

HORTICULTURE COURSE I - Student Outline

- I. Botanical Nomenclature –(pgs 53-54 in 2017 Handbook – note chart on page 54). For today, let's use as an example *Tagetes erecta* 'Yummy Mummy' as we look at the botanical name.
- A. Genus – *Tagetes* is the genus. It is always capitalized and either underlined or printed in italics.
 - B. Specific epithet – *erecta* is the second part of the binomial name, is not capitalized but is either underlined or printed in italics.
 - C. Cultivar –a hybrid or sport of a species which will not come true when seeds are planted. This piece of the name should be capitalized and written either with a single quote of the name such as 'Yummy Mummy'.
 - D. Variety –a distinct group of plants occurring naturally within a species that have unique characteristics distinct from other plants in the species. If you come across a plant that has the Genus name, say *Petunia* followed by an x and the word *hybrid*, that means that this plant was a cross between two differing species of *Petunia*.
 - E. Series – cultivars identical to each other except for color. For marigolds, Moonstruck Series and the Gem Series are two that are fairly new.
 - F. Patented Names – these names are usually different from the actual cultivar name and is used for marketing.
 - G. Common Name – Never to be substituted for the cultivar name if one exists.
- * Please remember, in order to be awarded a Top Exhibitor Award (Section and/or Division award), the exhibit MUST identify the entry by its binomial name or its currently accepted scientific identification.
- II. Writing an Entry Tag Look at the card samples on page 57 of the 2017 Handbook.
- III. General Horticulture Top Exhibitor Awards: (HB 39-41)
- A. Section Awards
 1. Arboreal Award – For cut and container-grown trees and/or shrubs.
 - a. Cut specimens may not compete in the same section as container-grown specimens.
 - b. Cut or container-grown vines are NEVER eligible in Arboreal sections.
 - c. Cut specimens may not exceed 30" in length from apical tip to cut end. It should contain a minimum of 3 nodes.
 - d. A rosette of green ribbons; a score of 95 or above; unlimited number of awards offered.
 2. Award of Merit – All cut non-woody specimens including vines. In other words, any type of horticulture except trees/shrubs may be included here. While roses appear as shrubs, they are considered perennials, not arboreal.
 - a. Rosette of orange ribbons; a score of 95 or above; unlimited number of awards offered.
 3. Collector's Showcase Award – For collections and displays
 - a. Sections must consist of three (3) or more classes of ALL collections or ALL displays. A show cannot mix collections and displays in the same Section. Remember, all classes in a Section must be judged by the same Scale of Points. Collections fall under the 'All Cut and Container-Grown Horticulture Specimens and Collections' while Displays are judged by the 'Display' Scale of Points.
 - b. EACH specimen in the collection or display must score 95 or above in order to win a TEA. Specimen scores are NOT averaged.
 - c. Rosette of brown and green ribbons; a score of 95 or above (each specimen); unlimited number of awards offered.
 4. Elfin Award – for petite horticulture specimens in a NON-Petite NGC Flower Show.
 - a. Classes in an eligible section must consist of all CUT specimens, all CONTAINER-GROWN specimens, or all ARBOREAL specimens.
 - b. Plants designated as dwarf or miniature never compete with standard-sized material. They are always shown in a separate Section, Class or

sub-class. c. Small rosette of Chartreuse and purple ribbons; a score of 95 or above; unlimited number of awards offered.

5. Grower's Choice Award – for all container-grown plants (single, multiple or self-multiple and container-grown specimens)

a. Combination plantings never compete with single, multiple or self-multiple container-grown specimens in the same Section. b. Includes foliage, flowering, fruit or vegetable specimens. c. Rosette of dark-green ribbons; a score of 95 or above; unlimited number of awards offered.

B. Division Award – The Award of Horticultural Excellence

1. General requirements for the Horticulture Division Award:

a. The division must include at least two or more sections.

b. All Horticulture Section Top Exhibitor Award winners are eligible for the Award of Horticultural Excellence.

c. All first-place blue ribbon winners not in the sections offering TEAs in those sections but which meet award requirements are eligible.

d. A rosette of green, blue and orange ribbons; only 1 may be offered in a show; it must be the highest scoring blue ribbon exhibit entered by an individual in the entire Horticulture Division.

