

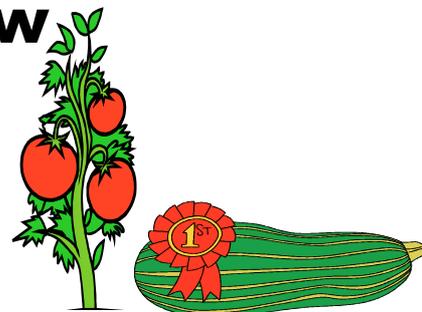
LITTLE HORWOOD ENTERTAINMENTS COMMITTEE

THE VILLAGE SHOW

2007 – The 30th Show



Hints and Advice



As promised last year, here's an updated list of helpful hints and advice on growing your own vegetables, fruit and flowers; how to choose and prepare them for the Village Show, along with advice on domestic and craft classes.

Don't forget it doesn't have to be too serious; it is light hearted and good fun. Just have a go – it's a great day and a good chance to try your hand at a typical village event. If you would like an early copy of the schedule of classes please contact either Jeremy (712492) or Kate (715927). Schedules will be distributed to all households around the beginning of August to enable you to put in your entry form.

Perhaps the most important piece of advice for all classes is to make sure that your entry adheres to the schedule, i.e. size, quantity, etc: If the wrong quantity is displayed then the entry is immediately disqualified as "Not as Schedule" (NAS), even if they are the best specimens! If in doubt, please ask.

Potatoes

Select 4 of even size and shape, with no holes or green patches. If there is any colour around the "eyes", they must be entered in the coloured class. Display "in a wheel" on a small paper plate or on the bench.

Onions

These and shallots can be prepared in advance to ease any pressure on the day!

Do not over trim the roots or strip too many outer layers off. The "as grown" class is as it says, with roots and tops just as you have lifted them, (minus the dirt of course!) Onions should be lifted as soon as the top growth withers and left to dry for about 4 weeks to ripen them to a light brown colour. Choose 3 of even size and colour, and in the dressed class, trim the tops and bind them with raffia or string for a really "professional" finish. Display on a plate of dry sand or small cardboard tubes cut from the centre of a kitchen roll or similar.

Shallots

Pickling shallots should be "of pickling size" i.e. about 1 – 1½" diameter. Culinary shallots should be bigger. Both classes should be of even size and shape, tops and roots trimmed as for onions and the tops bound with raffia or string if you have time. Display on a plate of dry sand in a roughly symmetrical pattern.

Carrots

Choose 3 that are as reasonably matched as possible, wash very carefully, remove fine side roots and trim the tops to 3". Leave the taproot as intact as possible. Make sure there are no green "shoulders" by covering with soil throughout the growing season.

Beetroot

Choose 3 that are not too large, i.e. about tennis ball size and with only one taproot, not a set of legs! Don't remove the leaves which should be healthy and fresh. Clean them well but gently; soaking in salt water overnight brings out the colour. They also like a little salt added to the row while they are growing.

Peas and beans

Please make sure you enter the correct quantity! They should be of even size and shape and cut with scissors, leaving the whole stalk attached. Runner and French beans can be cut up to 3 days before the Show and kept in the fridge in a damp tea towel. These should break cleanly when bent in half to show that they are fresh and not too old. Beans inside should not be so large that they distort the shape of the pods.

Cabbages and Cauliflowers

Cabbages should not be stripped too far, retaining some of the outer leaves where reasonably clean and not eaten too much! Leave about 1" of stem. Cauliflowers should have a nice white curd and 3" of leaf and, again, 1" of stem. Both should be free of wildlife!

Table Marrow

Not too large please! A table marrow should be about 12" long and nicely rounded. The skin should be matured but not rock hard around the neck!

Lettuce

Again, please leave slugs and snails at home! They should be cut leaving a bit of stem.

Tomatoes

Make sure you enter the correct quantity, they should be even in colour and size, with their tops on and ripe i.e. not too hard or too soft. There should be no damage, watermarks, splitting or "greenback". They can be gathered up to 3 days before the Show with plenty of stalk and kept in the fridge. Then, before the Show trim the stalks to give a fresh wound to the stem.

Cucumber and Courgettes

Both types of vegetables should be even, fresh, rigid and with the remains of the flower still attached if possible (but not essential). Most importantly, they should not be soft or "floppy".

Parsnips

Water well before harvesting and try to retain as much of the taproot as possible. There should be no "canker" at the top, no spade damage or multi-legs! Hairy side roots can be pinched off. Evenly sized, with 3" of tops left on, keep in a damp towel prior to staging.

Swede or Turnips

Should be even, round and free from dirt, damage or pests.

