Generally speaking, according to the society, the bloom should be one-half to three-quarters open. The center should be well formed, and more than just one row of the outer petals must be unfolded.

Exhibitors must avoid specimens that are dull in color or that possess split centers or malformed petals. The stems must be strong enough to support the flower but not out of proportion to it.

Asters, Bachelor's Buttons, Calendula, Cosmos, Dahlias, Dianthus, Gaillardia, Marigolds, Nasturtiums, Phlox, Salpiglossis, Scabiosa Zinnias

All of these plants should be exhibited as single-stem disbuds as described above. The flowers must be in perfect condition, fully open, with the outer (older) petals still fresh. In the case of phlox, the bottom flowers must still be fresh and on the plant.

The flower must be squarely attached to the stem and not crooked or deformed in any way. Stems should be straight and as long as possible. Foliage must be present

and removed only on the portion of the stem that is under water.

The foliage must be clean, free of damage and lustrous. Damaged foliage will cost many points when the final scoring is done.

Condition, cultural perfection, substance, and uniformity must be expressed in your exhibit.

Ageratum, Chrysanthemum, Sweet Peas

Here are three plants that are exhibited as sprays. In other words, they are not disbudded as those above. Otherwise, they should be exhibited following the same pointers.

Flower Arrangements and Corsages

It is not the purpose of this bulletin to teach flower arranging or corsage making. For information on these subjects, consult your Extension agent who has bulletins and other aids.

It is of interest, however, to know how flower arrangements and corsages are judged.

Arrangement of Garden Flowers

This is the score card that is most often used in judging flower arrangements:

Good design (balance, scale, proportion)	30 points
Good use of color combinations, avoiding clashing colors	20 points
Good relationship to materials. This means that the materials used should not be too skimpy, too crowded, or out of scale with the container ...	20 points
Originality	10 points
Flowers in good condition	20 points
Total	100 points

Table arrangements must not exceed 14 inches in height. If they are higher, the judge may disqualify them.

Miniature Arrangements

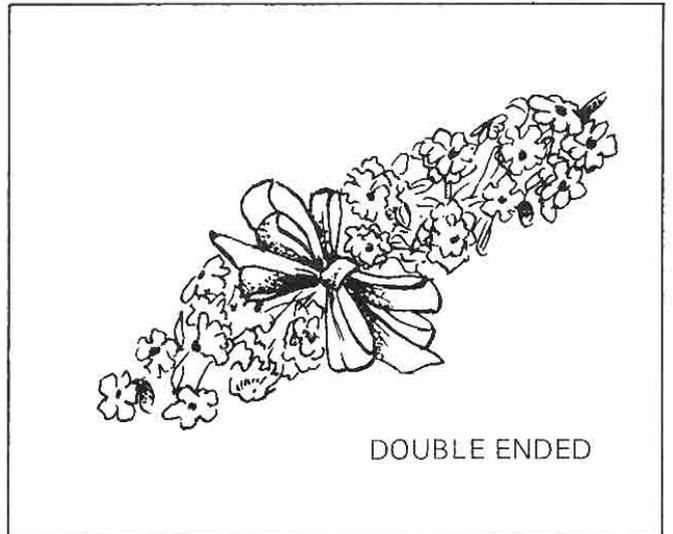
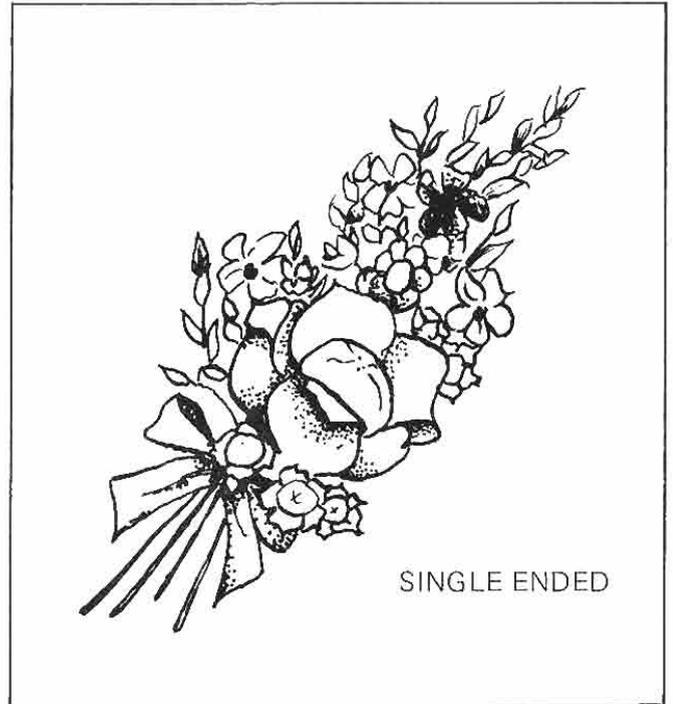
Similar principles are followed in making miniature arrangements except that the entire arrangement must not exceed 3 inches in height. The following score card is used:

Scale — This means that the flowers must be tiny, as should also be the vase they are placed in so that the arrangement looks like a miniature of a normal size arrangement	40 points
Design	30 points
Color	20 points
Condition of flowers	10 points
Total	100 points

Corsages

Here is the score card most often used for corsages:

Technique — This refers to the way the flowers are tied together, the way they are taped along the stem, if tape is used, and the way the ribbon is tied and attached to the corsage	10 points
Design	30 points
Color	10 points
Good combination of materials	20 points
Originality	15 points
Condition	15 points
Total	100 points



House Plants

Following are two score cards for house plants:

Flowering Plants

Cultural perfection	35 points
Size of plant (suitable to variety) ...	20 points
Abundance of flowers	15 points
Rarity	5 points
Good soil mixture and container ...	15 points
Color	10 points
Total	100 points

Foliage Plants

Cultural perfection	35 points
Size of plant (suitable to variety) ...	20 points
Rarity	10 points
Foliage	15 points
Shape or form	10 points
Container	10 points
Total	100 points

You will notice that there is a separate score card for flowering, and nonflowering or foliage plants. Your premium list should also have separate lots for each. It is important for you to enter your plants in the proper lot because a nonflowering plant entered in a flowering class will be disqualified.

Size of the plant in proportion to its pot is another point the judge looks for. The plant should be about twice the size of its pot to have good proportion. This is a good general rule.

The shape of your plant is also important, and to give it a good shape you should turn the plant each day as it grows in your window. This has to be done throughout the year in order to grow a nicely shaped plant.

The pot in which you exhibit your plant must be scrubbed clean. *Never wrap the pot in foil as the judge will disqualify such plants.* Make sure your plant is growing in a good soil mixture, not just plain hard garden soil.

Never spray the foliage plants with material to make the leaves shine. Just wash the leaves off and gently rub them with a flannel cloth to get a natural shine.

Vegetables and Fruits

VEGETABLES

Just as in the selection of flowers for the fair, in selecting vegetables we should remember uniformity of size, shape, and color. Also, when a variety of fruit has a pink cheek, the size, shape, and degree of pinkness of the cheek should be the same in all five specimens that make up an exhibition plate. Where a single specimen is exhibited, as in melons or eggplant, this specimen must be true to type.

Many exhibitors fail to read the premium list before they select their produce for the fair. Some lists may call for a quart of plums, while in some fairs ten plums make up an exhibit. Therefore, the importance of reading the premium list carefully cannot be overstressed.

