Tilehurst Horticultural Association
Gardening for All

TILEHURST HORTICULTURAL ASSOCIATION
Hints and Tips for Show Exhibitors

Before the Show

- Read the schedule and the rules very carefully
- Note the closing date for entries
- Select the classes you wish to enter, where you are reasonably sure you will have an exhibit to enter
- Complete the entry form clearly
- Submit the entry form in good time, with the correct entry fee
- If necessary, put questions to experienced exhibitors. Everyone is happy to help you if you aren't sure
- Gather any equipment needed to stage your exhibit
- Carry out any preparation
- Practise staging at home

On the Show Morning

- Where possible select your exhibits on the morning of the show, so they are as fresh as possible
- Take spares in case of any mishaps
- Allow ample time for staging, which takes place between 8.30am - 10.45am
- Collect your entry cards as you enter the hall
- Flowers and flower arrangements should be prepared in the area outside the hall, behind the kitchen. Water is available
- Vases are provided for classes where stated in the rules
- Place your exhibit within the marked square for the appropriate class number
- Place your entry card face down on the table, with the edge under your exhibit
- When staging your exhibit, be careful not to disturb the entries of other exhibitors
- Vacate the hall by 10.45am, when judging will commence

On the Show Afternoon

- The hall is open to the public at 2pm
- Trophies are awarded at 4pm
- If you wish to keep your exhibits, please remove them promptly at 4.30pm, following the award of trophies. Any exhibits remaining on the Show benches after 5pm will be distributed to a local Community Organisation

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Vegetables

- Condition – cleanliness, tenderness, freshness and absence of blemishes
- Uniformity – alike in shape and colour
- Size – pay attention to sizes where stated in the schedule. Otherwise size only counts if accompanied by quality
- Colour – should reflect trueness to the cultivar, freshness and maturity
- A dish must consist of one cultivar only

Fruits

- Condition - all fruit should be ripe and fresh, with the exception of apples, pears and gooseberries which may be shown unripe
- Stalks, (except apricots, peaches & nectarines), should generally be present and fresh
- Fruit should be free of blemishes and malformations with the natural bloom preserved
- Uniformity – alike in size, condition, form and colour
- Size – apart from dessert apples, which should not exceed 75mm in diameter, look for above average size specimens
- Colour – attractive, naturally produced colour with a natural bloom

Cut Flowers

- Condition – the most perfect stage of possible beauty, fresh and free from damage
- Uniformity – alike in age, size and form
- With these points in mind, choose blooms / stems of quality with numbers as specified in the schedule
- Where numbers are not specified, choose the correct number of stems to give the best possible appearance in the vase
- Remove tired, damaged and spent florets, petals or foliage
- Vases will be supplied at the show, unless stated otherwise in the rules / schedule
- If necessary, use paper, packing around the stems to hold in position
- The use of wire supports is not allowed under the rules

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Pot Plants

With all plants, make sure the pot is within the size specified, if any, in the schedule and that the pot is clean. The exhibit will look complete if stood in a saucer and this will also help keep the staging clean. The rules prohibit wire supports in some classes. Where staking, tying, or wiring is necessary and allowed, it should be neatly done so as not to detract from the appearance of the plant.

Flowering Pot Plants

- Select a sturdy plant with a good shape, well covered with blooms or bearing the number of flowering stems typical to the kind
- Blooms and foliage should be healthy, unblemished, at the most perfect stage and free of any damage, pests, disease or wilting
- Remove any spent blooms or any damaged, dead or discoloured leaves from the plant and from the top of the pot

Foliage Pot Plants

- Select a sturdy, shapely plant, well furnished with clean, unblemished, healthy foliage and good colour appropriate to the kind
- Remove any damaged or discoloured leaves from the plant and from the top of the pot
- An occasional flower is permitted, but if there are a significant number of flowers you should consider whether entry into the flowering plant classes is more appropriate

Flower Arrangements

It is no longer permissible to use Florists foam (oasis). Instead it is suggested that twigs, pebbles, sand, gravel, clay, marbles, wood aspen, compact moss, flower frog, pliable chicken wire or metal pins could be used as an alternative.

For further and more detailed information, we recommend The Horticultural Show Handbook, published by the Royal Horticultural Society and available at RHS Gardens and online at www.rhs.org.uk. This book has been used as a reference when preparing this sheet.
Similar reference guides are available from the W.I. (for the Cookery and Preserves classes) and NAFAS (for the Flower Arrangements classes)

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Constitution of Fruit Dishes
Reproduced From The Horticultural Show Handbook, 8th Edition, Revised 2016

Fruit	Number required
Apples, cooking or dessert	6
Apricots	6
Apriums	6
Blackberries & Hybrids	20
Blueberries	Dish of 200-250gm
Cape Gooseberries	20
Cherries, sour or sweet	20
Citrus Fruits - kumquats & calamondins	9
Citrus Fruits – not kumquats & calamondins	3
Currants, all	Dish of 200-250gm
Damsons & bullaces	9
Figs	5
Gooseberries	20
Grapes, glasshouse	1 bunch
Grapes, outdoor	2 bunches
Huckleberries	Dish of 200-250gm
Japanese loquats	10
Kiwi fruits	6
Medlars	10
Melons	1
Melons, horned (kiwanos)	2
Mulberries	20
Nuts	Dish of 425-450gm
Passion Fruits	5
Peaches and Nectarines	5
Pears, Asian, cooking or dessert	6
Persimmons	5
Pineapple guavas	5
Pineapples	1
Plums, cooking, dessert & gages	9
Pluots	9
Quinces	6
Raspberries	20
Strawberries	15
Strawberries, alpine	25
Tamarillos or tree tomatoes	9
Worcesterberries & currant / gooseberry hybrids	Dish of 200-250gm