

## HORTICULTURE CONTEST

### GUIDELINES FOR NEW MEXICO 4-H HORTICULTURE CONTEST FOR JUNIOR AND NOVICE 4-H MEMBERS

The Horticulture Contest has been developed for New Mexico 4-H Club members to give them a broad knowledge of horticulture and some of its practical aspects in everyday living.

#### Eligibility:

The Horticulture contest will allow two novice and two junior teams per county to participate.

#### Contest:

The horticulture contest is composed of two sections:

#### Section I:

##### **IDENTIFICATION      POSSIBLE SCORE: 200 PTS**

Contestants will identify 40 Horticulture specimens from the following areas:

Vegetables	}	20 specimens
Fruits		100 pts.
House Plants	}	20 specimens
Nursery Plants		100 pts. Garden Flowers

#### Section II:

##### **JUDGING      POSSIBLE SCORE: 100 PTS**

Contestants will place (2) classes of horticultural (4) specimens on the basis of quality and condition. Classes will be placed from top to bottom (best to worst). Fresh fruits or fresh vegetables will be used in the judging classes.

This section will be based on those items of quality and other characteristics that a consumer would look for in buying horticultural crops and products. Each class will be worth 50 pts. Judging criteria are included on pages 41-45.

## Section I: Identification

4-H members will identify horticultural plants. Incorrect identification or no answer (-5 pts.)

- |                              |                           |                             |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 African Violet             | 42 Pinon Pine             | 83 Onion                    |
| 2 Aloe Vera                  | 43 Ponderosa Pine         | 84 Parsnip                  |
| 3 Asparagus Fern             | 44 Prickly Pear Cactus    | 85 Peas                     |
| 4 Begonia                    | 45 Pyracantha             | 86 Pepper (Bell)            |
| 5 Boston Fern                | 46 Russian Olive          | 87 Pepper (Jalapeno)        |
| 6 Christmas Cactus           | 47 Spruce                 | 88 Pepper (NM Chile)        |
| 7 Chrysanthemum              | 48 Willow                 | 89 Potato                   |
| 8 Coleus                     | 49 Yucca                  | 90 Pumpkin                  |
| 9 Cosmos                     | 50 Apple                  | 91 Radish                   |
| 10 Daylily                   | 51 Apricot                | 92 Squash (winter)          |
| 11 Dumb Cane / Dieffenbachia | 52 Avocado                | 93 Squash (Summer) Zucchini |
| 12 Ficus spp                 | 53 Banana                 | 94 Sweet Corn               |
| 13 Geranium                  | 54 Blackberry             | 95 Sweet Potato             |
| 14 Impatiens                 | 55 Blueberry              | 96 Tomato                   |
| 15 Jade Plant                | 56 Cherry                 | 97 Watermelon               |
| 16 Lily                      | 57 Grape                  |                             |
| 17 Marigold                  | 58 Grapefruit             |                             |
| 18 Peperomia                 | 59 Lemon                  |                             |
| 19 Petunia                   | 60 Lime                   |                             |
| 20 Philodendron              | 61 Nectarine              |                             |
| 21 Rose                      | 62 Orange                 |                             |
| 22 Salvia                    | 63 Peach                  |                             |
| 23 Snake Plant               | 64 Pear                   |                             |
| 24 Spider Plant              | 65 Plum                   |                             |
| 25 Zinnia                    | 66 Pomegranate            |                             |
| 26 Agave                     | 67 Raspberry              |                             |
| 27 Apache Plume              | 68 Strawberry             |                             |
| 28 Arborvitae                | 69 Tangerine              |                             |
| 29 Ash                       | 70 Asparagus              |                             |
| 30 Barberry                  | 71 Bean (snap)            |                             |
| 31 Boxwood                   | 72 Beet                   |                             |
| 32 Desert Willow             | 73 Broccoli               |                             |
| 33 Elm                       | 74 Brussel Sprouts        |                             |
| 34 Euonymous                 | 75 Cabbage                |                             |
| 35 Forsythia                 | 76 Carrot                 |                             |
| 36 Honey Locust              | 77 Cauliflower            |                             |
| 37 Juniper                   | 78 Cucumber               |                             |
| 38 Lilac                     | 79 Eggplant               |                             |
| 39 Maple                     | 80 Lettuce                |                             |
| 40 Mulberry                  | 81 Muskmelon (Cantaloupe) |                             |
| 41 Oak                       | 82 Okra                   |                             |

## Section II: Judging

Judging is a matter of opinion, but the opinion should be based on the standard.