Varieties of vegetables and fruit, as with flowers, must not be mixed in a single exhibit. Regardless of how good the material is in other respects, the judge is forced to disqualify any exhibit of mixed varieties unless the premium list specifically calls for this mixture. This seems a very easy point to remember yet it is violated often. When the exhibitor goes into the garden he sometimes is faced with the need to select five uniform specimens and

only four can be found. He therefore includes the fifth specimen of another variety thinking that the judge will not catch this substitution.

We have already spent considerable time discussing the matter of trueness to type, uniformity, quality, condition, maturity, cultural perfection, freedom from pests, and cleanliness of the specimens in relation to flowers. These pointers are just as true for fruits and vegetables as they are for flowers.

We should, however, say a word or two about the cleaning of vegetables. Dirty specimens are scored down heavily at a fair and for this reason we must do a careful job of cleaning them. All root crops such as carrots and beets—and other underground specimens like potatoes—must be washed but not scrubbed. Scrubbing leaves marks on the specimens which will cost you points at the fair; and also moisture escapes through these gashes which shortens the fair life of the produce.

Leaf crops, like chard, lettuce, and cabbage, are merely hosed to remove spattered soil or spray residues. Cucum-

bers, squash, melons, peppers, tomatoes, and beans can be cleaned with a moist, clean cloth. These should not be submerged in water and washed.

Soft fruits like strawberries and raspberries cannot be washed or cleaned with a cloth. In this case, soil can be removed by brushing the fruit gently with a painter's brush. In a strawberry patch a mulch can prevent much of the soil spatter on the fruit.

PERENNIAL CROPS

Asparagus

Asparagus must be in prime condition at the time of the fair. It is not a common class in premium lists because it is so early maturing. Exhibitable stalks must be green throughout and show no purplish discolorations. A little bit of white at the butt end is permissible. These stalks should be at a "snapping" stage, which indicates that they are just right for eating. A 1-inch diameter at the butt with the stalks 6 to 8 inches long is ideal and this must be uniform in the stalks making up the exhibit, which usually is 10 to 12 stalks. Colored rubber bands are used to hold the bunch together. One band should be below the tip and another a few inches above the butt ends. All spears, besides being uniform in color and size, must be round and symmetrically shaped; twisted or malformed spears are not good.

Rhubarb

Exhibitable stalks of rhubarb should be firm, crisp, tender, and at the right eating stage. Usually, stalks approaching 1 inch in diameter and 10 to 12 inches long are just right for the fair table. Color is extremely important with this crop and this color must be a clean, clear red throughout. Usually six stalks make up an exhibit and these must be uniform in size, shape, and color. The stalks are held together with rubber bands as with asparagus. The basal husks must be cut off and the remaining portion cut in a fan-like fashion.

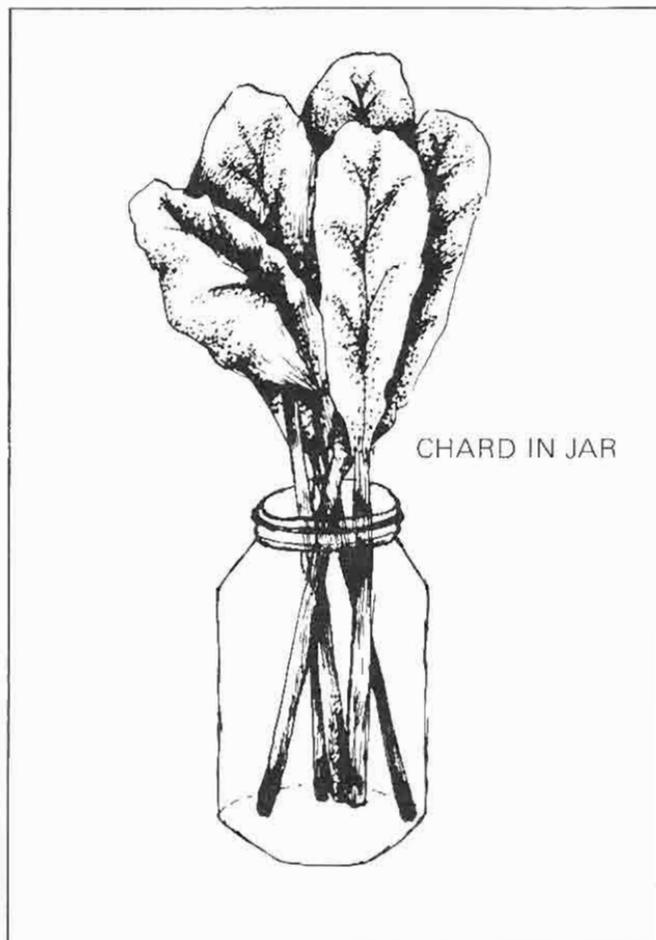
GREENS

Chard

The manner in which chard is exhibited depends a great deal on the premium list. Some schedules call for an entire plant. Others want just 10 cut leaf blades and their stalks. If your fair requires the entire plant then it should be dug from the garden, all rootlets removed and the taproot washed and thoroughly cleaned. The chard should be at the proper eating stage when it is exhibited and the taproot placed in a jar of water.

Fairs that ask for cut stalks and leaf blades make your selection job somewhat easier. Usually, the premium list

will call for 10 stalks with leaf blades attached and these 10 stalks must be uniform in size, shape, and color. The stalks are placed in a jar of water on the exhibit table unless the list suggests something different. As in all other crops the leaves and stems of chard must be clean and free from pests or mechanical blemishes.



Spinach

Again, in the case of spinach, premium lists will vary in the way they want you to exhibit. Some fairs prefer that you exhibit a prescribed number of cut sprigs. Others require from one to three entire plants cut at the crown or the point where the root system begins at the base of the plant. Whichever the case may be, it is your duty to exhibit specimens at the right stage for eating and those which are a good, clean, and green color. No blemishes are allowed and wilted specimens are scored down. For this reason if you cannot exhibit this plant in a jar of water make sure that you carry it to the fair in water so that it will not be wilted when placed on the exhibit table. In the case of cut sprigs make sure they are uniform in size and shape. When exhibiting entire plants be certain that the plant is well leafed out from top to bottom.

SALAD CROPS

Lettuce

Most premium lists have one class for all lettuce—head lettuce, butterhead (such as Bibb), leaf lettuce, and romaine.

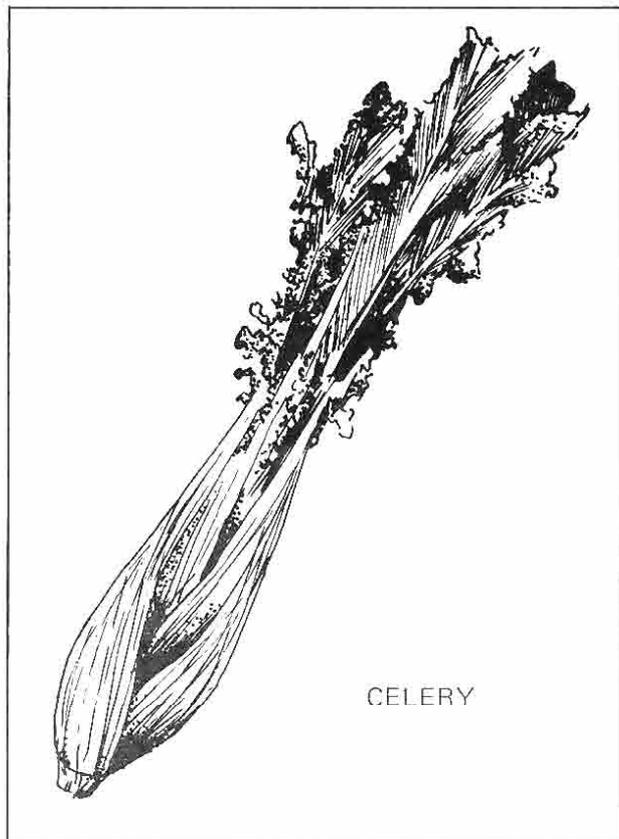
Heads of lettuce must be firm, fresh, and at the proper stage of maturity for eating. The head must be in good condition with most of the outside or “wrapper” leaves intact. It is improper to peel off all of the wrappers, but a few of the very outer ones may be blemished and therefore should be removed. Do not remove these, however, until you reach the fair for they will protect the head in transit.

