

PEGS SPRING AND AUTUMN SHOWS

Our Annual Shows are an opportunity for a bit of friendly rivalry among members and friends and we always love to see new faces at the events. If you have never had a go, we have written a few hints and tips to get you started. Of course, if you'd rather talk to someone then please give Val Smith, our Show Coordinator, a call on 01233 756317.

Don't be put off, its great fun and the more times you enter the better you get at it!

Tips for Exhibitors – including Guidance from the RHS Show Guide

Before the Day of the Show

- Read copy of the show schedule and walk round garden and see what might work.
- Read guidelines at front.
- Read description of classes carefully – these are really important as you can be disqualified as NAS Not As Schedule!
- Check restrictions eg type of plant, stage of development, size of exhibit.
- Check date and time of set up.
- Plan how you intend to transport exhibits to the show – most damage occurs at this stage – wine & beer carriers, cardboard boxes, bubble wrap or newspaper can all be useful!
- In most cases you can only have one entry per class from a household, although there are one or two exceptions. These are noted in the relevant class descriptions.
- If you are asked for a number of the same item they should be as similar as possible.

Selecting Exhibits & Hints on How Best to Pick Them

Flowers (except daffodils)

- Pick flowers the evening before the show; make a clean cut on a slant and put straight into clean cold water and store in a dark cool place to maximise water take up. In hot weather, ideally pick early on the morning of the show.
- Choose blooms that are $\frac{3}{4}$ open, so they will open for the show.
- Look for straight, strong 'perfect' specimens.
- Watch out for insects, insect damage, torn leaves, bent petals, weak stems etc.
- Remove leaves below the water line and remove faded blooms and yellow leaves.
- On dahlias, buds count as flowers, if single blooms are required take off any buds.

Daffodils

- Pick early and leave in a cool shed or garage to open, tight buds may take 7-10 days to open.
- Put in tepid water and arrange so flowers can mature but are not touching.
- Use moss from your lawn to secure blooms in the vase; try and make them face forward.
- Check the classification of flower - see Daffodil classification page in booklet or on website.
- Select clean unblemished flowers with a good poise.

Floral Classes

Judges look for interpretation, colour harmony, design balance, proportion, space, form, texture, plant material condition, presentation & effect. Marks are lost for exceeding the allotted space and poor presentation. Make sure your flowers face forward. Consider your display, don't overcrowd it.

Judges prefer exhibits without oasis, consider using rabbit wire or moss.

Fruit

Judges will assess the merits of fruit exhibits looking at:

- Condition – clean, fresh, blemish free with attractive naturally produced colour.
- Stalks - nectarines, apricots, peaches, blueberries and citrus fruit are shown without stalks, all other fruits should be shown with stalks fresh and intact.
- Absence of defects - over ripeness, shrivelling (except in gages), malformations, decay, splitting (except in figs), blemishes, bruises or other injury, and imperfect bloom are considered defects.
- Uniformity - specimens should be alike in size, condition, form and colour except where specified.

Vegetables

Judges consider:

- Condition – fresh, tender, blemish free.
- Size – relative to cultivar & ready for harvest.
- Uniformity – shape, size, form, colour & development.
- Colour – attractive & natural.
- Staging – cleanliness & attractive presentation.
- Sweetcorn should have their silk still.
- Do not cut onion tops, fold over and tie with string or raffia.
- Leave the roots on your carrots.
- Small tomatoes are less than 35cm.
- In runner beans, the beans should not be visible and must be fresh.
- Beans should have stalks.
- Chillies and peppers can be green or red.

Cookery Classes

Marks are awarded for:

- Flavour & aroma.
- Appearance – shape, colour, regularity.
- Condition, crust, texture, distribution of ingredients.
- For jams & chutneys & preserves, ideally use a plain jar and label clearly description of contents and day, month and year made. Make sure the jar and label are clean.
- Pickles and chutneys should be at least 12 weeks old.
- Keep a look out for cake sizes. If you make it the wrong size it will be disqualified.

On the Day

- Make sure you know what classes you are entering and maybe label your items in advance.
- Give yourself plenty of time to set out your exhibits. You may need to bring extra material or a small watering can to help prepare your exhibits.
- Make sure you correctly label your exhibit as you place it on the display tables. If there is no label the judges will not consider your entry.
- Take time to see what the judges have given awards to and pick up tips for next time.

And lastly, take time to enjoy the experience!

Committee members will be around to help you on the morning of the show if you need any advice or assistance but please give yourself plenty of time as the morning is quite busy.