In judging fruits and vegetables for show, remember three main points:

1. Uniformity of size
2. Uniformity of shape
3. Uniformity of color

Size: Choose exhibits that are all the same size; they should be medium in size and not too large. They should be typical for the variety. Size is usually what the public would prefer to buy at the market.

Shape: Choose exhibits having the same shape and being typical for the variety.

Color: The specimens should have the same color or color markings (i.e., peaches with a red blush should all have the same blush).

The specimens judged should be:

1. True to type
2. Of good quality
3. In good condition (without damage to the flesh)
4. At proper stage of maturity for eating (ripe but not overly ripe)
5. An example of cultural perfection
6. Free from pest damage
7. Clean

**Cleaning fruits and vegetables** – All root crops such as radish, carrots, beets, and other underground specimens, such as potatoes, should be washed but not scrubbed. Scrubbing leaves marks on the specimen creating a faster breakdown which shortens the life of the produce.

Leaf crops such as Swiss chard, lettuce, and cabbage should be cleaned with sprayed with water to remove splattered soil or spray residues. Cucumbers, squash, melons, peppers, tomatoes, and beans can be cleaned with a moist, clean cloth. Do not submerge in water. With fruit, be careful not to remove the natural bloom on grapes and plums (bloom refers to the white substance that naturally covers the fruit). It is generally acceptable to shine apples and pears with a soft cloth.

## Special Points to Consider in Selecting and Judging Vegetables:

### ◆ Beans, green and wax

- Merits:** Fresh color, uniform in length, good shape for variety, generally straight but some varieties curve on end, pod brittle, not wilted, fleshy and well filled with pulp (no prominent beans) Free from defects, can be shown with or without stems but should be uniform.
- Preparation:** Leave stems attached to pod.
- Faults:** Tough, wilted, pale and discolored, evidence of insects and disease, or knife marks on the pod.

### ◆ Beets

- Merits:** Uniform in size, color, and shape, should be 1 ½ to 3 ½ inches in diameter, generally dark red with little russetting on crowns, no cracks, new varieties including a gold-colored beet.
- Preparation:** Cut off tops to approximately one inch.
- Faults:** Color not uniform, light streaks, damaged, cracked, pithy, wilted, too large and tough for eating.

### ◆ Broccoli

- Merits:** Fresh green color, right stage of maturity for eating, flowers tightly budded without yellow showing, crisp, free from worms and aphids, stems should be less than six inches long.
- Preparation:** A few lower leaves may be trimmed off leaving no stubs.
- Faults:** Small, loosely closed sprouts, yellowish color, wilted.

### ◆ Cabbage

- Merits:** Heads solid and firm. Salad types should be 5-8 inches in diameter, kraut types should be 8 inches or more in diameter, tender, crisp, good weight for size, free from insect damage or disease. Shape will vary by variety (round, flat, pointed, red, and savoy).
- Preparation:** Outer leaves should be removed, leaving only the last few that curl at the tips (wrapper leaves) Cut stem one-fourth inch below lowest leaf.
- Faults:** Poor color, loosely formed, wilted, disease or insect damaged, incorrect size or shape

### ◆ Carrots

- Merits:** Type very important: Short (3-4"); Half Long (5-7"); and Long (8" and over) Diameter depending on variety. Should be smooth and straight. Pale to deep orange color, depending on variety; uniform in size.
- Preparation:** Cut tops off to approximately one inch.
- Faults:** Off colored, wilted, rough, cracked, insect damage, crooked, or branched

◆ Cauliflower

- Merits: Solid heads, good white color, smooth fine-grained texture, and crisp.
- Preparation: Outer leaves trimmed evenly about 1 -2 inches above center of head. Cut stem ¼ inch below lowest leaf.
- Faults: Wilted, yellow to brown color, rough or grainy texture (ricey)

◆ Cucumbers

- Pickling: 1-3 inches long; Slicing should be 6-8 inches long; Gherkins (West India) small pickling cucumbers that have burr-like fruit should be 2-3 inches long and 1 to 1 ½ inches thick. Bright green skin with fleshy prickles.
- Merits: Should be even in size, crisp, straight, block ends, even spines
- Preparation: Leave ¼ to ½ inch of stem attached
- Faults: Light in color, not uniform in color and size, overmature, misshapen fruit indicates poor cultural practices