The stem or butt of the lettuce head should be neatly squared off with a knife leaving it about ½-inch long. Broken or crooked cuts on the stem detract from the overall appearance of the head.

Heads of Bibb-type lettuce must be symmetrical, full, clean, unblemished, and rich in color. The loose head can be severed from the root system just above the ground line. This is also true of leaf lettuce and romaine.

Celery

A specimen of celery is not just one stalk but rather the entire plant. Simply dig the plant and trim off all roots and then shape the butt, tapering it to a point. Although



the size is not of utmost importance in exhibiting celery, the plant must be at the proper maturity for eating and the heart well developed. Uniformity of color and size in the outer stalks is important as is shape. Twisted or malformed stalks only cost points on your score card.

Split stalks are common in celery and you as an exhibitor must select a bunch devoid of this fault. Also, be sure to look over the bunch carefully and remove all dirt or soil that may have spattered onto the plant during a recent storm. All foliage must be left on the specimen and not pruned off as some exhibitors mistakenly do.

Parsley

Again, we have a plant for which premium lists differ in their exhibit requirements. Some fairs ask for a potted plant of parsley. If this is the case it means that you have to dig the plant and pot it several weeks beforehand so that it will recover from transplanting in time for the fair. If your fair demands a potted plant select a thrifty, well-colored, symmetrical plant for the show. Trim off any leaves close to the crown that have yellowed or dried. And, of course, be sure to remove all dirt in the curls of the leaf, if you are showing a curled leaf variety.

Other fairs require that you exhibit an entire plant unpotted in a jar of water. Here you merely dig the plant the day of the fair and remove all of the rootlets leaving the main root in a cleaned condition. The requirements concerning the top of the plant are the same as for a potted specimen.

It is the trend at most fairs to schedule parsley as cut sprigs. If your fair wants this type of exhibit, simply select the number of sprigs called for (usually 10 to 20) and be sure that they are uniform in every respect. Each sprig must be the same length and a good one is anywhere from 6 to 10 inches. You will probably have to harvest many times the number of specimens that you need in order to select a uniform lot. After you have selected the desired number tie the bases of the stems together with clean, neat string or a rubber band and place the base of the bunch either in moist tissue paper or in a jar depending on what the fair requires. This is done to avoid wilting. I like to see fairs require parsley exhibited in little jars, for the specimens stay fresh for the entire fair when exhibited this way.

COLE CROPS

Broccoli

An exhibitable head of broccoli must be at the right stage of maturity for eating—meaning that the flowers have to be tightly budded and not expanded. Wilted specimens are considered very bad. For this reason keep the stem in water until you are ready to exhibit the specimen. Size is not the

all-important factor in broccoli classes, but the larger heads that are still tender and good for eating will be favored over small heads, all other factors being equal. You should strive for a head three inches in diameter as an average size.

A bad fault of broccoli is leaves showing in the flower cluster so it is wise to avoid such specimens. The stem should be cut neatly, straight and tidy, leaving an over-all length of 6 to 7 inches from the top of the head to the base of the cut stem. A few of the lower leaves can be trimmed off neatly, leaving no stubs.

Brussels Sprouts

One sprout does not comprise an exhibit since the judge cannot determine from so little how good a gardener and showman you actually are. For this reason you are usually requested to exhibit a quart or sometimes ten Brussels sprouts to make a representative exhibit.

All of the members of this lot must be uniform in size, shape, and color and in top-notch condition. A good general size is one inch in diameter. And, of course, the rule that underlies all exhibiting is important here too — freedom from blemishes of any type.

Cabbage

Some fairs set up separate classes for the various cabbage types although this is not the case unless the fair is predominantly one for vegetables. These types are round, flat, pointed, red, and Savoy. Often the superintendent of all vegetable classes will make this division after the exhibits are in place and before the judging begins.

Pointed heads are usually lighter in weight than the other types. Therefore (using Jersey Wakefield as a variety example) your selection of Jersey Wakefield should weigh about 2 to 3 pounds. The other types should weigh about 3 to 5 pounds. The heads must be symmetrical and properly shaped for the variety, as well as crisp and firm except in loose-headed types like Savoy. All outer leaves should be removed leaving only the last few that curl at the tips. Then square off the stem neatly, leaving it about $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 inch in length.



Cauliflower

A good head of cauliflower must be snow white unless you have purposely grown one of the purple varieties. "Dirty" colored heads mean that the exhibitor didn't cover the head to blanch it by protecting it from the strong sunlight. Blanching is easy to do by simply tying the long leaves over the flower head as it develops.

A good average size to select for your exhibit is a head 4 to 5 inches in diameter. Leave four to six of the outer leaves and allow them to extend 1 or 2 inches above the head, trimming off the rest of the blade. The stem should be 2 inches long below the head and neatly squared off.

ROOT CROPS

Root crops have so many common basic requirements that it seems wise to discuss them generally. We must select specimens that are free from deformities, meaning that the shape must be perfect and true to the variety. Growth cracks in the specimen, rots or decays, and the presence of rootlets will not be tolerated by the judge. Only the taproot can be present.

Sunburn is common on many of our root crops. To illustrate sunburning, let's take the carrot with a green shoulder caused by exposure to the sun. This makes for a bitter flavor in the carrot or any other root crop so it must be avoided in selecting exhibition material.

Usually you will be required to exhibit your root crops in lots of five with the tops cut off 1 or 2 inches above the root. Sometimes premium lists call for radishes with the tops present, but usually you can remove the tops on radishes $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 inch above the root. Any dried stems must be taken off the specimen for good appearance.

Now that we have mentioned these matters basic to the exhibiting of all root crops all we need to mention is the size requirements for the specific plants.

Beets

Beets are ideal when they are $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter. You must make sure that each specimen is uniform in size as well as shape and color. Large beets are not fit to eat nor are they fit to exhibit.

Carrots

An average diameter of $\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches is ideal for carrots. Each carrot in the lot must be the same size. The ox-heart types should be 3 to 4 inches long, the half-long types 5 to 7 inches long, and the long types up to 8 inches in length.

Parsnips

The size requirements for parsnips are the same as for carrots except for length. Generally speaking, parsnips must be from 5 to 7 inches long. Avoid the selection of hollow-crowned parsnips since they are not considered good exhibition material.

Radishes

Depending upon the variety, radishes can range from $\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter.

Turnips and Rutabagas

Turnips should be $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 inches in diameter; rutabagas can range from 3 to 4 inches in diameter.

