

Harvesting and Preparing Vegetables for Exhibit

Preparation and Handling Tips When preparing vegetables for exhibit there are many important guidelines for best displays. Some of the criteria that judges will use to evaluate your exhibits are cleanliness, blemish-free, freshness, prime condition, uniformity, true-to-type, and labeling. Vegetables are typically exhibited on white paper plates. Check fair book for specific show guidelines.

Harvesting Always use a sharp knife to make clean, straight cuts when harvesting or trimming vegetables. Do not pull fruits from the vine. This may result in a jagged tear on the stem. Vegetables should be fresh and in prime condition for eating at the time of judging. Harvest and prepare vegetables (except onions and sweet potatoes) as close to the exhibition date as possible to prevent wilting and shriveling. If vegetables must be harvested a day or so before the fair, store them in plastic bags in the refrigerator. The size of vegetables on exhibit should be typical of the crop and variety.

Remember, the biggest doesn't always mean the best. Uniformity must be considered when two or more specimens are required for an exhibit. A good vegetable exhibit is uniform in size, shape, color, maturity, and type. All vegetables should be true-to-type, that is, typical of the crop and variety being exhibited. For example, cucumbers with curled ends are not true-to-type, nor is an elongated beet typical of the variety 'Detroit Dark Red'. All fruits and vegetables on exhibit must be free of blemishes that may be caused by insects, diseases, and mechanical injury. Damage caused by rough treatment during harvest or transportation downgrades an exhibit. For example, it is not desirable to display root crops that have been injured while digging or to show squash with torn off stems. Pack vegetables carefully in cloth or paper when transporting them to the fair.

Cleaning Clean vegetables are another important criteria for judging. Dirt detracts from the appearance of the vegetables. However, it is not always advisable to clean vegetables by washing. Root crops, such as potatoes, that have been washed and scrubbed will wilt and shrivel after only a short time on display. Generally, less soil adheres to root vegetables if they are dug when the soil is relatively dry. If washing is necessary, soak roots in cool water, and gently wash with a stream of water or soft cloth. Never scrub with a hard-bristled brush. Tender-skinned vegetables, such as summer squash and eggplant, must not be washed. Clean them by lightly brushing the dirt away with a soft bristled paint brush.

Beans (lima)

Best stage of maturity—Full size for variety, bright green, tender, fresh
Faults—Wilted, immature, variable color, rusted, or insect-damaged pods
Preparation—Pick before seeds reach full size. Seed color changes from dark green to light green and they become more starchy as they approach maturity.

Beans (snap)

Best state of maturity—Uniform in color and size, straight, true to variety, small seeds, not more than half grown
Faults—Cracked pods, variable color, seeds too large; disease, insect or mechanical injury
Preparation—Brush with soft-bristled brush or soft dry cloth to remove dirt; leave 1/4 to 1/2 inch of stem on pod.

Beets

Best stage of maturity—Smooth, firm, and uniform in color; 1 1/2 to 3 inches in diameter
Faults—Variable color, misshapen, rough or broken skin, oversized, insect or disease damage
Preparation—Trim tops to 1 1/2 to 2 inches in length (helps reduce wilting); leave up to 2 inches of tap root; brush to remove soil, or soak and gently wash in cold water; do not scrub because skin will break.

Broccoli

Best stage of maturity—Firm heads, uniform color, tender and crisp, tight bud stage
Faults—Wilted, leaves in head, flowers open or showing yellow, depressed center, insect or disease damage
Preparation—Rinse with cold water; keep refrigerated until ready to exhibit; remove all leaves below the head; minimum diameter of head (or sprouts) is 3 inches; minimum length of stalk and head is 5 inches.

Cabbage

Best stage of maturity—Heads solid and firm, tender and crisp, heavy for size
Faults—Light weight, loosely formed, not firm, wilted, split; insect, disease, or mechanical damage; peeled too much
Preparation—Do not peel excessively; two or three outer leaves should be left on; trim stem close to head but leave no more than 1/2 inch of stem.

