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Whitney, Wayne, "Exhibiting Garden Vegetables : Extension Circular 12-33-2" (1960). *Nebraska 4-H Clubs: Historical Materials and Publications*. 267.

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EXHIBITING GARDEN VEGETABLES
Wayne Whitney, Extension Horticulturist

The first step in preparing to exhibit vegetables is to carefully read all rules and instructions in the premium list regarding vegetable exhibits. Then keep the book with you, refer to the rules and instructions while selecting your exhibit, preparing it for exhibit, and while placing it for exhibition. Many exhibits are disqualified each year because the exhibitors do not follow instructions and rules in the premium list. Some lists have general rules for the division, such as vegetables, with additional rules for specific classes such as vine crops. Follow all rules carefully.

Selecting Your Exhibit

Size -- First carefully observe the size of the vegetable you are going to exhibit. Determine which size onion, for example, makes up the largest number you have. This is the size to use in your exhibit. By using this size you have the largest number possible from which to select your exhibit. Any commercially acceptable size is satisfactory.

Type -- Next, have well in mind the shape or form (referred to as type) the vegetable should have for the variety. Example: A sweet Spanish onion is a globe shaped bulb, while a Bermuda onion (Crystal Wax) is flattened in appearance. Then, too, different varieties of carrots vary in type. Nantes is a long, tapered cylindrical type, while Red Cored Chantenay carrot is thicker, shorter, and blunt in comparison. (All vegetables in a given exhibit must be the same variety.)

Condition -- Insofar as possible, vegetables should be exhibited in their peak of edible condition. Since some of the vegetables in 4-H gardens are past their season at the time of 4-H fairs, some may be shown canned. This is especially true of peas and green beans. Condition refers to edibility and quality. Any evidence of disease or insect injury reduces the score on this point materially. Mechanical damage such as cuts, bruises, or other damage that will shorten the keeping quality of the vegetable is also a serious defect.

Color -- Color refers to vegetables that have colored skins such as red potatoes or internal color such as beets. The judge has every right to cut a vegetable to compare or check on internal color. Of course the more desirable the color for the variety the better the score.

Uniformity -- In an exhibit comprised of more than one specimen, uniformity receives more consideration than any other factor because it means how nearly identical the 5 tomatoes are, for example, in regard to type, size, color, and condition. You can readily see why you need to determine which size you have the largest number of for a given vegetable before starting to select your exhibit. It would be best to sacrifice a little in size and color, to achieve uniformity. Be very reluctant to sacrifice condition and never type or uniformity.

Extension Service
University of Nebraska College of Agriculture
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Cooperating
E. F. Frolik, Dean E. W. Janike, Director

Preparing Vegetables for Exhibition

Uniformity among exhibitors in preparing vegetables for exhibition is desirable. The following suggestions should be followed:

Canned Vegetables -- The vegetables in a given jar should be uniform in form, size, color, and condition, and be packed attractively in the container.

Onions -- The top is cut to 1 inch in length. The roots are to be rubbed off the base of the bulb. Some of the papery skins surrounding the bulb may be carefully removed, but at least 1 should be left covering the onion bulb.

Vegetables That May Be Washed or Cleaned With Damp Cloth

Beans -- When shown as pods, beans should be entire including the short stem which attached it to the plant.

Cabbage -- Stalk cut smoothly at base of head. Outer leaves may be removed, but not any more than necessary to present an attractive appearance. Outer leaves left on head should be red or green in color.

Cauliflower -- Leaves around head may be cut even with edge of the cauliflower head.

Kohlrabi -- Leaf stems should be cut to 1 inch in length.

Okra, Peppers, Eggplant -- Must have stem 1 inch long.

Vine Crops -- Must have 3 inches of vine attached to stem. This includes cucumbers, squash, pumpkin, muskmelon and watermelon.

Celery, Spinach, Kale, Endive, Parsley, Chard, Chinese Cabbage -- Remove damaged or outside stalks, leaves, or branches but no more than necessary. Carefully cut off roots but not into crown of plant.

Vegetables That Are Not Washed

The following vegetables should not be washed. These crops should be cleaned with a soft brush or cloth:

Potatoes (Irish)	Rutabagas
Potatoes (Sweet)	Salsify
Carrots	Beets
Parsnips	Turnips

The tops of carrots, parsnips, rutabagas, salsify, beets, and turnips are cut back to 1 inch in length. Side roots should be carefully removed so that the skin of the vegetable is not scuffed or broken.

When placing your vegetables in the exhibit, melons, eggplant, cabbage, cauliflower, muskmelons, squash, pumpkins, and canned goods may be placed directly on the table. All other vegetables are placed on the table on 9" paper plates.

Suggested Score Table

Size -----	10%
Type -----	25%
Condition -----	20%
Color -----	20%
Uniformity -----	25%
	<hr/> 100%

The suggested table is given to show you the relative importance of the various factors considered when judging a vegetable exhibit. If this score card is followed in selecting your exhibits, it should be included in the fair or show premium list or should be given to the judge for use as a basis.

In the State Fair Premium List for 4-H, it states:
"Garden exhibits shall consist of not less than 5 nor more than 8 kinds of vegetables, not more than 3 of which may be canned."

To avoid confusion on the part of the exhibitor, the requirements for local shows should be identical with those of the State Fair.

It is also desirable that the requirements as to the number of a given kind of vegetable be the same at local, county and state shows or fairs.

Suggested
Number or Amount to Include
In Your Exhibit

vegetable	2	5	canned 1 pint	vegetable	2	5	canned 1 pint
asparagus			X	sweet corn		X	X
beans (snap, pole, lima, shell)		X	X	tomato (slicing)		X	X
beets		X	X	tomato (preserving)		X	X
broccoli	X			turnip		X	
brussell sprouts		X		okra		X	
cabbage (head)	X			onion		X	
Chinese cabbage	X			parsnip		X	
celery (plants)	X			peas			X
carrots		X	X	peppers (sweet)	X		
cauliflower (head)		X		peppers (hot)		X	
chard	X		X	potatoes (Irish)		X	
cucumber (slicing)	X			potatoes (sweet)		X	
cucumber (pickling)		X	X	rutabagas	X		
egg plant	X			salsify		X	
kohlrabi		X		spinach	X		X
muskmelons	X			kale, endive, parsley (plants)	X		
pumpkin	X			watermelon	X		
squash	X						