BULB CROPS

Onions

Onions must be at least 2 inches in diameter. Their tops should be cut off leaving only 1 or 2 inches on the bulbs. This operation is best performed two weeks before the fair when the onions are dug so that the tops have some time to dry slightly. Onions should be dried in a spot out of direct sunlight and in good air circulation. It is best to remove the rootlets of the onions when they are shown. Actually, the rootlets do not tell very much about the culture of the onion that the bulb itself doesn't tell; therefore leaving the rootlets on the specimen merely detracts from its overall appearance.

Only the very outer scale may be removed from the bulb. This scale is usually cracked and dirty and its removal is necessary. However this operation is one that requires utmost care and patience. If you are in a hurry and tear off this scale you may accidentally tear off part of the inner scale and then the judge's comment will be that points were deducted because the specimen was "peeled too much."

Cracked scales and sunburned spots are the most common faults in onion exhibits. Aside from these factors the selection of five onions to compose a lot is relatively easy as vegetable selection goes.

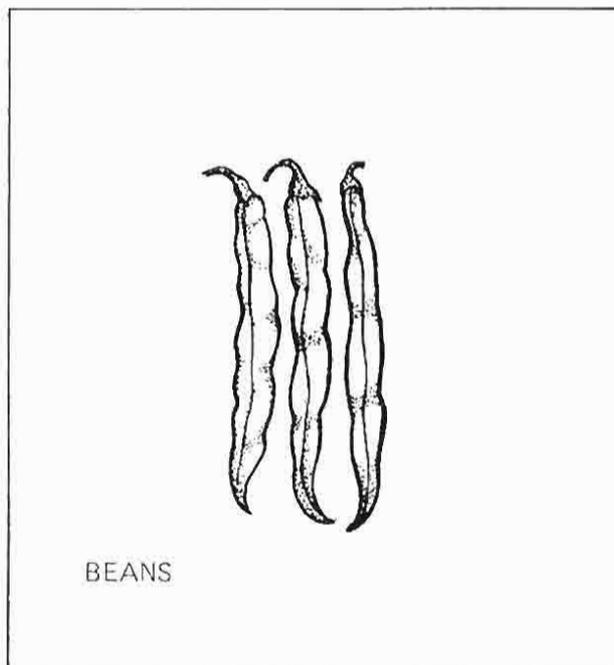
LEGUMES

Beans

The bean exhibit may be divided into at least three main areas: shell beans, lima beans, and snap beans (either green or wax).

Usually the premium list asks for ten beans to a plate.

Regardless of what type of bean they are, they must be uniform in size, shape, and color and must be at the proper stage for eating, whether limas, snaps or shell. All of the specimens in a plate must be of the same variety and, further, they must have $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of the stem present (as illustrated). Snap and lima beans must not be wilted or flabby. In lima beans the bean itself must be pronounced



in the pod, for this is what the crop is grown for. Snap beans, on the other hand, must only slightly show the bean in the pod, for these are not grown for the actual bean. And shell beans, of course, must clearly show the well-developed bean.

All beans, regardless of type or variety, must be straight and free of twisted and contorted pods. In some varieties it is the tendency of the pods to be curved, and when you grow this variety, make sure that all ten members composing a plate are curved the same way; in other words, they must be uniform in shape.

Peas

Since peas, too, are in pods, the same basic points as discussed under beans underlie their selection for the fair. Usually they are exhibited as a plate of ten specimens but in some instances the premium list asks for shelled peas. This, however, is the exception rather than the rule.

Except for edible-pod peas, the peas in all pods that are exhibited should be well developed and the pod must be well filled out. Often in edible-pod peas, if we wait until this point the pods are too tough, so we must exhibit them with the peas only slightly developed.

All pods making up an exhibit plate must be uniform in

every respect. Furthermore, a short portion of the stem must be present as well as the very tip of the pod. Broken tips in either peas or beans cost points on the score card.

SOLANACEOUS FRUITS

Tomatoes

The name "solanaceous" refers to the family Solanaceae, the nightshade family, of which tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants, as well as potatoes, are members. Since potatoes are not fruits we will discuss them in a separate division.

Depending on the size of the vegetable exhibit, tomatoes are either shown in one big class or divided into ripe reds, yellows, greens, cherry, plum, or pear. For the small fair the latter divisions may be too involved and a division of only three parts may be more practical: ripe, green, and novelty types—which would include the cherry, pear, plum and other types.

Most often five uniform specimens 2 to 3 inches in diameter comprise a good exhibit. The novelty types do not attain this size, of course. The exhibitor should avoid unevenly colored fruits, those with touches of rot, or those which have cracked skins. Ripe tomatoes can be exhibited with the stems either on or off, but green tomatoes must always have their stems on.

Peppers

At most fairs peppers are divided into two classes — sweet and hot.

As in tomatoes five specimens are usually the normal number for an exhibit, but some fairs require only three. All of these specimens on a plate must be uniform and possess the same number of lobes on each pepper according to the type and variety shown. Sweet peppers must be mature at the time of the fair and the exhibitor can strive for a length of 3 to 4 inches in selecting his specimens. The stems of peppers should be neatly cut off level with the shoulders of the specimen.

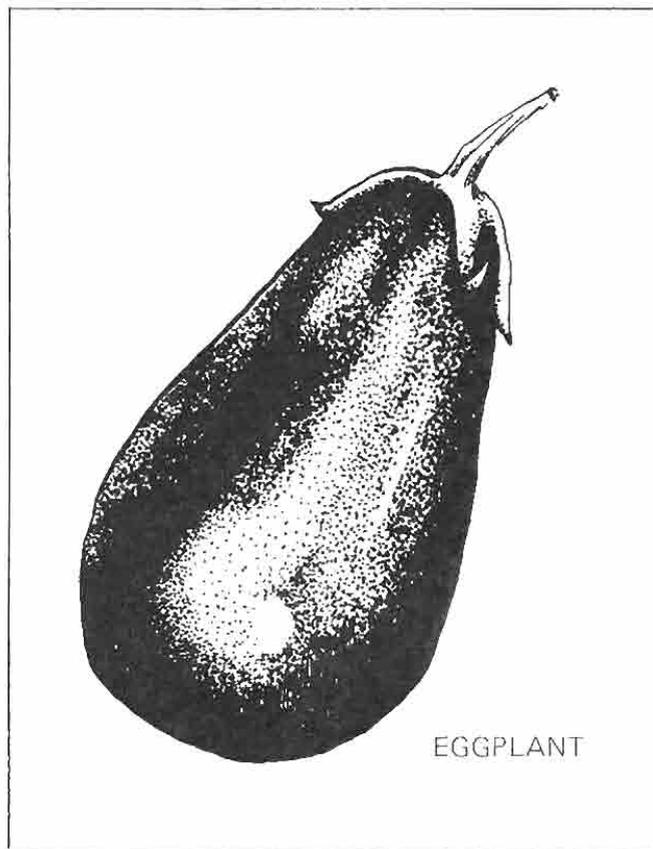
Common faults such as discoloration of parts of the fruit, shriveling, immaturity, and skin blemishes will not be tolerated by the judge.

Eggplant

In most instances one fruit makes up an exhibit.

The specimen must be symmetrical and true to type as well as mature. The color must be uniform over the entire fruit, and no dark spots indicating bruising will be tolerated. Streaks through the normal purple color of the fruit is considered a very bad fault.

