

## Container Plant Competition

The Container Plant Competition is open to individual exhibitors who reside in Austin County and adhere to the Home Economics General Rules. on Sunday, September 27, 2026, between 8 am and 8:45 am to submit their competition entry. Entries will be completed and accepted via online entry. **Entries will close on August 16, 2026. All containers must be planted by August 16th to have their projects completed and grown for 6 weeks.** One entry per exhibitor. Entry fees are non-refundable. This will be considered an Austin County Fair project. Please see the ACF website for the updates or additional details under Menu/Horticulture.

### **ENTRIES WILL OPEN ON SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2026 at 9 am.**

There are three Divisions in Container Plants, Juniors, Intermediates and Seniors. Junior are 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>, Intermediates are 6<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> and Senior are 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Entry for Container Plants is located online at the ACF website/Menu/Horticulture and is Mandatory for entry submittal. **The Horticulture Committee will confirm your entry via email. Exhibitors will be required to RSVP by August 28, 2026, to confirm they will be participating at the fair.**

**Competition Format:** Exhibitors will plant and cultivate 3 or more different plant species in an appropriate container. Each project will have a corresponding project log to be submitted with the entry at check in.

**General Guidelines:** Exhibitors should review the guidelines prior to preparing their entry. Questions may be directed to the Horticulture Committee at email address [ACFHorticulture@gmail.com](mailto:ACFHorticulture@gmail.com).

- There is NO Theme for Container Plant entries.
- Entries must have been owned and grown by the exhibitor for at least 6 weeks prior to the Show. (Planted NLT August 16th)
- Plants should show evidence of being grown in the container, such as being securely rooted in the soil.
- If plants are found to have been freshly potted or do not stand up during the Show because they were not potted soon enough, entries will be disqualified.

- If single elements require replanting during the eight-week period prior to the Show, the exhibitor should document (in writing and with photos) the removed element and the replacement element. The documentation will be part of the Exhibitor Project Log. (See the “Exhibitor Project Log” section below).
- Do not put Exhibitors name on the Cover of the Project log
- Entries must be complete upon arrival to the Show.
- **Entries must be completely set up by 8:45 am on Sunday, September 27, 2026.**
- If the exhibitor is unable to deliver his/her entry, they may allow a designee, to place their entry on the table.
- The entry will be disqualified if, at the sole discretion of the Show, it is determined that the designee has altered the design in any manner.
- Entries should be designed to be viewed from all sides.
- Entries should feature 3 or more different plant species per container.
- Plant selection is at the exhibitor’s discretion.
- Plants may belong to any species.
- Plants must be healthy, free of disease, and bug free.
- Plants are the only living items that may be included with the entry – no other living items are permitted (e.g., animals, reptiles, bugs). Vivarium’s are excluded from the competition.
- Plants should be clearly and attractively potted in a container that is suitable for tabletop display and able to be watered without leaks.
- Select a container that enhances the creative presentation of the entry.
- If submitting a container grown plant, double potting is permitted, provided natural top dressing is used and the inside of the container is not visible. Top dressing must not float when watered.
- If submitting a terrarium, double potting is not permitted.
- If submitting a terrarium, the container may be open air or closed.
- Leaf polish or other commercial foliage enhancers are not permitted.
- Accessories are permitted; however, emphasis should be on the creative use of natural, fresh planted materials rather than accessories to create a scene.
- Entries must not exceed a size of 30” Wide x 30” Deep.
- Entries may not exceed 50 lbs.

**Delivery of Entries:** Entries must be delivered to the Austin County Fair on Sunday, September 27, 2026, between 8 a.m. and 8:45 a.m. Exhibitors must check in at each competition table that they have entered. Exhibitors will access the Austin County Fairgrounds through Gate 1 and 2 and park in front of the pavilion to unload.

**Exhibitor Project Log:** Each exhibitor must keep an Exhibitor Project Log that will be submitted the day of the competition at the check in table. Questions may be directed to the Horticulture Committee at [ACFHorticulture@gmail.com](mailto:ACFHorticulture@gmail.com)

- Each exhibitor must maintain and submit a project log using the Exhibitor Project Log available on the website at [austincountyfair/menu/horticulture/project log](#).
- Other types of exhibitor logs will not be accepted. Entries without the approved ACF Exhibitor Project Log will be disqualified.
- The Exhibitor Project Log is assessed for content, not creativity and should include:
  - o A thorough and descriptive narrative describing the source of inspiration for the entry and the steps taken during the creative process (e.g. selection and sourcing of plant materials).
  - o A **minimum** of ten progressive photographs taken during the growing project must be printed and included with the log. Photographs should be arranged following the journaling timeline.
  - o A list of plant materials used, including the genus, species, common name, cultivar or variety.
  - o A timeline journaling/documenting the planting and maintenance activity. This timeline should coincide with the photograph timeline.
  - o ACF will not print logs for exhibitors. Project logs need to be complete, bound in a braded folder or binder with page protectors. No Paper Clips, No staples, or Pocket Folders.
  - o Project logs must be ready to be turned in when exhibitors arrive at the check-in table.

**Judging:** The Show will select qualified judges for each competitive event. Any questions about the judging criteria questions may be directed to the Horticulture committee at email address [ACFHorticulture@gmail.com](mailto:ACFHorticulture@gmail.com). Judging criteria will be placed on the website and sent out via facebook at registration time.

- Entries will be judged on the day of arrival.
- Entries will be judged on a 100-point system:
  - o Up to 35 points may be awarded for design.
  - o Up to 40 points may be awarded for staging and quality.
  - o Up to 25 points may be awarded for the completion of Exhibitor Project Log
- Judges may make notes in the Project Log.
- Only Judges and Horticulture Committee members will be allowed inside the competition area while judging is in progress.
- **Judges' decisions are final.**
- Winning entries will be announced on September 28, 2025, at 2:00 pm and winning exhibitors will be recognized.

### **Additional Opportunity**

**Any Container Plant placing 2nd and on are encouraged to enter their Container plants into the Youth 4H/FFA/FCCLA/TAFE Junior, Senior or Open Youth Flower Show. Entry cards are available at the Expo Center on the day of entry. There is a power point online under Home Economics to help explain the entry procedure. There is a charge per entry. Exhibits must not exceed 30" W x 30" D.**

**Awards:** Supreme Grand Champions will receive a banner. Grand and Reserve Champion Container Plants will be awarded buckles for Junior, Intermediate and Senior Divisions. Placement ribbons will be awarded to 3<sup>rd</sup> thru 10<sup>th</sup> place.

**The Horticulture Committee will water the plants during the week. Pick up will be on Sunday, October 11, 2026 starting at 11 a.m.**

## **SUPREME CONTAINER PLANTS**

Supreme Champions will have the option to enter their Container Plants into the Youth Supreme & Country Auction to be held on Saturday, October 10, 2026.

Supreme Champions of the Container Plant Division entered in the auction will receive the auction price minus the administrative fee from the fair. See the Youth Supreme & Country Auction section of this book for a full set of rules pertaining to the auction.

Exhibitors will surrender all items used in their Container Plant as designed. Items of great sentimental value should not be used. Buyers will pick up their purchase at the conclusion of the auction.

**Supreme Champions, Container plants will be on display for the remainder of the fair. The Horticulture Committee will water the plants during the week. Pick up will be on Sunday, October 10, 2026 at 11 a.m.**