Carrots

Best stage of maturity—Smooth, straight, uniform bright color, 1 to 1 1/2 inches in diameter at crown
Faults—Purple or green shoulders, too large or small, pale color, forked, crooked or cracked roots, insect or disease damage

Preparation—Trim tops to 1 to 1 1/2 inches in length; remove soil by brushing or wash in cold water. Do not scrub because skin will break.

Cauliflower

Best stage of maturity—White, orange (yellow) or purple (depending on cultivar), crisp and solid, "jacket" leaves fresh and with uniform color
Faults—Poor color (yellow-brownish), grainy, excessively rough, wilted, insect or disease damage
Preparation—Trim "jacket" leaves even with top of head; some of the older leaves may be removed. Leave 1/4 to 1/2 inch of stem below bottom leaves.

Celery

Best stage of maturity—Crisp, firm, thick, and uniform petioles (stalks); uniform color for type
Faults—Wilted, small size stalks, blemishes, split stalks, poor color for type; insect, disease, or mechanical injury
Preparation—Trim leaves uniformly and remove roots; wash in cold water and refrigerate until ready to exhibit.

Corn (sweet)

Best stage of maturity—Kernels fully grown and in milk stage; well filled, good color, and even rows; fresh, bright green husks
Faults—Too immature or over mature; crooked, uneven rows; cob not filled to tip; insect damage; dried husks
Preparation—Remove husk from one side of ear (corn deteriorates rapidly if entire husk is removed); trim silk to within 1 inch of tip of husk; trim shank (stem holding ear) to butt (bottom end of ear).

Cucumbers

Best stage of maturity—Straight, dark green color; crisp and firm
Faults—Misshapen or crooked fruit, insect or mechanical damage, oversized, yellowish color, over mature, no stem
Preparation—Leave 1/2 inch of stems; wipe clean with soft cloth.

Dill

Best stage of maturity—Light green with mature seed; ready to use
Faults—Immaturity, small size
Preparation—Cut seed heads with 10- to 12-inch stems.

Eggplant

Best stage of maturity—Firm, shiny; medium to large size; uniform color (purple, green, orange, white, or bicolor); light thumb pressure will leave a dent at the proper harvest stage; small blossom scar; fresh green calyx (the leaf-like cover of the flower and the eggplant)
Faults—Too small, off color for type, dried calyx, dull color, immature
Preparation—Do not wash; wipe with soft cloth if necessary; leave 1-inch stem.

Garlic

Best stage of maturity—Clean, smooth, brightly colored bulbs with dry necks
Faults—Rough, off-colored bulbs; necks green and immature; missing or broken sheaths or cloves; blemished; roots or tops too closely cut.

Preparation—Leave 1 inch of stem attached; trim roots to within 1/4 inch of bulb; brush off soil; do not remove sheath; do not wash. Exhibit three specimens

Herbs (See also Dill)

Best stage of maturity—Fresh, clean, proper harvest stage for use
Faults—Dirty, wilted foliage; flowering or improper stage for kitchen use; improperly labeled
Preparation—Rinse in cold water.

Kale

Best stage of maturity—Dark green, crisp fresh leaves; bright, clean stems
Faults—Insect damage to leaves; dirty, wilted, poorly colored leaves; seed stalk present
Preparation—Remove discolored outer leaves; place roots in jar of water.

Kohlrabi

Best stage of maturity—1 1/2 to 3 inches in diameter, tender, good color
Faults—Too large, tough, poor color, misshapen, dirty; insect, disease, or weather damage
Preparation—Cut leaves 1 to 2 inches in length; trim roots 1 to 2 inches below "ball."

Lettuce, leaf

Best stage of maturity—Fresh, crisp, well-colored leaves
Faults—Leaves are wilted, yellow, damaged, or dirty
Preparation—Remove older outer leaves that show yellowing; place roots in jar of water.

