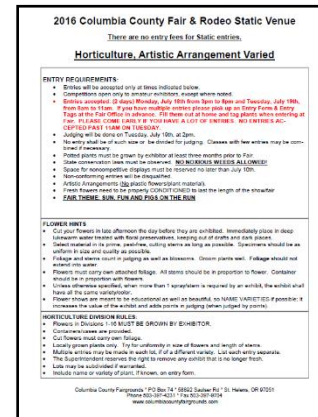


# Tips for Entering a Flower Show

Here are some helpful tips for entering your beautiful flowers into a flower show. These tips will help you gain points and possibly win top prizes!

The first thing judges will look for when starting to judge a flower show is has the exhibitor followed the schedule and filled out everything correctly?

The flower show schedule is the law or rules of the show. A show is only as good as its schedule and it is the first thing an exhibitor should study at length before planning or entering exhibits. If something is confusing or if there is something that isn't understood, ask the floral superintendent for assistance. Try not to guess at what is meant on the schedule. The more you are prepared with your entries, the better the chance you have at winning!



## Labeling Your Entries

Labeling or writing the variety name of the cultivar on the entry tag will gain you more points and will provide for a more educational show. Keep all labels of the plants you wish to show that are growing in your garden. Label in the garden and/or keep a chart of your plantings. Try to learn what you grow as this will help for an informative show for everyone. Labeling means giving the variety of cultivar not just zinnias but what variety of zinnia: 'Border Beauty' Zinnia, 'Oklahoma' Zinnia, 'Big Tetra' Zinnia, etc.

Be sure to exhibit the correct number of cultivars according to the schedule. The schedule will indicate whether one, two, three, four, etc. blooms, stems, or sprays are to be shown. If exhibiting more than one, all cultivars should look exactly alike as to maturity, color, form, size, etc. They should look like identical twins, triplets, etc.

## Grooming Your Entries

Entries in the Horticulture division (cultivars/specimens/exhibits) are to be well groomed.

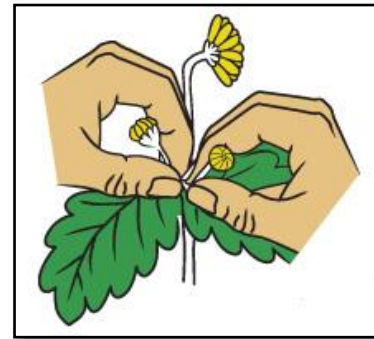
- Is the cultivar clean?
- Is all dirt and pesticide washed away?
- Is the cultivar free of disease or pests?
- Are there dead pieces of leaves or flowers attached to the cultivar?
- Could the cultivar be improved in some way?
- Is all of the foliage removed below the water line of the vase?

An exhibit should not be brought to a show showing any type of disease or contain insects. This is especially important if you are showing houseplants or container grown plants. Diseases and pests can spread quickly to other exhibits and are reason for an exhibit being removed from the show and/or disqualified by the judge.

A good exhibitor takes the time to remove all old flowers and dead leaves. Leaves or petals can be carefully trimmed a little to remove all brown edges so a judge won't notice. Be sure to remove all foliage that will be submerged in the water of the vase. If foliage is left on the flower, it will be marked down in judging.

### Disbudding

An important rule to follow in a horticulture show in certain classes, is one of disbudding. Disbudding is removing the side bud or shoot from round form flowers such as roses, zinnias, marigolds, dahlias, daisies, etc. Don't just pinch out the bud – remove the whole side shoot to the main stem carefully by pinching or using a small pair of scissors. Disbudding should be neat and in many cases done a day or days prior to the show depending on the cultivar.



### Definition of Sprays



Many cultivars are shown as sprays. A spray is a single main stem with blooms or florets borne on pedicels or lateral branches, led by a terminal bloom, which blooms first. Look at the stem for a Y. This indicates there are two sprays – one on each side of the main stem. Each spray should have as many blooms and buds as possible. The old center or terminal flower should be removed if past its prime. Examples of flowers shown as sprays are marigolds, petunias, phlox, etc.

Winning a ribbon in horticulture does not mean just growing the best flower or plant, but skill in grooming and preparing your exhibit. Planning ahead, studying the schedule, and learning how a flower or plant is judged helps you win!

