

# **EDINGTON GARDENING CLUB**

*Established 2004*



## **HINTS AND TIPS ON EXHIBITING**

**FRUIT  
VEGETABLES  
FLOWERS and POT PLANTS  
PRESERVES and BAKING  
HANDICRAFT  
ART and PHOTOGRAPHY**

## **Guidelines for the Exhibiting of Fruit, Vegetables, Flowers and Pot Plants, Preserves and Baking, Handicraft, Art and Photography**

**The inclusion of an item in this guide does not imply that there is a category/class for it in the show; please check the show schedule for the specific categories and classes.**

### **FRUIT**

**General guidance** - Pick as near to Show time as practicable – retain stalks. Do **NOT** polish fruits – leave the natural bloom. Apples, pears and gooseberries may be shown ripe or unripe. All other fruit should be ripe. Do **NOT** select over-ripe fruits.

**Apples** (cooking) - Select large, solid, unblemished fruits of shape and colour typical of the cultivar with eyes and stalks intact.

**Apples** (dessert) – Optimum sized shapely fruits with eyes and stalks intact, and clear unblemished skins of the natural colour characteristic of the cultivar.

**Blackberries and hybrid cane fruits** – Large, ripe fruits of good colour, free from blemishes, in good condition, with fresh calyces, and having stalks. Avoid small, unripe or overripe fruit.

**Blueberries** – Strigs with large, ripe fruits of good colour and bloom, free from blemishes, in good condition.

**Currants** - Select large strigs with plenty of berries. Stalks fresh. Own foliage may be used for decoration.

**Gooseberries** – Large, ripe or unripe fruits as appropriate for the season, uniform and unblemished, of good colour, complete with stalks.

**Pears** (dessert) – Large for the cultivar, shapely fruits with undamaged eyes, stalks intact and clear, unblemished skins of the natural characteristic of the cultivar.

**Plums** – Large, fully ripe fruits of good colour, with bloom intact and having stalks.

### **VEGETABLES**

**General guidance** – beetroots, carrots, etc. - must have the leaves cut so that approximately 75mm of leaf stalk remains. Apart from improving the presentation of the roots, this helps to make the exhibits anonymous as far as the judge is concerned. Water the soil before lifting to minimise damage to the root. Wash root vegetables carefully to remove soil – use soft cloth and plenty of water, take care when washing as any damage will show clearly after a few hours - brushing will damage the skin. On other vegetables, retain the bloom wherever possible.

**Beetroot (Globe)** - Select beetroot (not too large, between 60 and 75mm) with smooth skins of even size and uniform dark colour. Remove side roots, but retain full length of taproot. Trim foliage to approximately 75mm.

**Carrots** - Select full-length roots of good shape, good even colour and size, without discoloration at the top – free from side roots and from green at the crown. Skins clean and bright. Stage with approximately 75mm of foliage, exhibit in a row with roots facing the front.

**Courgettes** – Select young tender fruits of good uniform shape and colour, approximately 35mm in diameter and approximately 150mm in length. Of any colour but well matched. Stage flat with or without flowers still adhering.

**Cucumber** - Select fresh, young, green, tender, blemish free straight fruits of uniform thickness, with short handles and with or without flowers still attached. Retain waxy bloom.

**French Beans/Runner Beans** - Select straight tendersnap pods of even length and good colour with no outward sign of seeds. Exhibit with stalk intact on a plate or directly on the table, stalks at one end, tails at the other.

**Herbs** - fresh, healthy, clean foliage, exhibited in a vase.

**Onions** – Avoid soft, stained specimens with thick, immature necks. Do not over skin. Select uniform well-ripened bulbs of good colour. Tops should be tied with uncoloured raffia with the roots neatly trimmed to the base of the onion. May be staged on rings or soft collars.

**Peppers , sweet and hot (chilli).** - Select fresh, brightly coloured fruit, size and colour for the cultivar. Fruit may be shown immature but fully formed usually green, or at the mature or coloured stage. The exhibit should be uniform in colour.

**Potatoes** - should be free from blemishes. Wash very carefully in clean water with a soft sponge – avoid use of a coarse cloth or brush that might damage the skin. Select equally matched tubers, generally between 175g and 225g, with shallow eyes. Should be free from skin blemishes. Stage on plate with rose end outwards.