Muskmelon

Best stage of maturity—Pick at full maturity when stem separates readily and completely from fruit (full-slip); medium size and fragrant
Faults—Harvested too soon (half-slip), poorly colored, decay spots, pest or mechanical damage, over- or under-ripe
Preparation—Do not wash; use soft-bristled brush to clean.

Onions (dry)

Best stage of maturity—Firm, mature, well-shaped bulbs; true to variety; small neck that is well dried; heavy for size; 2 inches or more in diameter; uniform color and finish

Faults—Peeled bulb; sun scalded, immature, misshapen, double or split bulbs; large soft neck; poor color, size, and finish; disease, insect, or mechanical injury

Preparation—Harvest early (approximately 2 weeks before exhibiting) and cure thoroughly; do not remove outer scales; do not wash; trim tops 1 inch above bulb; trim roots to 1/4 inch.

Onions (green)

Best stage of maturity—1/2 to 3/4 inch in diameter, straight, white stem and dark green leaves

Faults—Too small or too large, crooked, poor color, dry or discolored leaves, heavily peeled, enlarged bulbs
Preparation—Remove loose skin, cut tops 4 to 5 inches above white shank; trim roots to 1/2 inch.

Peas (edible pod)

Best stage of maturity—Tender, flat pods with seed just beginning to form, bright green color

Faults—Seed maturing, pods swelled or damaged, pods tough

Preparation—Pick with stems; use soft-bristled brush to remove soil

Peas (unshelled)

Best stage of maturity—Bright green, well-filled pods with seeds in eating stage

Faults—Poorly filled pods, dull or whitish green color, pods shriveled or drying, blemished; seeds shriveled, starchy, or bitter

Preparation—Pick with stem, rinse with cool water to clean.

Pepper (bell)

Best stage of maturity—Large, firm, blocky with dark color (red, yellow, green, orange, purple); large for variety, crisp and heavy, uniform in size and color

Faults—Badly misshapen, rough, too small, off color, wilted, lightweight, dirty; show signs of sunscald, mechanical injury, insect, or disease damage

Preparation—Leave 1/2 to 1 inch of stems attached.

Pepper (hot)

Best stage of maturity—Firm, with dark color (red, green, yellow, orange, or purple); crisp and uniform in size and color

Faults—Badly misshapen, rough, too small, off color, wilted, lightweight, dirty; show signs of sunscald, mechanical injury, insect, or disease damage

Preparation—Leave 1/2 to 1 inch of stems attached.

Potatoes

Best stage of maturity—Firm, medium size (6 to 10 ounces), uniform color

Faults—Mechanical, insect, or disease damage; unusually deep eyes for variety; poor color, green color, hollow heart, knobby, or growth cracks

Preparation—Do not wash; dig from dry soil and use soft-bristled brush or soft cloth to remove soil

Pumpkin

Best stage of maturity—Thick flesh (heavy for size); clean, hard rind; true to type in size, shape, and color

Faults—Light weight for size, stem removed, color and shape not typical of variety, scars and blemishes, insect or disease damage

Preparation—Leave 2 inches of stem attached; wipe and polish with a soft cloth.

Radishes

Best stage of maturity—Roots are 1 to 1 1/2 inches in diameter; fresh, crisp, uniform color, and smooth.

Faults—Wilted or soft roots, poorly colored, rough, or blemished; oversized or split

Preparation—Gently wash in cool water; remove only the discolored or injured leaves.

Rhubarb

Best stage of maturity—Young, tender stalks, uniform color, approximately 1 inch in diameter

Faults—Tough, blemished, over mature, poorly colored stalks; lower end of stalks cut

Preparation—Pull, do not cut stalks; trim leaves so only 1 inch of leaf blade remains attached to stalk.

Spinach

Best stage of maturity—Uniformly colored, clean, fresh, crisp leaves

Faults—Wilted, poorly colored, blemished, insect-damaged leaves

Preparation—Wash in cold water; pull entire plant, trim off roots to crown, remove outer damaged leaves; place in jar of water to prevent wilting.