IV. Judging Qualities found on Horticulture Point Scoring Form – there is one scale of points for all single specimens, whether it be flower, foliage, arboreal, fruit/nut/vegetable as well as collections. (HB 129; 100-103)

A. Conformance – (5 pts) Ask yourself if it adheres to the Class description in the Schedule. Have all class requirements been met and does the exhibit qualify for the Section award?

B. Plant Identification (5 pts) – should have the binomial name or currently accepted scientific designation, including cultivar or variety. In addition, the name should be legible and have the proper format (underlining or, if printed, italics)

C. Peak of Perfection – show worthiness of the specimen/s.

1. Form (20 pts) – 3-D shape of the entire exhibit as well as its individual parts. Is the shape ideal for the specimen being exhibited? Notice radial or bilaterally symmetry if appropriate. What about the placement of the flowers/leaves/cones, etc. Are they consistent with this particular species?

a. Cut specimens includes leaves, stems and fruit/flowers/cones/berries as they apply. b.

Container-grown specimens includes everything in cut plus the overall silhouette. Is it symmetrical? c. Fruits/vegetables/nuts is only the actual shape

of that which is exhibited. d. A few flat specimens, usually a leaf, may not show a true 3-D form but an acceptable two-dimensional shape.

2. Color (20 pts) – visual perception of the hues, shades, tints and tones of all parts of the specimen.

a. Plant should have distinct, clear color. If there are variegations, spotting/streaking or blotching, is it a regular pattern or irregular and is that pattern appropriate for the specimen? b. The color should be what is expected of the species. If it should be a rich rose and this specimen is a dull, light rose then certainly that would impact points negatively. If the leaves are yellowing and they should be a deep green then there must be deductions.

3. Maturity/Size (20 pts) – this is the ideal stage of development for the specific plant being judged.

a. Flowers should be in full bloom, not the bud stage. There may be one or two buds on a spray provided the abundance of blooms are open. This would indicate maturity but not overly

mature. b. Is the specimen fully leafed out? Immature leaves or leaves still rolled indicate immaturity? c. If the specimen is a container-grown exhibit, is there evidence of new growth?

d. Arboreals must have at least 3 nodes and an apical bud. No exceptions.

e. Fruits/nuts/vegetables are judged as prime for consumption. They should be ripe but not overly so and certainly not 'green' or immature. Unique to judging rules, F/N/V may be, and in most cases should be, picked up and handled gently by one of the judges.

4. Condition/Blemishes (15 pts) – the physical appearance of the specimen at time of judging
 - a. The specimen should be well-hydrated with no wilting.
 - b. Are there indications of insect damage such as chews, pinpricks, etc?
 - c. Indications of mechanical damage such as water/spray spots, torn leaves or petals, obvious trimming issues along the leaf margin.
 - d. Look for sunburn, frost damage or even hail damage.
 - e. Are there actual insects present?

D. Grooming/Staging

1. Grooming (10 pts) This is one of two areas where the exhibitor has the ability to make the specimen look its absolute best. If that has not been done, then the exhibit should be penalized appropriately.
 - a. This includes cleaning the exhibit, removing debris, any insects, spent leaves or blooms.
 - b. Remove spent leaves, petals or entire blooms, clean up debris caught in between petioles and stem.
 - c. Check for insects or for webbing. Clean up any sticky spots.
 - d. If judicious trimming of leaf margins has been done well, then don't dwell on that small imperfection.
 - e. Make sure the stem length is in proportion to the size/heft of the bloom.
 - f. There should be no foliage below the water line (single exception is the Gladiolus)
2. Staging – cut, container-grown/epiphytes (5 pts) - presentation of the specimens. As with Grooming, this is the other area over which the exhibitor has total control.
 - a. Is the Pose correct and presented to best view?
 - b. The wedging should always be unobtrusive
 - c. The container should always be proportional to the actual specimen, whether in a cut, transparent container or in a container-grown exhibit. The specimen should never be top heavy, nor should the container be twice as large as it needs to be.
 - d. If it is a container-grown exhibit, the specimen should be centered in the container. However, for self-multiples, give the exhibit a bit of room for new pups to pop up almost anywhere – they don't know they are at a show.
 - e. The soil should be clean and if covered with gravel or other covering, it should be unobtrusive. If it is a cut specimen, the water should be clear of any debris.