Dirt can be removed from eggplant by gently running a damp cloth over the fruit. The word "gently" cannot be



stressed enough, for if the cloth picks up a piece of grit the skin of the fruit can be badly damaged. The stem must be cut neatly about an inch or two in length and the calyxes must be present on the fair specimen

VINE CROPS

The division includes pumpkins, squashes, melons, and cucumbers. In comparison with many of the other crops mentioned so far this is one of the easiest groups to exhibit.

All specimens in this group are cleaned as you clean eggplant and with the same precautions. All fruits must be symmetrical and true to variety with a short portion of the stem present and neatly cut. In the large fruits, 2 to 3 inches of the stem is necessary; in the smaller items like cucumbers and small melons, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of stem is all that is required. Of course, all exhibition specimens must be at their peak of maturity unless the premium list says otherwise—as it may do in the case of watermelons when a fair is early.

Summer Squash

Often all types of summer squash are shown in one class. In other fairs this group is divided into crooknecks, scallops, and Italian squash (cocozelle, zucchini, and caserta).

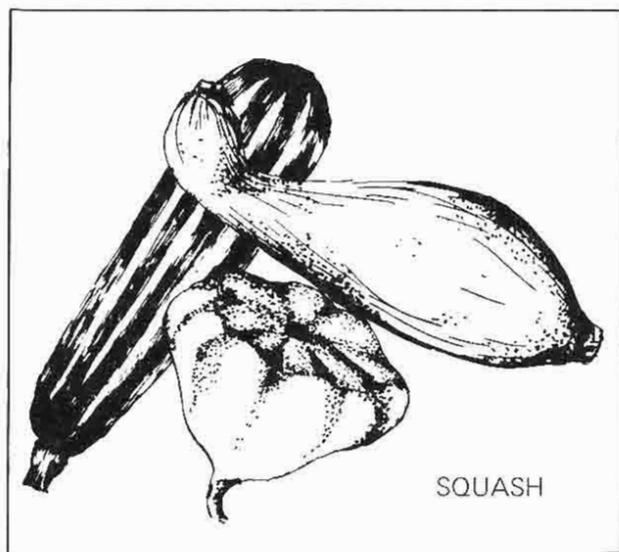
Crooknecks and straightnecks can range from 6 to 8 inches in length with a good lemon yellow color. A hard

orange-yellow indicates over-maturity. The scallop types can range from 3 to 6 inches in diameter, but the Italian types must fall between 8 to 12 inches in length. Two to three specimens make an exhibit.

Winter Squash

Hubbard and Delicious squash, Table Queen, and Butternut are likely divisions for this group. Except for the Table Queen and possibly Butternut entries in this group are usually single specimens. Table Queen is sometimes asked for in groups of two's.

The size range that the exhibitor must select is 10 to 18 inches in length for Hubbards, 5 to 7 inches for the Table Queen types, and 10 to 12 inches for Butternuts. The characteristic shape for Hubbard squash is the typical protruding stem and blossom ends with a large plump central portion. An acorn shape is ideal for the Table Queen types, and the Butternut must be of the rounded blossom end with a broad, plump stem end almost as broad as the basal rounded portion. Slim stem ends are not considered correct for Butternut squash.



Pumpkins

Symmetry, good color, maturity, and trueness to type are the characteristics the exhibitor must look for in pumpkins, regardless of variety. The size of the specimen will vary according to the variety and the exhibitor must not feel compelled to exhibit only the largest specimen without regard to the other important requirements. Undue attention has been focused on size because over the years many fairs have had classes for the largest specimen. Many fairs today have such classes, and while it is true that for this class you must have the largest specimen if you want to be recognized, it is not true for a regular garden class of pumpkins.

MELONS

Muskmelons

All premium lists should be divided to include separate classes for watermelons and muskmelons.

For muskmelons usually a single specimen is required. The melon must be mature and the varieties which have netted rinds must show a clear, neat pattern. Muskmelons are the only members of this large group of vine crops on which the stem must not be present. The best way to tell whether or not a muskmelon is mature is when the stem slips off naturally. Although the melon must be mature and at the proper eating stage, it must not be overmature to the point where yellowed spots show on the rind. The stem end must be calloused and sunken on most varieties.

Watermelons

Symmetry in shape, good shiny color, and freedom from injury and disease are a few of the important factors to consider when selecting a watermelon for exhibition. Of course, maturity is of utmost importance too, and this is perhaps more difficult to determine in watermelons than in muskmelons. Usually if the white spot that develops where the melon touches the ground has turned yellow, you can be fairly sure that your melon is mature. Although this is not a foolproof test it works in a high percentage of cases. The judge does have the privilege of removing a core of rind and meat from the melon with his knife if there is any question in his mind as to the melon's maturity.

It is important to leave from one-half to a full inch of stem on watermelons. When the stem is torn off in picking the fruit it leaves a scar for the evaporation of water which in turn lowers the quality of the melon.

Cucumbers

This vegetable is often listed in two categories on premium lists—slicing and pickling. From three to five specimens are required in most slicing classes; five to ten specimens are asked for in pickling classes.

Cucumbers must possess a good, symmetrical shape which is true to variety. Misshapen fruits indicate, as a general rule, poor culture. The color should be a good green and the fruit must be at the proper stage of maturity for its intended purpose. One-half inch of stem must be present.

GOURDS

Usually premium lists call for a collection of five gourds. Unless the premium list reads "five gourds, one variety," it is all right to assume that mixed types and varieties are acceptable in the lot of five.

If gourds have a definite color pattern it must be clear and distinct. Indistinct color patterns indicate that the specimen or specimens are not true to type. In other respects the same basic rules for exhibiting summer squash are followed in the exhibition of gourds.

Corn

In addition to the basic pointers for all vegetables and flowers, we must be sure to follow others peculiar to this plant.

Corn classes are often divided into sweet corn and popcorn.

Most of the corn exhibited at fairs is sweet corn. The premium lists usually call for three to five ears to a plate or exhibit, and these must be uniform in every respect. The stem of the ear must be neatly cut off just below the point where the husks are attached to it. If this cut is made too high the husks will fall off and ruin the over-all appearance of the specimen.

Although opinion varies, judges will usually specify that the silk should be removed from the ear before the ear is placed on the exhibition table. This makes his job easier for the judge, and the fair committee is appreciative since the table is not littered with silk after the judging is over. While removing the silk (by turning back the husks) you can see whether the ears are filled out all the way to the tip and also whether earworms are present. Every ear should be filled out completely with kernels if good scoring results are expected, and the lines or rows of kernels should be straight except in those varieties where crooked rows are typical. Judges hate to open the husks and see a worm wiggling about. So when you remove the silk you also accomplish these inspections. After doing so, neatly turn the husks back as they originally were. Never exhibit husked corn.

Although we have already mentioned that proper maturity is important in every crop, it is so easy to go wrong with corn that we will mention it again. In selecting corn for the fair table you will probably have to pick many more ears than you will exhibit. On some of the ears that are not exhibitable, but which come from the same planting as those that are, try the "finger test" for maturity. Press your finger into a kernel. If the juice that comes out is sluggish and syrupy then the ear is over-mature. If the juice is light and milky and really squirts out of the kernel then you have selected an ear that is

proper. May we repeat: you do this on specimens that you will not exhibit, for if you do it on the fair specimens the judge will consider them injured.

Lastly, see that the color of the kernels is not only uniform within the ear but within the entire lot of ears that you exhibit.

POTATOES

Irish Potatoes

Potatoes, like other crops, must be uniform in size, shape, and color. This usually means that you will have to dig many more than you need for the exhibit in order to find a uniform five. The digging should be done a week or two prior to the fair so that they will have time to dry a little.