**Tomatoes – (medium-sized)** approximately 60mm diameter, well-shaped, rounded fruit, ripe but firm richly coloured fruit with firm, fresh calyces attached and natural bloom. Avoid overripe fruit or those with “greenback”. Stage on plate with calyces uppermost.

**Tomatoes (small-fruited/cherry)** - Fresh, ripe but firm, well-coloured fruits not exceeding 35mm in diameter, with fresh calyces attached and natural bloom.

## **FLOWERS AND POT PLANTS**

**General guidance** - 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.

### **Guidelines for flowers**

A week or two before the show identify those plants that you intend to enter. Remove unwanted side shoots and buds to aid the development of the main bloom. Protect blooms from damage by pests, rain, hail and pets. Turn pot plants regularly to avoid lopsided development.

Cut your flower stems in the cool of the evening or early morning. Leave the stems as long as possible, making a slanting cut to help with water uptake. Remove the lower leaves and any unwanted side shoots and plunge them up to their necks in water. Exclude light but don't squash the flowers. It is best to do this the night before the show as it can encourage the blooms to expand.

You will need to bring enough vases for all your exhibits. Take some marbles or glass beads as this helps to hold stems in position. A small watering can is useful to top up the vases. A final spray with clean water will help to keep the blooms fresh; it can get very warm in the hall.

**Annuals** – One vase of five different varieties, one stem of each. Good fresh condition. A good proportion of flowers fully developed and appropriately positioned on their stem(s). The petals should be properly positioned on the flowers and of shape, texture and colour typical of the species or cultivar. The foliage should be clean, healthy and undamaged by weather or pests. Stems should be typical of the species or cultivar. The vase of cut mixed flowers will not be judged on the arrangement but should be presented so that it can be viewed from all sides; it is a common mistake to arrange the vase for front viewing.

**Cactus or succulent** - Any species of cactus is accepted. Points will be awarded for: large (for the species), well-balanced, healthy, showing signs of flowering. Species that are harder to cultivate will be awarded more points. Points will be lost for: small (for the species), evidence of pest infestation, damaged or missing spines, distortion or scarring of body or leaves.

**Chrysanthemums** - Same as for dahlias except that blooms should be at 90 degrees to the stem. Foliage should be in good condition and retained on the stem.

**Dahlias** - 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. The exception is the Pompon dahlia where the bloom faces upwards, like a drumstick. Stage with blooms all facing in the same direction, not touching and with a balanced effect. Retain some foliage on the stems if possible.

**Flowering shrub** – 1 stem in flower

**Mixed perennial garden flowers** – One vase of mixed kinds, not less than three plants. A good proportion of flowers fully developed and appropriately positioned on their stem(s). The petals should be properly positioned on the flowers and of shape, texture and colour typical of the species or cultivar. The foliage should be clean, healthy and undamaged by weather or pests. Stems should be typical of the species or cultivar. The vase of cut mixed flowers will not be judged on the arrangement but should be presented so that it can be viewed from all sides; it is a common mistake to arrange the vase for front viewing.

**Pot Plant** - Any type of plant that you have grown indoors for decorative purposes is accepted. It may be a flowering plant or grown for its attractive foliage. Epiphytic plants such as ferns, bromeliads and orchids may be shown attached to a piece of bark/ wood instead of in a pot.

Pots or containers should be clean and undamaged. Points will be awarded for: sturdy, shapely plant, healthy unblemished foliage and flowers (if present). All else being equal, preference will be given to plants that are harder to grow.

Points will be lost for: unhealthy plant, deformed, undersized, scanty or diseased foliage, dull colour. Dirty or damaged container, staking / tying / wiring done so that it detracts from the overall appearance.

Presentation tips: stakes, wires etc. are fine as long as they are neat and do not look ugly.

**Roses** – Three of the same variety. The exhibit should be balanced in height and width in relation to the container, and enhanced by good colour combination. The

flowers and foliage should be artistically arranged to avoid either crushing or excessive gaps and without exposing such expanses of stem or foliage that the flowers are not the dominant feature of the exhibit.

## **GUIDELINES FOR EXHIBITING HOME CRAFTS (Preserves, and Baking)**

Read the schedule carefully to make sure that your entry complies in all components, i.e. size, weight, and numbers in each exhibit as appropriate. All exhibits should be clean/hygienic. Lids on jars need to be loosened prior to the judging taking place.

