

Guide to Exhibitors

The following is a basic guide for exhibitors wishing to exhibit at North Lincoln Horticultural Society(NLHS) Annual Produce and Flower Show.

Show Schedule: The first and an important aspect is to be fully conversant with the Show Schedule and Classes. Taking note of the deadlines for the submission of the Entry Form and paying particular attention to the date and timings of the show itself. Entry forms should be submitted by the deadline as no late entries will be accepted, but earlier if possible. Please only submit entries that you are reasonably certain to stage as late cancellations or no-shows make it difficult to layout the staging. Should anything unclear then one should contact the Show organiser sooner rather than it being left until the date of the show.

A week or so before the Show: Check the Show Schedule with a view of what flowers and vegetables you are planning to show and the number required in each of the class/classes. Once you have a good idea of what you are going to exhibit keep an eye on them to ensure they remain in good condition

A day or two before Show Day: Thoroughly re-read the Show Schedule making sure that you are fully conversant with the Class requirements e.g Class 7 asks for three carrots - stump rooted, tops reduced to three inches(75mm) - take a spare just in case, make sure they are stump rooted, if one cuts the tops off then you are technically NAS(Not as Schedule) and the judge will not judge your exhibit. Similarly in there flower classes do not leave buds on the stem as these will be classed as extra flowers - NAS. Selection of specimens is important in terms of all aspects of uniformity.

Preparation:

Fruit: pick as near to the show time as possible, taking care not to cause any damage to the fruit. Handle as little and as gently as possible and by their stalks so that the natural bloom is not spoilt. Use scissors to remove soft fruit. Fruit should be fresh uniform, free from blemish and characteristic in shape and colour. Do not use over or under ripe fruits and under no circumstances should fruit be polished.

Vegetables: where necessary, vegetables should be carefully washed to remove soil but in no circumstances should oils or similar substances be applied in an attempt to enhance their appearance. Wash with a soft cloth and plenty of water, brushing will damage the skin and spoil the appearance of the exhibit. Retain the natural bloom wherever possible. All vegetables should be handled carefully during preparation.

Flowers: the ideal time to cut flowers is in the evening (or early morning if that is not possible). Flowers should be cut with as much stem as possible making a slanting cut to assist the uptake of water. Sometimes flowers such as chrysanthemum may not absorb water easily and the stems can be split upwards for a couple of inches under water to assist. After cutting remove sideshoots, unwanted buds and lower leaves and place the flowers upright in a container of clean deep water. It is better for this to be done overnight if possible and then the container of flowers should be placed in the cool dark room.

Pot plants: 'all around the fact' is important in most plants and plants should be turned every few days. This is particularly important in the few days before the show. If necessary flowers and leaves should be gently teased out so that the plant is displayed at its best. Any damaged foliage or flowers can be carefully removed. Take care during transit that the plant arrived undamaged. Final preparation should involve removing any faded foliage and flowers back to the base and ensuring that the container is clean. Stage the plant so that its best side facing the front and place a label nearby

Show Day: There are a number of points which one should consider.

- Allow plenty of time to stage your exhibits with the aim of finishing before the end of the allotted time. Do not rush this is when mistakes are likely to occur.
- On arrival at the venue check in with the Secretary for entry cards. Ensure that entry cards and labels correspond to the exhibits, Entry cards should be placed face down.
- Pay particular attention to the number of specimens the schedule requires for each class. Mistakes is a common reason for exhibits being classed as NAS.
- Make every effort for the specimens within your exhibit to be of uniform shape and size. Differences can lower the impact of one's exhibit.

Exhibitors with questions should contact the show organisers prior to the Show.