Potatoes should be an average of 2½ to 4 inches in length and the larger ones should not weigh more than 16 ounces. The smaller ones must meet a minimum weight requirement of 6 ounces.

Be sure that the potatoes you exhibit are mature, cured slightly, and free from soil. Dirty potatoes will be disqualified as will scrubbed potatoes. Wash them with a soft cloth in cold water.

Sweet Potatoes

Like Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes must be clean, free from disease and dirt, and uniform in every respect. They too must be dug at least a week before the fair so that they will have an opportunity to cure slightly.

Different varieties of sweet potatoes differ in shape. Some are spindle-shaped while others are globular. Either shape is permissible depending on the variety, but shape must be uniform throughout the plate of five. Each specimen must weigh between ½ and 1 pound and this weight must be uniform throughout the exhibit. An average diameter of between 2 and 3 inches is best and a length of two to three times the diameter is ideal.

FRUITS

The basic factors that underlie the selection of flowers and vegetables also govern the selection of fruits.

Most fruit judges use the following score card or a slight variation of it in judging fruits:

Condition, including freedom from blemishes	30 points
Uniformity of size, shape, and color	25 points
Color	20 points
Size	15 points
Form	10 points
Total	100 points

Color on this score card refers to the intensity of color for the variety in question. Color should be high in fruit as in most other horticultural specimens. But in this case color is set off as an item demanding 20 points since in fruit it is color which gives eye-appeal and is an important indicator of condition.

Size refers to the ideal size of a certain variety of fruit; form refers to the characteristic shape for a variety.

Apples

Five apples is what the premium list usually requires at most fairs, although in some cases the fair committee decides that only three are enough. The stems of all specimens must be present but not the fruit spur or leaves from the spur.

Pears

Five medium-size fruits with stems attached comprise a plate for exhibition. The color, size, and shape must be uniform and the specimens free from blemish or injury. Over-maturity or under-maturity will not be tolerated by the judge unless the premium list permits it because of the time of the fair.

Peaches

Peaches, like other fruit, must be uniform in every respect. The basic color of the fruit is yellow. Red cheeks will vary with varieties and will not be demanded by the judge unless it is typical of the variety.

The stems of peaches need not be present and each member of a lot must be uniform in this respect. Since it is easy to bruise a peach, the exhibitor must take great care at the time of harvesting and during transportation of the specimens to the fair. Avoid the selection of over-ripe specimens for exhibition purposes.

Plums and Cherries

Fairs will vary in the number of specimens you need to exhibit. Some require ten to a dozen specimens on a plate; others require either a pint basket or a quart basket full. In either case do what the premium list requires, but make sure that you leave the stems attached in both crops. Select only the plump, ripe specimens and make sure that they are uniform throughout the exhibit. Bloom, the white substance on plums, must not be removed.

Grapes

From three to five bunches make an exhibit of grapes. Each bunch or cluster must be uniform in size and the fruit on the bunch must be in good condition with the bloom present. The stem of each cluster must be neatly cut and preferably the same length on each cluster. Any decayed portion of the cluster can be neatly removed, but be careful not to detach any of the good parts. Each grape must be firmly attached if good results are expected.

Raspberries and Blackberries

Usually only a pint box is required with these fruits. Make sure that each specimen is uniform in size, shape, and color within the box and that ripeness is uniform. Each fruit should be clean and free from mechanical injury as well as pest injury.

Blueberries

Again, only a pint box is required at most fairs. The berries must be uniformly plump and ripe, with as much of the bloom present on the fruit as possible. You must be careful not to tear the fruit at picking time. Each berry must be of the same variety in each lot.

Strawberries

Either pint or quart boxes of strawberries may be required, depending upon the fair. Each berry within the box must be uniform in size, shape and color; and each berry must also have the stem and "cap" attached. Green-streaked or malformed berries are common faults with this crop and should be avoided. Also, be certain to clean the specimens before placing them on the exhibiting table. As mentioned earlier, dirt can be removed with a soft painter's brush. Strawberries must never be washed prior to a fair.

Conditioning and Grooming

The grooming of horticultural specimens for a fair is not nearly as much work as the grooming of an animal; nevertheless, it does take some time and patience. But it is the best expenditure of time that you will make in the long process of producing a specimen for the fair. Good grooming is what makes an exhibit. No grooming at all can literally ruin an otherwise perfect, blue ribbon entry.

Picking and conditioning

Conditioning means to properly treat a specimen so that it will stand up well after it reaches the fair. Good conditioning begins the moment the stem of a flower, fruit, or vegetable is severed from the parent plant in the garden. A good, sharp knife contributes to proper conditioning. When a dull knife is used, it constricts the water-conducting vessels of the specimen, thus shortening its life span. Shears, if sharp, are the second best tool for cutting stems, but since you have two blades coming together in their cutting action, you risk the chance of constriction here also. Hence we say that a good, sharp knife is the best cutting tool.

In the garden the exhibitor must carry a pail of warm water in which to place the stems of flowers. Technically this water should be at a temperature of 110 degrees. It is believed that warm water moves freely into the stems of flowers. Some researchers theorize that warm water also dissolves any air bubbles in the conducting vessels of the stem more quickly than cold water.

If the warm water treatment is to be of any use, the flower stem must be placed into it immediately after it is cut. For this reason, the low, sideless basket sold in many garden shops especially for the collecting of cut flowers in the garden is of no use when exhibition specimens are being collected. Many of the flowers that produce milky or sticky sap, however, condition best if they are placed in cold water. Examples are dahlias, daffodils, fuchsias, forget-me-nots, and poppies.

You have probably noticed that many of our garden flowers exude sap when they are cut from the plant. Therefore their stems must be seared to "seal up" the sap and prevent too much of it from being lost. Hollyhocks, poppies, dahlias, daffodils, heliotrope, plume poppy, and milkweed are members of the group that requires searing. This step can be accomplished very easily by placing the freshly cut stem in boiling water for one minute or in a flame for one-half minute before placing the flower in the conditioning pail.

Many people stress the importance of cutting the stems of flowers on a slant "so that they will take in more water." This belief is erroneous because the slanted cut does not appreciably increase the exposure of conducting tissue. The prime benefit of cutting a stem on a slant is that these stems do not squarely touch the bottom of a container

when placed in it, and for this reason the conducting vessels are less likely to become clogged up with dirt. Also, stems cut more easily on a slant than square across.

However, it has been found beneficial to crush the lower 2 inches of woody stems with a blunt object before conditioning them. Woody stems do conduct water to some degree through the tissue between the xylem tubes as well as through the tubes themselves. The main difference between woody and non-woody stems is that the former have more tissue between the xylem tubes than the latter. Chrysanthemums, phlox, lythrum, stock, and the woody shrubs are among the plants that benefit from stem crushing.