Squash (summer)

Best stage of maturity—Rind should be soft; long-fruited varieties (zucchini-type) should be 4 to 8 inches in length; flat or scalloped types should be 3 to 5 inches in diameter

Faults—Stem removed; large, over mature or oversized fruits; scarred skins, wilted or soft fruit

Preparation—Leave 1 to 2 inches of stem attached; do not wash; use soft-bristled brush to clean.

Tomatoes

Best stage of maturity—Firm fruits that are heavy in relation to size, typical of variety, uniform in size and color, ripe, smooth and well-shaped.

Faults—Poor color, green shoulders, sunscald, too large or too small, misshapen, insect or disease damage, cracked fruit, stems left attached; over-ripe fruit are likely to be soft and "leaky"

Preparation—Pick mature but firm fruits; remove stems; clean with soft cloth.

Turnips

Best stage of maturity—Roots 2 to 3 inches in diameter, smooth skin and firm flesh, uniform color

Faults—Poorly colored, soft, spongy, too large, rough skin, excessively dirty, side roots present; show evidence of insect, disease, or mechanical injury

Preparation—Leave 1 to 2 inches of tops; leave at least 2 inches of tap root; soak and wash in cold water; do not scrub.

Watermelon

Best stage of maturity—Ground spot shows yellowish background color, dull gloss, in best eating stage, medium to large size, shape and color typical of variety

Faults—Immature or over-ripe, poor color, misshapen, blemished

Preparation—Leave 1 to 2 inch stem; wipe with moist cloth.

of premiums.

Ten specimens of one variety are required in each lot; tubers should be clean and attractive, uniform in size and shape, free from blemishes and disease and true to variety name. Diseased potatoes will be disqualified and not shown. Variety must be named.

CLASS 1 POTATOES, 10 specimens

Premium: 1st 2.00 2nd 1.50

LOTS

1. Cherokee
2. Chippewa
3. Early Ohio
4. Irish Cobbler
5. Kennebec
6. Norland
7. Pontiac
8. Russet
9. Yukon Gold
10. Any Other



Open Class exhibitors will receive premium checks at the fair office after 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 5, 2018.



CLASS 2 GARDEN VEGETABLES

Premium: 1st 2.00 2nd 1.50

LOTS

1. Beans, purple, 12 pods
2. Beans, green, 12 pods
3. Beans, yellow, 12 pods
4. Beans, lima, 12 pods
5. Beets for table use, 3 specimens
6. Broccoli, one bunch
7. Cabbage, flat green 1 specimen
8. Cabbage, round green, 1 specimen
9. Cabbage, red, 1 specimen
10. Carrots, 6 specimens
11. Cauliflower, 1 specimen
12. Celery, 1 bunch
13. Cucumbers, slicing, 3 specimens
14. Cucumbers, pickling, 2-3", 6 specimens
15. Cucumbers, 4-5", 6 specimens
16. Egg Plant, purple, 1 specimen
17. Egg Plant, white, 1 specimen
18. Garlic, 6 bulbs
19. Gourds, 6 specimens
20. Ground Cherries, 1 pt
21. Kale, 1 specimen
22. Kohlrabi, White, 3 specimens
23. Kohlrabi, Purple, 3 specimens
24. Leek, 6 specimens
25. Muskmelons, any variety, 1 specimen
26. Onions, yellow globe, 3 specimens
27. Onions, red globe, 3 specimens
28. Onions, white globe, 3 specimens
29. Sweet Spanish Onions, 3 specimens
30. Parsnips, 3 specimens
31. Peas, in pod, 12 pods
32. Sugar Snap Peas, 12 pods
33. Peppers, Hot, 3 specimens
34. Peppers, Sweet, 3 specimens
35. Radishes, 6 specimens
36. Rhubarb, 3 stalks, 1" of leaf on
37. Red Rhubarb, 3 stalks, 1" leaf on
38. Rutabagas, for table use, 3 specimens
39. Salsify, 3 specimens
40. Sunflower, one head
41. Cherry Tomatoes, 6 specimens
42. Tomatillos, 3 specimens
43. Tomatoes, red, any variety, 3 specimens
44. Heritage Tomatoes, 3 specimens
45. Tomatoes, Large Yellow, 3 specimens
46. Grape Tomatoes, 6 specimens
47. Pink Tomatoes, 3 specimens

