VEGETABLE EXHIBITIONS

THEIR PLANNING and MANAGEMENT

By Lee A. Somers

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THE PERIOD of agricultural fairs, harvest festivals, 4-H club achievement days, farm bureau picnics, farmers' institutes and other agricultural exhibitions in Illinois begins in late July and continues until some time in February. These exhibitions range all the way from the great State Fair and the International Livestock Exposition, which are visited by hundreds of thousands, thru the county fairs, county institutes, and bigger harvest festivals to the little exhibitions in small rural schools that are visited by few other than the patrons of that school.

Whether visited by thousands, by hundreds, or by only a few, all these exhibitions have the same central objective—they are all educational in nature. In the urban visitor they create an appreciation of the agriculture of the region. To the exhibitors they give recognition and reward for leadership, for initiative, and for work well done. To the rural public they are an example and an inspiration.

Horticultural products, especially vegetables, at these fairs are, however, often so poorly displayed as to defeat their educational purpose. Horses, beef cattle, hogs, and sheep are the center of the larger fairs and almost always they are well shown. Usually the dairy cattle and dairy products are shown to the great advantage of that industry. Corn, wheat, oats, and the other grains, as well as the forages, are shown to good advantage. In each of these classes the exhibitions are usually well arranged and well managed. The exhibitors seem to be well informed in choosing and preparing their specimens for exhibition. The judges are usually highly competent and work with confidence and precision.

Well-arranged, well-managed exhibits by informed exhibitors who understand the points on which entries are judged and who know how to choose and prepare their specimens for exhibition should likewise be the goal of all those who plan vegetable exhibitions. Judges who are trained and competent and who understand the factors of quality and the shifting weight of these factors under varying conditions should be secured.

The usual poor showing of the vegetable crops both from commercial gardens and from noncommercial home gardens indicates the
need for knowledge and information on the part of the committees that arrange the vegetable exhibitions, the exhibitors, and the judges.

The committee need to know what crops to show and what not to show. They need to know how to show vegetable crops, and particularly to appreciate the amount of space required to show them to best advantage. They need to know the value of uniform containers, of variety labels, and of proper groupings.

Exhibitors need to understand how to choose typical specimens and to appreciate the factors that constitute quality. They need instruction in the choosing of specimens, in preparing them for exhibition, and in arranging them to the best advantage.

Judges must know whether the displays are to be judged as commercial exhibits or as home-garden exhibits. For each exhibit they must know exactly what points are to be considered, and the conditions which change the weight to be given to the various points.

**PLANNING THE EXHIBITION**

**Decide Point of View—Home Garden or Commercial**

In vegetable gardening there are two distinct points of view—the commercial gardener's and the home gardener's.

The first duty of the committee, board, or secretary, when planning an exhibit, is to determine which of these points of view shall be represented; and the catalog should leave no doubt in the minds either of prospective exhibitors or judges whether vegetables are to be exhibited as commercial garden products or as home-garden products. The great state fairs must, of course, include both types of exhibits. Home-garden exhibits may appropriately be made in almost every county and every region of the state. In counties or regions of commercial production, commercial exhibits must, in addition, be provided for.

The home gardens may be limited to farmers' home gardens, or there may be classes for suburban and city backyard gardens, or 4-H club gardens and high school agricultural project gardens, or all these may compete on even terms. The point is that home-garden exhibits and commercial garden exhibits should never be confused.

The need for the above distinction is clear when one considers the difference between the commercial gardener's point of view and the home gardener's. The commercial gardener is interested in sales and profits. He raises those vegetables that are suited to his soils and his climate. He tries to eliminate those that are least profitable and to
concentrate his efforts on those that are most profitable. He chooses the varieties that yield best and most nearly meet the market preferences rather than those having simply high quality. He is interested in anything that promotes sales and profits. He is interested in proper degree of maturity for the market, best methods of preparation for the market, most acceptable packages at minimum cost, and in best methods of grading and packing. He is only indirectly interested in food values or in balanced diets.

The home gardener, on the other hand, cares nothing about the market or market preferences. He is interested in quality as it expresses itself in flavor, texture, and palatability. He is not at all interested in profits as such, since he has no intention of selling anything out of his garden. He is not interested in packages and containers since he needs to buy none. He is not interested in grading and packing. He raises a garden to provide his family with an adequate supply of a wide assortment of high-quality and well-balanced vegetable foods. He wishes not only to provide these foods, but also to create and maintain a desire for them.

All these considerations give different weight to details of selection, arrangement, and judging in commercial and home-garden exhibits, and make it impossible to do justice to exhibitors and exhibits unless distinctions are clearly drawn.

Make the Catalog Clear and Definite

The success of an exhibition is dependent first upon the preparation of a clear, accurate catalog of well-selected entries. The vagueness and the ambiguity of many cataloged lists of vegetable crops and the classes for which prizes are offered lead to misunderstandings and unwise compromises and concessions.

The catalog should state definitely—

1. Whether the exhibits are to be judged as commercial vegetable exhibits or as home-garden exhibits. Without this definite statement both exhibitors and judges must work at a great disadvantage.

2. Who is eligible to enter. Is the exhibit limited to one class, such as Cook County Gardeners Only, Farm Bureau Members Only, 4-H Club Members Only, Farmers Home Gardens Only? Or is the exhibit open to other classes or to all classes, such as Home-Garden Exhibition Open to All, Home-Garden Exhibition Open to Farmers and 4-H Club Members.

3. The quantity, weight, or number of the entry to be shown, such
as Potatoes, 1 peck; Beets, bunch of 5; Slicing Cucumbers, 6 specimens; Muskmelons, 6 specimens.