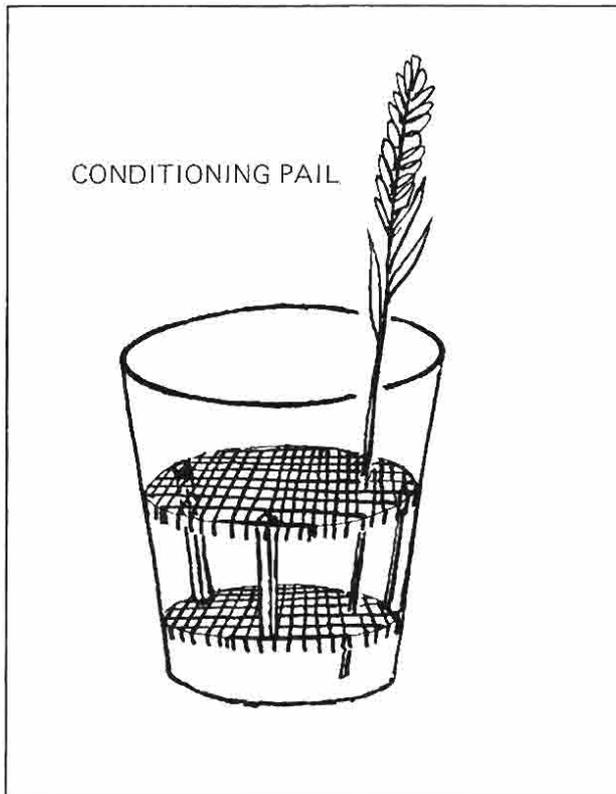
Most flowers, then, should be placed in warm water as soon after picking as possible. The container holding the flowers should then be placed in a cool location—specifically 40 to 45 degrees. For most exhibitions, unless they have a refrigerator specifically for the purpose, the best place to condition flowers is on a cool basement floor. The spot selected should be dark and out of drafts and the flowers should be left in this location for at least twelve hours previous to the fair. Try to find conditions that do not favor a high respiration rate leading to water loss.

The amount of water that you place in the pail will usually be enough for the entire conditioning process; but in some cases, such as with the woody material, more water may be necessary before the process is completed. In this case cold water can be added, since the water in the conditioning pail is already cold. If for some reason a few of the flowers have wilted, simply remove them from the pail, re-cut the stems, and place them in warm water. They will probably come back to life. In other words, you are repeating the whole process in an effort to revive the wilted specimens.

The humidity in the conditioning process should be as high as possible. Some authorities recommend syringing the foliage of the flowers, but this can be dangerous because the blossoms of many flowers will spot badly when droplets of water fall on them. Delphiniums, dahlias, lupines, petunias, and roses are but a few of those that will spot. Furthermore, free water on any portion of the plant encourages disease invasion if temperature conditions are favorable. If you do syringe your specimens, do it sparingly; but, better yet, place a plastic bag over the entire pail and its contents in an effort to raise the humidity by trapping the moisture which is evaporating from the base of the pail or transpiring through the foliage.

Specimens that are being conditioned cannot be crowded without risking the possibility of some injury to the foliage, stem, or blossoms. Even non-crowded flowers that rub against the side of the pail can be damaged. For this reason it is wise to devise some means of holding flowers

erect in an uncrowded condition. To accomplish this some exhibitors place shredded styrofoam in the base of the pail; others prefer to construct a wire mesh frame. One of the frames is placed within 2 inches of the bottom of the pail, while the other can be adjusted at the proper height for the material in question. For example, leafless scapes of daylilies cause little concern, but stems of phlox or marigolds, which have leaves, may necessitate placing the two mesh frames closer together. The exhibitor must remember, however, that when the specimens are finally placed on the fair table, the lower foliage will be under water and must be removed. Therefore, it might well be removed at conditioning time so that the wire mesh frames could be used to hold the flowers erect and straight.



The many good conditioners on the market are designed to do two things. First, they lower the pH of the water to discourage bacterial growth. Second, they add carbohydrates to the water and eventually to the flowers so that what is lost through respiration is replaced, at least in part.

The addition of a tablespoon of white vinegar and two tablespoons of sugar to a quart of water makes an excellent conditioner. The mixture is especially good for roses because it prevents petal drop. Usually petal drop is not a problem for one or two day fairs, but for longer events it definitely is.

So far our discussion of picking and conditioning has dealt primarily with flowers. In the case of vegetables it is

better to pick and prepare them just before the fair, if you have time. This is also true of fruit.

When flowers and vegetables come into prime exhibiting condition a few days before the fair, it is wise to pick them and place them at 40° to 45° temperatures. This type of produce does not take up much room and the kitchen refrigerator can possibly be used for short periods. Sometimes when vegetables are stored in the refrigerator and removed to warm temperatures at the fair, the skin tends to shrivel, especially on tomatoes. For this reason, remove the vegetables from the refrigerator a few hours before the fair and place them in a cool spot slightly warmer than the refrigerator. In this way the vegetables become gradually acclimated to their future temperature.

It is easy to injure the surface of fruits or vegetables at picking time. Extreme care should be used in handling this produce; it should be placed in a cloth or paper-lined basket with pieces of paper between specimens. This cuts down greatly on mechanical injury and insures good appearance. It doesn't pay to pack too many vegetables or fruits in one basket for the weight of one upon another can cause bruising. This is especially true in the case of soft material such as tomatoes, peppers and berries.

A good, sharp knife or shears must be used in the picking of most vegetables or fruits. We mentioned that beans, peas, eggplants, peppers, strawberries, and many others should be exhibited with part of the stem attached. Without using a knife or shears it is hard to pick these specimens without breaking off the stem.

Grooming

The matter of grooming specimens is the last step in preparing them for the fair. Actually, all we have to do at this point is to remove any soil or dirt that is on the foliage, stem, or flower and also remove all spray residue. In the case of house plants the pot must be thoroughly cleaned, spray residue removed, and any leaves that have yellowed in the few days previous to the fair should be removed. Flowers that have passed their prime must also be removed from house plants during this process.

The removal of soil from a flower or plant is a relatively simple matter; the only hard thing about the process is the patience which it demands. If we are in a hurry, it is possible to damage the foliage by breaking it or by grinding soil into it and thus injuring its tissue. For this reason give yourself plenty of time for this step. Any loose soil can be removed by a gentle spray of water from either a faucet or a syringe. The remaining finer particles will come off under running water with the aid of a soft flannel cloth. If soil particles or (in some cases) soot or dust persist, syringe the foliage with mild, soapy water; then loosen the particles with a soft cloth and wash them off with running water.

Not only must you allow plenty of time for this process, but you must also do it well in advance of the fair. Allow plenty of time for a second washing if necessary.

Spray residue is removed in exactly the same manner, but here your patience is tried to a greater degree because some residues are reluctant to come off. Syringe the plant with soapy water, gently rub it with a soft cloth, then rinse gently with water. Spray residues which are not too extensive may sometimes be removed by simply rubbing the foliage with soft cotton or an old nylon stocking.

Vegetables or fruits must not be scrubbed with a brush because the bristles gash the surface and leave them unattractive and vulnerable to high water loss through the gashes. It seems logical to scrub vegetables since this is what we do before cooking them, but in such case they go immediately into the pot. They do not have to be judged or stay on a fair table for at least a day for viewing by all.

Fruits and vegetables should be washed with a soft cloth after first removing as much of the loose soil as possible under a faucet or hose nozzle. The root crops will need several washings so that they will not streak. At this time any dried leaf petioles on carrots or beets can be removed. Strawberries and other soft fruits cannot be rubbed even with a soft cloth, so here we have to rely entirely upon a gentle flow of water.

Before leaving the subject of grooming, we need to say a word or two about the application of materials to the foliage of house plants to make it shine. This practice is not considered proper in the exhibition of plant material. In fact, the judge will score you down severely if these "leaf shining" materials are used. Leaves can be made to shine by rubbing them with a dry flannel cloth. This practice brings out the natural oils making them appear more lovely than through artificial means.