DEPARTMENT 9 - VEGETABLES

Superintendent: Larry Gieseke

A champion & reserve champion ribbon, with premiums of \$4.00 & \$2.00, may be awarded in each class to outstanding exhibits.

In order to qualify for prizes all entries must be checked out with the superintendent before removed from premises. Exhibits will be released at 6:00 p.m. on the last day of the fair. Must be removed by 9 p.m. in the horticulture and fine arts building as the doors will be locked, exhibits removed before 6:00 p.m. will result in forfeiture

- 48. Yellow Pear Tomatoes, 6 specimens
- 49. Turnips, for table use, 3 specimens
- 50. Watermelons, round, 1 specimen
- 51. Watermelon, long, 1 specimen
- 52. Display of 10 varieties of vegetables
Premium: 1st 2.50 2nd 2.00
- 53. Display of 5 varieties of vegetables
Premium: 1st 2.50 2nd 2.00
- 54. Other

CLASS 3
SUMMER SQUASH, 2 specimens stems on
 Premium: 1st 2.00 2nd 1.50

LOTS

- 1. Peter Pan Scalloped
- 2. Yellow Crooked Neck
- 3. Yellow, Straight Neck
- 4. Zucchini, Regular Shape
- 5. Zucchini, Round
- 6. Any other Summer Squash

CLASS 4
SQUASH REGULAR, 2 specimens w/ stems
 Premium: 1st 2.00 2nd 1.50

LOTS

- 1. Butternut
- 2. Hubbard
- 3. Acorn
- 4. Spaghetti
- 5. Any other regular Squash, identify

CLASS 5

PUMPKINS, 1 specimen w/ stem

Premium: 1st 2.00 2nd 1.50

LOTS

- 1. Pie, Sugar
- 2. Field

CLASS 6

LARGE OR UNUSUAL EXHIBIT, 1 specimen

Premium: 1st 2.00 2nd 1.50



LOTS

- 1. Carrot
- 2. Cabbage
- 3. Cucumber
- 4. Potato
- 5. Tomato, any kind
- 6. Sunflower, one head
- 7. Squash
- 8. Kohlrabi
- 9. Table Beet
- 10. Pumpkin
- 11. Sunflower Head
- 12. Zucchini
- 13. Most Unusual Freak Vegetable
- 14. Other

CLASS 7

HERBS

Premium: 1st 2.00 2nd 1.50

LOTS

- 1. All varieties - each variety to be judged separately. At least 3 stems of each variety.
- 2. Fresh Herbs Potted (except dill) 1st 2.00 2nd 1.50
- 3. Collection of 5 potted herb plants 1st 3.00 2nd 2.00

CLASS 8

PAINTED VEGETABLES

Premium: 1st 4.00 2nd 3.00 3rd 2.00

LOTS

- 1. Decorated Pumpkin
- 2. Decorated Squash
- 3. Any Other

CLASS 9-Children Under 11

CLASS 10-Children 11-15

Premium: 1st 2.00 2nd 1.50

Children under 11 will be conferred judged throughout the day. Once youth has entered their exhibit they will be directed to the conference judging table. Exhibits must be prepared and presented by the child.

LOTS

- 1. Potatoes (10 specimens)
- 2. Any Garden Vegetable (refer to class 2 for # to exhibit for specific vegetable.)
- 3. Any Summer Squash
- 4. Any Regular Squash
- 5. Pumpkin
- 6. Painted Vegetable