◆ Eggplant

- Merits: Symmetrical and true to type, 3-5 inches in diameter, firm, mature, uniform in color, dark purple color
- Preparation: Stems trimmed 1 to 1 ½ inches. Do not wash, but wipe with a damp cloth.
- Faults: Wilted, misshapen, poor color, streaked with green or white, bruised spots

◆ Herbs

- Merits: Fresh, uniform  
General evidence of good culture
- Preparation: Clean leaves and stems
- Faults: Dirty, diseased, insect damage, discolored, shriveled

◆ Kohlrabi

- Merits: 1 ½ to 3 three inches in size; tender; even color
- Preparation: Trim leaves to about one inch, trim off long roots
- Faults: Oversized, wilted, hard and pithy

◆ Lettuce (Head)

- Merits: Firm, crisp, green color, in good condition.
- Preparation: Leave most of wrapper leaves intact, best to remove few outer leaves after you get to the show to protect the head, cut stem or butt with knife leaving ¼ to ½ inch.
- Faults: Wilted, dirty, shriveled, loose, or bolting heads.

◆ Muskmelons or Cantaloupe

Merits: Free from soft spots, scratches, decay. Deep ridged netting over entire melon, uniform color.

Preparation: Determine ripeness by the "full slip" - vine should detach clean at attachment to melon.

Faults: Over or under ripe, coarse netting, poor color, blemishes, too much yellow indicates over ripeness.

◆ Okra

Merits: Uniform in size, shape, color, and maturity, typical of variety, pods should be harvested when half grown (2-4 inches long).

Preparations: Trim stems ½ to 1 inch.

Faults: Pods woody and fibrous.

◆ Onion

Merits: Green onions – ½ to 1 inch in diameter showing no bulge, clear white color, dark green tops about 6 inches long, roots trimmed to ½ inch.

Dry onions – uniform in size, thin neck, good color and shape for variety.

Preparations: Cut tops, leaving 1-2 inches on bulb; remove rootlets. The outer scale can be carefully removed, but if damage occurs to inner scales, it will be faulted.

Faults: Too many layers of skin removed, thick, soft neck, sunburned. Cracked scales, damaged.

◆ Pepper, Bell

Merits: Uniform, true to variety, firm, heavy, smooth, free from blemishes

Preparations: Stems should be attached; all specimens should have the same number of lobes or sections, varying from one to four, solid green color.

Faults: Dull, rough texture Off color, sunscald

◆ Pepper, Chile

Merits: Uniform in size and shape, good color, firm, free from blossom-end rot, and straight.

Preparations: Stems attached

Faults: Discoloration, shriveling, immature, or skin blemishes

• Potato

Merits: Medium size (8 to 10 ounces), 3-6" long for Russet, 2-4" long for Red variety. Plump, firm, and smooth; no damage spots or shallow eyes.

Preparations: May want to harvest early (one to two weeks before show). Select for good uniformity, size and color, free from green color, sprouting, and shriveling.

Faults: Immature, blemishes, rough in shape, or dirty.

**PUMPKINS AND SQUASH**

Pumpkins and squash have tremendous variation and should be true to the variety. Trim stems to ½ to 2".

◆ Pumpkin

Merits: Mature, smooth, evenly colored and grooved surface (green color = immature); round to oblong in shape.

Preparations: Cut from stalk leaving 2-3 three inches of stem attached.

Faults: Misshapen or immature fruit.

◆ Summer Squash

Merits: Fruits small and tender enough to mark with fingernail, ideally 6-8 inches in length and 1-2" in diameter.

Preparations: Trim stems to one inch when removing from the vine.

Faults: Fruits large and over-mature

◆ Scallop Squash

Merits: Fruits small, 3-6 inches in diameter, with or without stems.

◆ Winter Squash

Merits: Uniform color, free from blemishes and insect or disease damage; typical in shape for the variety.

Preparations: Fruits should be mature with a hard rind, not easily marked with fingernail; trim stem to one inch

Faults: Immature, insect, damage to the flesh

◆ Sweet Corn

Merits: Uniform in length, size, and color according to variety, kernels full grown and in milk stage.

Preparations: Cut stems neatly below where the husks are attached. If cut high, husks will fall and ruin their appearance. Pull the silk to remove to the tip of the ear.

Faults: Immature, unfilled grains, over-ripe and hard, uneven or missing rows, worm damage.

◆ Tomato

Merits: Medium size, firm. Good color and typical of variety, clean, no cracks.

Preparations: Trim stems closely or remove entirely. Remove blossoms attached.

Faults: Coarse, over or under-ripe, bruised, soft cracks, or corrugation scarring.

