

Tips for Showing Fruit & Vegetables

Overall general comments

Read the schedule and follow instructions carefully such as a bunch of 5 stalks, 3 items for exhibit, 1kg of items. Judges actually check the number of items and/or weight of entry as part of the judging process if it has being specified in the schedule.

If there is more than one item making up the entry then try to select the required number with similar shape, form, colour, size and all the same variety so they look like a group of the same item.

With the 'heaviest' classes the major focus is the weight but the fruit or vegetables must be sound and presentable.

AOV - any other variety which is all varieties of the general fruit or vegetable which has not being included in other classes in that section.

NOM – not otherwise mentioned is any item which would fit in the section but is not listed specifically in the schedule. Vegetable exhibit NOM is any vegetable which is not covered by any class in the vegetable section.

Place entries on plain preferably white paper/plastic plates for most vegetables and fruit OR plain boxes OR containers for items such as potatoes and collections OR jars for herbs unless a specific display container is named.

Make sure the labels are well attached.

All exhibits should look fresh, without blemishes, diseases or insect damage if possible.

Select items at their best stage of development for harvest, ie not overlarge zucchinis and cucumbers.

The judge will usually cut the fruit and vegetables as part of the judging process.

Fruit

Apples

- Leave the stalk on.
- Select uniform apples with good colour for the variety.
- Do not polish, leave natural bloom.

Apricots

- Stalks removed.
- Mature fruit are plump and firm and flesh is juicy.
- Avoid over ripe fruit with water soaked appearance.

Citrus fruits

- Should have stems cut close to the surface of the rind leaving green plump sepals.
- Colour should be shiny and glowing without scale.
- Segments should be plump with good taste.

Grapes

- Try to retain the natural bloom on fruit.
- Bunches should be uniform in size and colour.
- All grapes firmly attached to stem
- Should be plump and fresh looking.

Nectarines

- Stalks removed.

Passionfruit

- Should be ripe and full of flesh.
- Leave a short stem attached.
- Should be uniform in shape, colour and size.

Peaches

- Stems removed.
- Good colour for variety.

Pears

- Leave the stems on.
- Free from blemishes and bruises.
- Uniform in size, shape and true to variety.

Plums

- Leave the stems on.
- Try to retain the natural bloom on fruit.
- Plums should be fresh, plump and full coloured.

Strawberries

- Should have caps and short stems attached.
- Fresh, clean and bright appearance.
- Size and shape should be even with no insect damage.
- Even red coloration, minimal white shoulders. No white tips.

Tomatoes

- Tomatoes are classified as fruit at Milton Show.
- There should be no blemishes on the skin, cracks or deformations of the shape.
- The fruit should be of average size for the variety.
- Leave a short section of stem on each fruit.
- The tomatoes should be even in size and colour.
- Ripe but firm.
- When cut, there should be more flesh than seed.
- Grosse Lisse and similar varieties present well. Cherry tomatoes such as Tom Thumbs should be only used in collections along with other gourmet/ heirloom unusually coloured and/or shaped varieties.

Vegetables

Beans

- Beans must be uniform length and straight.
- Beans should be a good colour for the variety.
- Leave short stems on.
- Must be fresh so they will 'snap' when broken.

Beetroot

- Uniform in size and shape with a good deep colour.
- Remove any 'wiskers' (little side roots) gently because the root may bleed. Keep long main root.
- Bright crisp leaves.
- If the leaves are showing white strips this will carry on down into the beet and show when cut.
- The flesh when cut should be firm, crisp and fine grained.

Broccoli

- Cut the main head leaving approximately 7 cm of stalk.
- Nice tight head.
- Good colour, even green, no yellowing.

Cabbages

- Cut off the cabbage at the ground level, leave a 5- 10mm stalk.
- Leave all good leaves on. Cabbage should sit in a flower shape of leaves.
- No caterpillars.
- Head nice and tight, no sign of breaking or seed stem.
- No yellowing, scorching or insect damage.

Capsicums

- Should be fresh, firm, deep in colour and true for shape for variety.
- Green capsicums should not show any red colour.
- Leave stems 10 – 20 mm long.

