

HORTICULTURE – COURSE II

- I. **STAGING** (2017 Handbook for Flower Shows, pgs. 33-35) – **the act and process of creatively and properly displaying exhibits using equipment or properties.**

- II. **Horticulture Division**
 - A. Who Provides:
 1. Sponsoring Organization – for consistency. May be more “theme-related”, especially if applying for a Flower Show Achievement Award.
 2. Exhibitor - schedule **MUST** state what type/s permitted and prohibited. Schedule must be specific!

 - B. Cut Specimens, non-arboreal
 1. Clean, clear bottle. Need not be colorless, but the stem should be easily visible.
 2. No labels or marks on bottle/vase/test tubes; low bowls/saucers (for *Camellia*, *Gardenia*, *Hibiscus*)
 3. Wedging **PERMITTED** in all classes unless schedule prohibits. Wedging is used to improve the “pose” of the specimen. Wedging must be unobtrusive. Examples include plastic wrap, foam/Styrofoam, wood.
 4. Schedule dictates who will provide bottle/vase/etc. If sponsoring organization, then Staging Committee must make sure they are all clean. If the exhibitor (and this makes it easy for Staging Committee), all credit/blame for container falls under exhibitor.
 5. Water should be clean. Exhibitors might consider bringing own water (cold to keep specimen from further opening, warm water to hasten maturity) in gallon jugs.
 6. Container needs to be in proportion to specimen. This is difficult, but think typically 1/3 total height of specimen.
 7. Container may be weighted by ballast such as clear glass marbles, Japanese black rocks, etc. Clean, unobtrusive, consistent color. **NOTE:** Specimen stem end must **NOT** be wedged by the ballast.
 8. In the past, some instructors have stated the water level must be the same in all bottles. This is not an NGC policy. Plants draw water at different amounts.

 - C. Container-Grown Specimens
 1. Schedule **MUST** state maximum diameter of container (diameter/height) if space is limited.
 2. Containers should be clean and unobtrusive. (Unobtrusive = unnoticeable at first, second, and third glance!) Terra cotta, dark green, brown, black. Free from decorations that dominate or attract the eye.

3. **Double potting** (putting one pot inside another, but with the inner pot's lip hidden) permitted unless the schedule states otherwise.

4. Staking is permitted unless the schedule prohibits. Staking should be below the top of the plant.

5. **Topdressing** (adding a layer of substrate to the top of the soil) permitted to improve the soil's appearance. Substances include soil, dried (but uncolored moss), coarse sand, chicken grit, pea gravel)

D. Arboreal

1. Many attributes like cut specimens above. Ballast and wedging are important. Containers should be sturdy/weighted enough they don't fall over.

2. Evergreens (broadleaf or needled) may be exhibited without being in water provide the specimen is well-conditioned. Staging can include laying the specimen on the table to hanging on trellis, doors, or other structure.

E. Fruits/Vegetables/Nuts

1. Displayed on flat surface. Paper plate, placemat, tray, etc.

2. Display staging should be unobtrusive. For consistency sake, it may be easier for Staging Committee to provide staging. However, schedule can state otherwise.

F. Petite Horticulture -- See Section Below on Petite Horticulture

G. Collections and Displays

1. Important to pre-register to determine necessary space in show. Schedule must state the space allotted (width, depth, height) but exhibitor is not required to use all.

2. Exhibitors are required to stage all specimens. Horticulture Placement only directs the exhibitor to the location.

3. Collections: staging materials such as blocks, placemats, overturned containers, risers, etc. can be used to present specimens BUT only to enhance specimen presentation. Staging MUST be totally subordinate and essentially unobtrusive.

4. Displays: staging can be creative as there is a "design" element to a Display. Containers do not have to be clear, etc.

III. **CREATIVE/INNOVATIVE STAGING/THEME STAGING**

A. Creates "excitement" for the Show.

B. Creative/Innovative staging not required in Flower Show Evaluation, but would be noted if present.

C. **Examples of creative/innovative staging:** Vignettes within the Sections; staging in wagons, on bales of straw (lighter than hay), table on table on table (Wedding theme of "tiered wedding cake), risers, overturned clay pots for height. Stacks of suitcases, stacks of books, old barn boards. Trellis, fencing, gates, doors for hanging conditioned evergreens.

D. Think about Section/Class separation, other than ribbon. Twigs, tool handles, pieces of old garden hose, ornamental grass stems, branches, etc.

- IV. PETITE HORTICULTURE (HB page 61)
- A. Standard Flower Show, Small-Standard Flower Show, Horticulture Specialty Flower Show; any may be also designated Petite Flower Show
 - B. Provides great interest to public.
 - C. In a schedule, must have separate section, class and/or subclass.
 - D. DEFINITION: Naturally small growth, or those designated as dwarf or miniature varieties or cultivars by nurseries and plant societies.
 - E. Botanically, many specific epithets can indicate a petite specimen:
compacta/compactus, microflora, microphylla, minima/mus, minor, nana, pumila, pussila, etc.
 - F. Horticulturally:
 1. Dwarf: Plant height
 2. Miniature: Plant part (Flower, leaf)
 - G. **Arboreal specimens must be no longer than 18” and have several nodes (NEW TO 2017 HB)**; schedule can state minimum length as well, and even a shorter maximum length. Not all dwarf specimens would be appropriate at 18”, which might take a good chunk of the plant.
NOTE: Some “dwarf” specimens may not be really dwarf, but just a shorter version of a standard specimen. Example: dwarf burning bush. but remember some dwarf arboreal specimens may not be eligible.
 - H. **Schedule dictates container size and type, length of specimen stem, and “number” of specimens per exhibit.**
 1. Clear pill bottles
 2. Flower tubes in wood rack
 3. Airline liquor bottles (cleaned)
 4. Salt/pepper shakers. Those with broad bottoms the best.
 5. Miniature syrup containers
 - I. Wedging may be needed, should be unobtrusive; schedule should dictate type
 - J. Provide ample and appropriate staging. Do not CROWD. (No horticulture specimens should be crowded)
 1. Staged at eye level best
 2. Make sure staging cards (class designation, etc.) don’t overwhelm, but you still need the information available to the public.
 3. Make sure specimens aren’t wobbly.
 - K. **When writing schedule, dwarf and miniature (Petite Horticulture) NEVER compete against standard sized material, but in a separate class or sub-class;** This is for initial class judging. Specimens can compete against each other for NGC Horticulture Top Exhibitor Awards. Classification chair and General Show/Hort Chair should be willing to subdivide if an errant petite specimen appears at the Flower Show in a “regular/normal” size class, even if it is the sole entry in that subclass.
 - L. Eligible for all Horticulture Top Exhibitor Awards within a Section and the Division.
 - M. ELFIN AWARD:
 1. Available in a non-Petite Flower show.
 2. Unlimited number of Elfin Awards possible. Will there ever be more than one section or two sections??