### **PRESERVES AND VINEGAR PRESERVES**

**General guidance** - Jars and bottles must be clear glass with NO commercial markings, clean, well polished and free of stickiness and finger marks. The contents are sealed with a wax disc and a lid / cover. Label the jars with the contents and date (DD/MM/YY) applied near to the bottom of the jar. The judge will taste the exhibit with marking given according to flavour / aroma being the biggest percentage of the overall marks.

#### **Preserves**

**Jams** - Shown in 375ml. or 1lb. jar. Colour should be bright and characteristic. No scum or foreign bodies, mould or sugar crystals. Fruit evenly distributed, not too many stones. Skins tender. Consistency 'jellified' not runny or sticky, no loose liquid or syrup. Flavour full, fresh and characteristic of the fruit. Jars should be made of clear glass and free from all commercial/trade marks, whether on lid, jar or base. Labels should be plain, neat and straight and of suitable size for the container. Place label between the seams of the jar. Label should state contents and day, month and year of making. Fill jars to the neck. Seal with a wax disc and a lid/cover.

**Jellies** - Shown in 190ml. or 8oz. jar. Should be brilliantly clear with no pulp, haze or scum and. Should be brilliantly clear. Colour should be even, bright and characteristic. Consistency should tremble, but hold its shape. No air bubbles. Flavour true of fruit, full and well balanced. Seal as for jams

**Lemon curd** - Shown in 375ml. or 1lb. jar. Must have a wax disc and cellophane cover. Twist tops and pliable tops are not acceptable. Consistency spreadable, but not runny or rough. No egg spots, peel, scum, sugar crystals and air bubbles. Flavour fresh and well balanced, with no greasy taste.

**Marmalade** - Shown in 375ml. or 1lb. jar. If peel is included in the preserve, it should be tender and uniformly cut. Colour will vary according to type, but bright and characteristic. Consistency 'jellified', not runny or too firm. No air bubbles or scum. Peel tender, uniformly cut and distributed. Traditionally peel should be sliced. Minced peel would lose marks, unless specified in schedule. Flavour slightly bitter, characteristic and true of fruit used. Seal with a wax disc and a lid/cover.

#### **Vinegar Preserves**

Jars must be suitably covered to prevent corrosion of the lid by the vinegar. Cover must be airtight. Chutneys and pickles should be 2-3 months old before exhibiting to allow the flavour to mature.

**Chutney** - Shown in 375ml. or 1lb. jar. Colour, bright and even throughout. Dark chutney should be dark and bright, but not muddy. Consistency reasonably firm, and uniform. No large pieces of onion, skin, cores, or stones. No air bubbles or free vinegar. Mature flavour (improved by potting for two months). Flavours blended well, and characteristic of ingredients used. Contents sealed with a wax disc and a lid/cover.

## **BAKING (CULINARY EXHIBITS)**

**General guidance** - If a recipe is provided for a particular class, it must be followed. Cakes, scones and biscuits etc. should be displayed on a plate with a doyley and the use of cling film will help to maintain standards of hygiene. No marks from cake rack should appear on top of cake.

The judge will look at the external appearance, colour, shape and uniformity, internal texture and quality, flavour and aroma.

**Apple Pie** – Shortcrust pastry top and bottom 8” / 20cm diameter

**Bread** - Baked 24 hours before judging and usually presented on a breadboard. Machine made – don't forget to remove the paddle.

**Bread Rolls** – Plate of 5, usually presented on a breadboard.

**Cup Cakes** – 6 Decorated, these will be marked on internal texture and decoration.

**Scones** - Suitable size is 5 cms. (2 inches) in diameter, almost as tall as round. Schedule will specify number and they should be uniform in colour and size.

**Victoria Sandwich** - Evenly matched depth for each half sandwiched with raspberry jam, NO additional filling is allowed, e.g. cream. Light sprinkling of castor sugar on top is allowed. Delicate flavour. There should be no cooling rack marks on the top surface.

*These guidelines are taken from a variety of sources including “The Horticultural Show Handbook” published by the RHS, “On With The Show” published by the WI, and comments made by the judges in previous years.*