

Hurst Horticultural Show

A Guide to Showing Fruit, Vegetables and Flowers

These notes are the result of frequently asked questions. Gardeners who have perfect specimens, but are put off by the supposed formality of showing, can take comfort in knowing that at our village show there are few rules, and these are contained in the schedule. There are however some practices and conventions that help in the presentation of your entries. This is not the Olympic Games ... No gold medals for the longest carrot! What our judges look for in general is condition, form, uniformity, size and cleanliness. These qualities mean different things for different produce. But good staging and preparation can make all the difference. Some examples....

Carrots

Free from dirt, 3 roots in schedule ideally uniform in shape and size. Foliage cut to about 4" and tied with string or raffia.

Parsnips and Beetroot

The same as for carrots - do not trim roots, except those small wispy ones that grow on the sides.

Potatoes

Clean and uniform in size and shape. Do not peel!

Runner Beans and French Beans

Can be picked in advance wrapped in a damp cloth and kept in a cool dark place, ie veg compartment in the fridge. Can be straightened (carefully) whilst damp. Leave a short length of stalk.

Onions

Towards the end of July take off any unsightly skin BUT be careful not to damage the sound skin which will need final ripening. Ease from the ground about 1 week beforehand allowing them to harden off and finally ripen. Place them in the sun for a day or two once lifted.

Onions and Shallots should have their roots removed and their tops should be trimmed and tied neatly with plain string or raffia.

Tomatoes

Uniformity is important. Leave on the calyces (stalks) and do not polish.

Leeks

Leave the roots on but cleaned. Tip from our judge, comb the roots! Leave the flags (foliage) intact but tied neatly.

Courgettes.

Courgette flowers can be left on or removed. If they are really fresh they are very attractive and might catch the judge's eye.

Sweetcorn.

Leave the green husks on but peel down a narrow one inch strip to show the yellow kernels.

Collection of Vegetables.

This class can include vegetables which are in the schedule or others which are not.

Any other vegetable.

Anything from a single pumpkin to a set of 12 pea pods. The more interesting and unusual the better!

Fruit

All fruits (except apricots, nectarines, peaches and nuts) should be shown with stalks intact. Apricots, nectarines and peaches are shown without stalks. All nuts are shown without stalks or husks.

The same general notes apply for condition, uniformity, etc. Do not polish fruit.

Flowers

Desirable merits and defects vary considerably between varieties and types however some general common hints are - Freshness, cleanliness and condition, form and uniformity, trueness of colour, size of blooms in balance with stems, stems clean and free from defect.

How to Grow

No mention has been made of how to grow, There are many books on the subject but we in Hurst are fortunate in having good soil in the main and good growing conditions (some times!). Any queries or not too difficult problems please ask one of our members. Please consider entering and help keep alive a village tradition that goes back over 100 years

Novice?

Adults and Children - If you have not entered exhibits into the Show before and are not too sure about it all, do start off by trying the novice classes.

More Information

There is more information on showing in the Royal Horticultural Society Show Handbook. Our judges use this for reference as they look at the exhibits.

Why Show?

A sense of pride and satisfaction can be one reason, good therapy another.