Herbs

Herbs are judged for freshness, variety and usefulness! There should be 1 stem of each of 5 different herbs in a jam jar of water, clearly labelled with the contents. No diseased or half-eaten leaves.

Chillies and Peppers

Peppers – show 2 of even size and shape. Chillies – show 5 or a small plateful if very tiny.

Any other vegetable

This is a very broad class and a lot relies on common sense. If in doubt please ask one of the people detailed at the end of these notes. Small specimens, show at least enough to cover a small plate. If showing leeks, do not remove the leaves and trim the roots to 1-2". Sweetcorn (at least two) should be ripe enough for picking and displayed with one of the three leaves peeled back to show the kernels. Rhubarb should be fresh and have a little frill of the leaf and a little base of the stem left on. If the exhibit is very unusual or a new type, then you are obviously a bit of an expert, so please help the judges by specifying what it is, i.e. the type!

Apples, Pears and Plums

These should be of even size and colour with their natural "bloom", i.e. not polished! They must have stalks but no leaves (although leaves can be used to dress the plate). Apples should be displayed with the stalks down. Pears should be displayed "in a wheel" with the stalk innermost. Plums should be cut from the tree leaving the stalks attached and displayed on a plate.

Soft fruit

These should be fresh with their stalks still attached where possible, i.e. strawberries. They should fill a small paper or ceramic plate. Use only the same leaves to dress the plate.

Flower classes

Staging is important, use only plain vases, i.e. plain white or clear glass not decorated porcelain. Retain the leaves on roses if healthy. With dahlias, pull out the side buds and don't mix types, i.e. pompom, cactus etc.

Gladioli should be picked when the bottom 1/3rd is in full bloom, the middle 1/3rd is in bud and the top 1/3rd is in green. For dahlias, chrysanthemums and gladioli use narrow tapering vases and pack with scrunched newspaper or oasis.

For sweet peas, use a tapered vase filled with oasis and put 6 at the back and 4 at the front with 1 leaf at the back and 1 at the front. Try for stems with 4 flowers on each, all fully open but not dropping.

Double asters should not show any centre yellow disc and should be of good size and even.

Flower arrangements should conform to the size stipulated.

Pot Plants

On foliage plants there should be absolutely no flower buds, remove them! They can be herbs, mother-in-laws tongue, ferns, foliage begonias, ivy, coleus etc. The leaves should be clean and healthy.

Cactus can be any size, flowering or in bud and free from cobwebs! Only one variety in a pot please.

Hanging baskets and Patio pots

These can be of mixed varieties or all one type but should be even all round if possible, not a flat, dead, wall side. They should be in full bloom although it is appreciated that some "filler" plants may be past their best!

Jams, Chutneys etc.

Chutneys and pickles should be mature, i.e. at least 3 months old at the time of the Show and could be last years Autumn preserves.

Use only plain jam jars, do not use jars or lids with a trade name on them. This is illegal and doesn't go down well with the judges! All jars should be filled to the brim, pickles should be covered by vinegar. Soft fruit jams include blackberries, strawberries, raspberries etc, not damsons, plums or other stone fruits which should be entered in the "jam – any other variety" class. With all preserves, the seal should not be broken.

Hedgerow drink, home-made, could be Sloe Gin, Blackberry Whisky, Elderflower Cordial etc.

Tallest Sunflower

This should be in flower the week of the Show, please let either Jeremy (712492) or Kate (715927) know about a week before if you have an entry so that we can come round and measure it!

Domestic classes

Preferably use plain white plates of an appropriate size for all entries.

In the Victoria Sponge class, please use only raspberry jam and dust with caster sugar, not icing sugar.

Follow the recipes given where indicated and don't use a bread maker for the tin loaf!

Scones should be cut using a 2½" cutter (approx).

The Date loaf should be made approximately 1 week in advance to allow it to "mature".

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The meringues should be filled on the morning of the Show with whipped cream.

Craft classes

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Whether it is knitting, embroidery, a painting, patchwork, woodwork, metalwork, a greetings card, a photograph, computer generated bonfire poster (under 16's), or anything else you can think of. The opportunities are endless! Please ask to see the schedule for a full list of classes.

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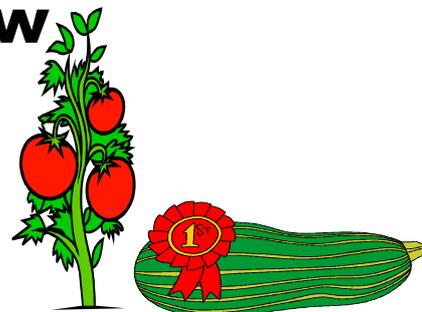
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