

How to Understand the Vegetable/Fruit Points System for Shows

Introduction:

Planning to exhibit in the Annual Flower and Produce Show starts at the previous show, looking at the exhibits and noting varieties and cultivars that do well and deciding on the classes one might wish to enter in the coming year. Selection of cultivars is important as some are naturally better than others. Once decided look through the seed catalogue marking those varieties you intend to grow for the next show. Most seed catalogues provide information on those varieties are suitable for both the table and for showing. For example the red rosette indicates this variety of parsnip designates that it is suitable for exhibition but also it is an excellent table parsnip.

Remember when ordering seeds as a member of NLHS you receive a discount of up to 40% on the price of seeds but the seed order needs to be received at the store by the published due date.

Read the schedule very carefully, including the rules of the show and if unclear on a particular aspect then contact the Show Organiser.

The Vegetable Points System:

The maximum exhibition points that can be awarded to an entry of vegetables is dependent upon the difficulty in producing the perfect entry. The maximum number of points for vegetable dishes/plate, for our show, are as follows:

Vegetable	Max Points	Vegetable	Max Points
Potatoes	20	Globe Beetroot	15
Carrot - Stump	18	Runner Beans	18
Carrot - Long Pointed	20	French Beans	15
Onions	15	Parsnips	20
Shallot	18	Tomatoes	Large 15/Medium 18
Garlic	12	Tomatoes - Cherry	12
Courgette	12	Tomatoes Truss	15
Chillies	15	Peppers sweet	15
Sweetcorn	18	Marrow	15
Squash	Winter 10/Summer 12	Leeks	20

Vegetable	Max Points	Vegetable	Max Points
Cabbage	15	Cucumber	18
Fruit	Max Points	Fruit	Max Points
Apples cooking	18	Pears cooking	18
Apples dessert	20	Pears Dessert	20
Plums cooking	14	Plums dessert and gages	16
Blackberries	12	Raspberries	12

When it comes to judging the judge will assess the exhibit of vegetables according to the following criteria; condition, uniformity size and colour. An exhibit/dish should consist of one cultivar/variety only and each dish will score a number of points the maximum value being determined by the difficulty in producing a perfect dish. e.g. potatoes/leeks 20 points, garlic/courgettes 12 points.

To gain the maximum points vegetables should display the following:

- a. Condition: All vegetables should be clean, fresh tender and free of coarseness and blemished.
- b. Uniformity: All the specimens exhibited on a dish should be alike in size, shape, condition and colour. When only one specimen is shown and points for uniformity are available, those points should be excluded.
- c. Size: Large specimens are preferable but only if they are of good quality as the production of large specimens of good quality requires more skill than the production of small specimens.
- d. Colour: Colour should be fresh and true to the cultivar at maturity. There are now many vegetables available in a range of colours. Good colour for the cultivar should be the main consideration.

Please note: Class 1 calls for 'A collection of four kinds of vegetables, two of each kind' Using the above chart the maximum number of points an exhibit may gain by entering Potatoes, Long Pointed Carrots, Leeks and Parsnips is 80 points i.e vegetables with maximum points. However, should an exhibit contain four vegetables e.g. Cherry Tomatoes (12pts), Winter Squash (10pts), Globe Beetroot (15pts) and finally, Courgettes (12pts) total 49 points, that would result in 31 points less than the previous entry. Hence the exhibitor entering vegetables with the maximum points stands a better chance of winning the Class. This only applies when entering a class which calls for a number of different vegetables and the same applies for a collection of fruit. Classes affected in our Show are Class 1 and Class 46.

Ref: The RHS Horticultural Show Handbook.