◆ Watermelon

Merits: Should be medium to large in sized and in good weight, bright intense green color or even striping over melon. Yellow (not white) ground spot. Uniform shape without bulges/furrows

Preparations: Trim stem to one inch.

Faults: Light in weight, uneven shape or color, blemishes, white ground spot.

### Special Points to Consider in Selection and Judging Fruits:

#### ◆ Apples

- Merits: Specimens should be typical of the variety, uniform in size, color, and maturity. Free from insect, disease and mechanical damage. Size medium to large, but size is not an important factor.
- Preparation: Stems should be left attached; remove leaves and spurs, polish to remove dirt and spray residue.
- Faults: Not uniform, blemishes.

#### ◆ Grapes

- Merits: Typical of variety. Both bunches of berries should be uniform in size, color and maturity. Preparation: Retain natural bloom.

#### ◆ Pears

- Merits: Uniform in shape, size, color and maturity, typical of variety.
- Preparation: Leave stems attached

#### ◆ Peaches

- Merits: Uniform in every respect with the ground color of the fruit yellow.
- Preparation: Stems of peaches need not be present but should be uniform with or without stem. Care in handling to prevent bruising is a must.

#### ◆ Plums

- Merits: Uniform and typical of variety, fresh, plump, full color, and free from damage
- Preparation: Stems attached; do not remove natural bloom



Identification (5 points each)

**HOUSPLANTS/FLOWERS**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_

- |                        |                               |                    |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| _____ African Violet   | _____ Daylily                 | _____ Petunia      |
| _____ Aloe Vera        | _____ Dumb Cane/Dieffenbachia | _____ Philodendron |
| _____ Asparagus Fern   | _____ Ficus spp.              | _____ Rose         |
| _____ Begonia          | _____ Geranium                | _____ Salvia       |
| _____ Boston Fern      | _____ Impatiens               | _____ Schefflera   |
| _____ Christmas Cactus | _____ Jade Plant              | _____ Sedum        |
| _____ Chrysanthemum    | _____ Lily                    | _____ Snake Plant  |
| _____ Coleus           | _____ Marigold                | _____ Spider Plant |
| _____ Cosmos           | _____ Peperomia               | _____ Zinnia       |

**LANDSCAPE PLANTS**

- |                     |                    |                           |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| _____ Apache Plume  | _____ Honey Locust | _____ Ponderosa Pine      |
| _____ Ash           | _____ Juniper      | _____ Prickly Pear Cactus |
| _____ Boxwood       | _____ Lilac        | _____ Pyracantha          |
| _____ Desert Willow | _____ Maple        | _____ Russian Olive       |
| _____ Elm           | _____ Mulberry     | _____ Spruce              |
| _____ Euonymus      | _____ Oak          | _____ Willow              |
| _____ Forsythia     | _____ Pinon Pine   | _____ Yucca               |

**FRUITS**

- |                  |                  |                   |
|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| _____ Apple      | _____ Coconut    | _____ Peach       |
| _____ Apricot    | _____ Grape      | _____ Pear        |
| _____ Avocado    | _____ Grapefruit | _____ Plum        |
| _____ Banana     | _____ Lemon      | _____ Pomegranate |
| _____ Blackberry | _____ Lime       | _____ Raspberry   |
| _____ Blueberry  | _____ Nectarine  | _____ Strawberry  |
| _____ Cherry     | _____ Orange     | _____ Tangerine   |

**VEGETABLES**

- |                       |                              |                                |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| _____ Asparagus       | _____ Lettuce                | _____ Pumpkin                  |
| _____ Bean (snap)     | _____ Muskmelon (Cantaloupe) | _____ Radish                   |
| _____ Beet            | _____ Okra                   | _____ Squash (winter)          |
| _____ Broccoli        | _____ Onion                  | _____ Squash (summer) Zucchini |
| _____ Brussel Sprouts | _____ Parsnip                | _____ Sweet Corn               |
| _____ Cabbage         | _____ Peas                   | _____ Sweet Potato             |
| _____ Carrot          | _____ Pepper (Bell)          | _____ Swiss Chard              |
| _____ Cauliflower     | _____ Pepper (Jalapeno)      | _____ Tomato (cherry)          |
| _____ Cucumber        | _____ Pepper (NM Chile)      | _____ Tomato (slicing)         |
| _____ Eggplant        | _____ Popcorn                | _____ Watermelon               |
|                       | _____ Potato                 |                                |