V. Review of Horticulture Commenting Vocabulary – We will carefully be going over vocabulary as pertains to the two specific specimens we are studying today but there are a few concepts that relate to every exhibit, no matter what it is.

A. Write what you see. That means try to describe the exhibit to someone who hasn't seen it at all.

1. Don't say beautiful/gorgeous/stunning/ugly/sad – what is beautiful to you may not be to someone else. Don't say unbalanced – be specific – WHAT is unbalanced? Is the entire specimen listing to its left or is there a large gap in the leaves on the left?
2. With COLOR, it works best to say something like brilliant red, deep purple, rich brown, hunter green, etc. in relating to the blooms. Be sure you always identify which part of the plant you are describing. You can also say washed-out yellow in the bloom (if you don't specify what part of the plant you are discussing, it could just as easily apply to say the leaves which are, in reality, a deep blue-green). What exactly is off-color?
3. For SIZE, use actual figures.
4. FORM words might frequently be 2 dimensional shapes such as rectangular or circular or 3 dimensional such as shaped like a box or ball.

B. Point Scoring No's

1. Never repeat the same comment. Learn to expand your vocabulary.
2. Never repeat the criteria – as an example – don't say "poor grooming" under Grooming or "conforms" under Conformance; don't say the specimen is "mature" under Maturity.

VI. Judging Procedures – judging is an honor and a responsibility – it is never a right. Judges should always be gracious, courteous, and willing to learn; never domineering or imperious. (HB 97-99)

A. Judging Etiquette

1. When asked to judge, be prompt in your response but always check your calendar to be sure before you accept. If you must cancel, contact the Judges Chair as soon as possible so that s/he can get a replacement.
2. Be on time or just a few minutes early. A Judges Chair never breathes until the last judge has arrived.
3. Listen carefully when the judges are given updates on classes closed, any weather issues that were pertinent to the exhibits, etc and ask questions if appropriate.
4. Judges are introduced to their clerks and they take the judges to their first class.
5. During the preliminary walk-through (this is generally offered once the updates are completed – if not offered, it is perfectly ok to ask for one). If, during the walk-through, a class needs sub-dividing, ask the Classification Chair if s/he might be interested in dividing it (MUST be at least 3 entries/sub division).
6. When writing comments on the entry card, always begin with a positive statement.
7. Always thank the Judges Chair and the Show Chair for the opportunity to judge the show.
8. Never comment on another panel's judging decisions. One exception to this rule is if a gross infraction of NGC policies occurred which the other panel(s) overlooked. An example would be if a Section Award was given to a specimen that was not botanically named. This is immediately brought to the attention of the Show Chair and corrected before the show is opened.

B. Judging Ethics and Policies:

1. Never solicit a judging assignment
2. Take the time to review the Schedule as soon as possible after receiving it. Don't just quickly look it over. Make sure you understand which classes you will be judging and if you aren't completely comfortable with the species then STUDY before the show. NGC Flower Shows require hours and hours of work in planning, staging, committee work before, during and after the show so offer them the courtesy of your responsibility to know what you will be judging.
3. If you are OFFERED mileage and/or overnight lodging please remember the club's budget and try to ride and room share.
4. Never exhibit in any show that you will be judging. There are a few circumstances where perhaps a student judge might also be exhibiting but NEVER judge the class or Section that you have an exhibit entered. It could be construed to be 'favoritism'. Sometimes perception can be an issue.
5. Always have your *Handbook* at the ready. Don't leave it at home.
6. Don't be overly critical of any exhibit – remember what it took to get it there and understand that sometimes weather creates an issue with all horticulture specimens.
7. The majority always prevails. That's why there are 3 judges. Don't stand there and argue in front of the clerks! All judges, including student judges have equal voting weight. If a decision cannot be made, Point Score the exhibits.
8. All judging panels that judged even 1 class in a Section must also judge for the Section Award. If there are 4 Sections and your panel judges just 1 class, your panel is included with the other panel/s who judged the other classes. Always sign/date entry cards for 90+ entries – student judges cannot sign.
9. ALL judges who judge in the Horticulture Division also judges for the Award of Horticultural Excellence.
10. Judging is confidential – before, during and after the show.
11. Remember that personal preferences must NEVER influence judging.