

Some guidelines for vegetable exhibitors at the summer flower show on August 6th

We wish to attract as many people as possible to 'have a go' and enter some of the classes. Some guidelines have been written below to help you with preparing vegetables for the show. In many ways they are the ideals and with indifferent weather and difficult growing conditions perfect examples will not always exist but don't let that stop you. Entering is good fun and enjoyable so do have a go!

Some general points

Root vegetables should be washed with a sponge or soft cloth and not with a brush which may damage the skin. Clean water only.

Beets, carrots, parsnips and turnips should have leaves removed so that 75mm (3") of stalk remains which should be neatly tied

Take care that the number of vegetables entered complies with the schedule. They should be as symmetrical in shape as possible.

Beetroot – spherical, approx. 50 – 75 mm (2 – 3") in diameter with tap root intact. Smooth skin and flesh of uniform colour

Broad beans - large well filled pods, clean skins, tender beans and intact stalks

Dwarf/French beans – straight tender pods of good colour, seeds should be inconspicuous from the outside. Even length and intact stalks

Runner beans – long slender straight fresh pods of good colour with no outward sign of seeds and intact stalks

Cabbage – fresh well shaped solid hearts with surrounding leaves in good condition. Leave a short length of stalk

Carrots - avoid those showing green at the top. Select uniform roots of good colour and skin undamaged. Stump/short types – well shaped stump with tap root intact. Long types – even length with well defined pointed root

Cauliflower –symmetrical solid white curds with no discolouration or frothiness and trim leaves level with the curd. Short stalk can be left

Courgettes – young tender well shaped fruits approx. 100 – 200mm in length (4 -8") and 30 – 45 mm (1 ¼-1 ¾") in diameter. Well matched intact stalks

Leeks – uniform in length, thick, well blanched, clean and spotless. Not bulbous at the base. Roots neatly washed and teased out. Avoid excessive stripping of leaves. No signs of softness or splits

Lettuce – firm fresh tender hearts, unbroken leaves and a good colour

Marrow – Young tender fruits. Can be any colour as long as well matched. Ideally 300mm (12") in length

Onions – firm bulbs with thin necks. Leaves above the neck should be removed and the cut end tied where possible. Avoid over skinning and cut roots back to the basal plate

Parsnips – skins as smooth as possible. Well shaped roots free from side roots and stains and discoloured shoulders

Peas – large well filled pods with the original bloom on the skin. Intact stalks and skin of good dark colour. Free from pest and disease damage

Potatoes - medium uniform size (not too big or too small) shapely, clear skinned, few eyes and eyes should be shallow