Transporting to the Fair

Just one little slip in transporting your entries to the fair can ruin all of your growing and grooming efforts. Here occurs most of the mechanical injury found on fair specimens. The exhibitor has put considerable time and effort into growing show material. He might just as well devote a few extra minutes to proper carrying techniques for his entries. This time will be well spent.

It would be well worth your while to construct a carrying rack in which to place your specimens for transporting. There are many types of racks that you can make right at home with very little expense and effort. The wire mesh frames which we discussed in relation to conditioning are one type of rack that can be used. Simply leave the flowers in the conditioning pail and carry it to the fair.

Tin cans make excellent carrying racks if mounted on a baseboard. As you know, there are many sizes of cans ranging from the small frozen juice concentrate size to the large liquid juice size; in addition there are even larger cans which restaurants discard. The very small juice cans are excellent for small materials like violets, pansies and alyssum. The medium-size cans such as those used for canned vegetables and fruits are suitable for material like

ageratum, petunias, and dwarf marigolds, while the large cans are best for the larger flowers.

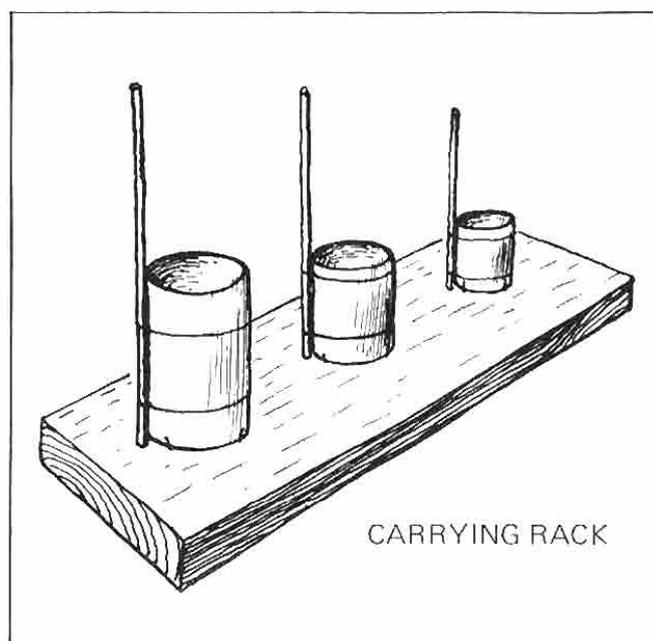
It is wise to make the rack in the winter when you have more time. To make the base obtain a pine board 10 to 12 inches wide and 3 feet long. In order to determine the right spacings for the cans on the board, lay them out and trace with a pencil around their bases. Allow at least 3 to 4 inches between the small cans and 6 to 8 inches between the larger ones. Then drill a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch hole to the side of each can and place a dowel in it. Permit the dowel to be 6 inches above the height of each can so the specimen may be tied to it for the trip to the fair. This keeps the specimen from rubbing and rolling around and becoming damaged. You may want the dowel to extend 1 foot to 18 inches above the can for carrying tall material such as iris and gladiolus.

With a fine-gauge wire such as that used for corsage making or picture hanging, tightly fasten the can to the dowel in two places. Three brads may be driven into the baseboard around each can to keep the cans from sliding around. Lastly, paint the rack for appearance and long life.

A rack of this type is easy to make; the only tools needed are a drill, hammer, pliers, and a paint brush. The cans may be changed from fair to fair to fit the size of material being transported. Also, it is inexpensive to build and may be used for conditioning as well. Some 4-H members may want to fasten a handle on the rack for extra ease in carrying.

Even though the tin can rack is easy to build it may involve too much work. You could devise a satisfactory case by placing waxed cartons such as those used for milk, cream, and juice in a box and separating them with newspapers. The coneshaped cartons are especially good since they do not tip easily.

House plants too should be carried in a box with newspapers stuffed between the pots, allowing plenty of





room for the plant itself. Even if you have just one plant place it in a box with newspapers stuffed between the pot and the sides of the box. This procedure makes a base for the pot so that it will not tip over.

To avoid any possible damage to the tender petals of your flowers, buy a package or two of tissue paper for wrapping the blooms. This is purely a safety step that often pays dividends. Place a large piece over the blooms loosely and wrap it around the bases of the flowers or flower heads, being careful not to crowd the florets or petals.

All vegetables and fruits must be wrapped in either tissue paper or newspapers to prevent bruising. With small vegetables such as ten pea pods selected for a plate exhibit, you can wrap them all together in one piece of paper. The wrapped produce can be packed in a shallow box with newspapers stuffed between packages as cushioning. The use of a low, shallow box is important, for packing of the produce in a deep box causes too much weight and injury on the bottom ones. Soft material like strawberries and tomatoes must be packaged separately.

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Apples	15	Foxglove	3	Rhubarb	8
Arrangement: garden flowers; miniature, table	5	Freedom from damage	2	Root crops	10
Asparagus	8	Fruits	15	Roses	4
Asters	5	Gaillardia	5	Round form flowers	3
Bachelor's buttons	5	Garden flowers, arrangements	5	Rutabagas	11
Beans	11	Gladiolus	3	Salad crops	9
Beets	10	Gourds	13	Salpiglossis	5
Blackberries	15	Grapes	15	Salvia	3
Blueberries	15	Greens	8	Scabiosa	5
Broccoli	9	Grooming	17	Shape, uniformity of	1, 2
Brussels sprouts	10	House plants: flowering, foliage	7	Size, uniformity of	1, 2
Bulb crops	11	Insect damage	2	Snapdragons	3
Cabbage	10	Legumes	11	Soil damage	2
Calendula	5	Lettuce	9	Solanaceous fruits	12
Carrots	10	Lilies	4	Spike form flowers	3
Cauliflower	10	Marigolds	5	Spinach	8
Celery	9	Maturity	2	Spray residue	2
Celosia	3	Mechanical injury	2	Strawberries	15
Chard	8	Melons	13	Substance	2
Cherries	15	Miniature arrangements	5	Summer squash	12
Chrysanthemums	5	Muskmelons	13	Sweet peas	5
Cockscomb	3	Nasturtiums	5	Sweet potatoes	14
Cole crops	9	Onions	11	Table arrangements	5
Color, uniformity of	1	Parsley	9	Tomatoes	12
Conditioning	16	Parsnips	11	Transporting fair materials	18
Corn	14	Peaches	15	Turnips	11
Corsages	6	Pears	15	Type	1
Cosmos	5	Peas	11	Uniformity of size, of shape, of color, of variety	1
Cucumbers	13	Peppers	12	Variety, uniformity of	2
Cultural perfection	2	Perennial crops	8	Vegetables	7
Dahlias	5	Phlox	5	Vegetables and fruits	7
Damage, freedom from	2	Picking	16	Vine crops	12
Day lilies	4	Plums	15	Watermelons	13
Delphiniums	3	Potatoes	14	Why exhibit	1
Dianthus	6	Pumpkins	13	Winter squash	13
Eggplant	12	Radishes	11	Zinnias	5
Flowering plants	7	Raspberries	15		
Flowers	3, 4, 5, 6, 7				

<p>FAIRFIELD COUNTY EXTENSION SERVICE</p> <p>Route 6, Storey Hill Bethel, CT 06801 Tel. 748-3523</p>	<p>NEW HAVEN COUNTY EXTENSION SERVICE</p> <p>Agricultural Center 322 North Main Street Wallingford, CT 06492 Tel. 269-7788</p>
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