Carrots

- Wash then clean gently to remove dirt.
- Chose straight carrots, no forked roots or side shoots.
- Brush off any hairs without damaging the carrot and leave long root tip on.
- Choose the carrots with fresh, healthy tops.
- Leave the tops on.
- Good even colour, no green colour or discolouration at the neck.
- When cut the core should be small, and flesh deeply coloured.
- Make sure there is no seed shoot in the middle of the carrot top.

Cauliflowers

- Heads must be nice and tight.
- Good even colour head.
- Cut off at the ground level leaving an attractive flower of leaves.
- No holes in leaves, nice and clean.

Cucumbers

- Long types should be straight with stem attached.
- Apple types should be true in shape and colour with stem attached.
- Should be young, firm and crisp.
- Colour should be bright and clear.

Eggplants

- Wipe fruit to clean.
- Select eggplants that are heavy, firm and free from blemishes.
- Good colouration, fresh appearance.

Herbs

- Should be tied in bunches.
- Should be fresh and intense in colour

Kohl Rabi

- Roots should be removed just below the ball. Leave 4 to 6 upper leaves trimmed.
- Should be not hard, woody or pithy.
- Skin should not be too hard – able to be punctured by a thumbnail.
- Clean but do not wash.

Lettuce

- Heads should be crisp, firm and clean with no burning or slime.
- Some outer leaves may be removed but do not strip right down to the heart.
- Stalk should be about 5mm long.

Onions

- Good skin colour according to the variety.
- Bright, clean, hard and dry skins. Do not peel.
- Uniform size and shape.
- Must not have any soft spot around the stem or they may be soft in the middle.
- Some dried stalk may be left.
- No obvious faults.
- Try to select round not oval onions as they often have two sets of rings rather than one when cut.

Parsnips

- Wash then clean gently to remove dirt.
- Chose straight parsnips, no forked roots or side shoots.
- Brush off any hairs without damaging the root.
- Choose parsnips with fresh, healthy tops. Leave the tops on.
- Make sure there is no seed shoot in the middle of the top.

Potatoes

- Potatoes should be even in size and colour.
- There should be no green on the skin.
- They must not have too many eyes which must not be too deep.
- When the potatoes are cut they must have a slightly rough surface.
- They must not have brown rot or be split in the centre.
- If they are slippery/shiny they will not taste pleasant when cooked.
- They must have a good starch content.
- They must not have any second growth or sprouting.
- Potatoes should be clean but not washed.

Pumpkins

- Pumpkins should be of pleasing shape, with no deformities.
- They must be washed clean.
- Pumpkins should be mature, the harder the skin the better.
- Leave about 5cm of stem. (They will also keep better too).
- When cut they must not show any bone (odd white patches in the flesh) and be of good colour.
- They should have a button shape on the base.
- Different varieties have different optimum sizes.
- Queensland Blue should be 3.5 to 4 kg, with a 10 cent 'belly button'.
- Triambles should open out in three even sections.

Radish

- Wash then clean gently to remove dirt.
- Chose radishes that are ready to eat and not overlarge.
- Leave the tops on.
- Good colouration as for the variety.
- Choose the radishes with fresh, healthy tops.

Rhubarb

- Pull stalks away from the plant, do not cut.
- Stalks must be clean and uniform in colour, thickness and length.
- Stalks should be long and snap when bent.
- Leave crown of the leaf or the whole leaf on each stalk as it improves the look of the bunch.

Silver Beet

- Pull leaves away from the stem, do not cut.
- Leaves must be crisp, good colour with an attractive white stem. Stand in water to keep fresh before making into the exhibit.
- Individual leaves should be uniform in size and colour.
- No brown spots.

Sweet Corn

- Ears must be free from caterpillars.
- Kernels must be tender and juicy.
- Husks should be fresh and green.

Turnips

- Wash then clean gently to remove dirt.
- Chose nicely shaped roots.
- Leave the leaves on and select turnips with good looking leaves.
- Make sure there is no seed shoot in the middle of the leaves.

Watermelons

- Select medium to large, well-formed and true to variety.
- Wipe to clean, do not wash.
- Leave stem about 25mm long.

Zucchini

- Should have a soft tender rind.
- Leave a short stem about 15mm on each zucchini.
- Uniform size, shape and colour.