4. The form in which crops are to be shown, such as Carrots bunched or Carrots topped; Cabbage trimmed or Cabbage untrimmed; Popcorn shelled or Popcorn on the cob; Lima Beans in pod or Lima Beans shelled. Failure to state definitely the form for showing results in a confusion of varying entries in the same class.

5. The date entries are closed.

6. The date vegetables must be on hand.

7. The hour when exhibits must be completed and ready for judging.

The listings must be accurate and carefully selected:

1. List only varieties having horticultural standing in the region. For example, in the early potatoes Triumph, Irish Cobbler, and Early Ohio probably constitute 95 percent of the crop. These varieties and only these should be listed. True enough there are over forty other so-called varieties but only a few of these have sufficient constantly differing characteristics to give them varietal standing. Most of the others are simply synonyms or local names used instead of the standard variety name.

2. Avoid ambiguous listings, such as “any other variety” or “variety unnamed.” If the variety is unnamed, it has no horticultural standing and should not be listed. The variety lists of any state, county, or region should be revised every few years to include new and improved varieties of recognized breeding and to drop out varieties which are no longer recognized.

3. Never use “biggest and best” as a listing. The biggest is not likely to be the best. “Best” is a very good listing. However, in crops that vary greatly in size, such as the watermelon or winter squash, it is well to add a size limit, such as, “Best Tom Watson weighing over 50 pounds,” “Best Tom Watson weighing 40 to 50 pounds,” “Best Cushaw squash weighing over 40 pounds,” or “Best Hubbard squash weighing over 25 pounds.” “Biggest” is a useful listing only in those instances in which quality is an unimportant factor, as in Mammoth Pumpkins.

4. Do not list crops that are out of season. Early spring and summer crops should not be listed in fall exhibitions, nor should late fall crops be listed in July and August exhibitions. To list these is only to invite the showing of poor specimens and thus to lessen the educa-
tional value of the exhibition. (See chart on the harvesting and marketing period of Illinois vegetables, pages 26 and 27).

5. State circumstances under which no award will be given. A problem that often arises to vex the committees, superintendents, and especially the judges, is that of what to do when only one entry is made in a given class and that entry is of grossly inferior quality. This difficulty usually does not occur if out-of-season crops are not listed, and if a general ruling is made that inferior specimens will not be accepted for exhibition. To give an inferior entry a prize is to defeat the purpose of the exhibition.

There should be a clause in the catalog which reads: “If only one entry is made in a class and in the opinion of the judge that entry is unworthy of a prize, it shall be judged ‘no award.’”

ARRANGING THE EXHIBITION

Insist on Variety Labeling

A vegetable exhibit in which the varieties are not labeled has practically no educational value. When arranging livestock exhibits, it may be taken for granted that the spectators know the difference between a Jersey and a Holstein calf, or between a Poland China and a Chester White pig, and that these breeds do not need to be labeled. In horticultural exhibits, however, it is doubtful if one percent of the spectators know the difference between a Chantenay and a Nantes carrot, between a Hales Best and a Honey Rock muskmelon, or between a White Globe and a Silverskin onion. The spectator seeing ten varieties of yellow-kernelled sweet corn learns very little if he is not told what these varieties are.

Each exhibitor should be required to name the variety or varieties of the vegetables he is entering for exhibition, at the time the entry is made. Reference to the seed catalog or to his seed order will usually give this information. Local names and synonyms for standard variety names should be avoided in so far as possible.

Provide Neat, Uniform Labels

The committee or board in charge of exhibits should furnish uniform and neat cards or labels together with pins, stickers, cords, or other device for attaching them to the exhibit specimens. Small round, oblong, or rectangular cards can usually be found in 5- and 10-cent stores. Here too can be found price-tag holders that can be used to hold the labels or cards.
Entries sent in by an exhibitor should be labeled by the committee or board with the variety names typed on the cards in accordance with the list submitted by the exhibitor with his entries. When the committee or board make up the display, they should attach all variety labels in a uniform manner.

When the exhibitor brings his own specimens in person and makes up his own display, it is optional whether the committee or the exhibitor shall print the variety labels. Usually it is better for the committee to do it, but each exhibitor should be free to attach the labels in the way he considers best.

The printing of labels and their attachment should be determined from the standpoint of the spectator. Are they easy to read? Do they add to the attractiveness of the display? Do they enhance the educational value of the display?

Make Sure That Space Is Adequate

A vegetable display requires a great deal of space. Each entry should be sufficiently separated from the others so that the spectator has no difficulty in distinguishing one from the other. Racks set rather high against outer walls, pyramids of various kinds, and adequate tables should be provided in sufficient number to show all entries to the best advantage. Frequently there is plenty of space available, but it has not been used to advantage. More often the space assigned to vegetables is too limited.

As a result of inadequate space, exhibits of bunched carrots are often piled on top of each other. The same is true of the bunched beets, turnips, parsnips, and salsify. Containers of potatoes are likely to be piled one on top of another, as are also sweet potatoes, cucumbers, snap beans, and peppers. Sweet-corn entries are nearly always piled, and frequently the cabbage entries also.

Before finally approving the catalog for a vegetable exhibition, the amount of space available must be determined. When the actual space has been apportioned in the best manner and still is grossly inadequate, the committee should adopt one of two alternatives. First, the catalog may be limited to fewer kinds and fewer classes. It is far better to show only eight or ten crops and show them to their best advantage than it is to show many more kinds to the disadvantage of all. Second, entries of each kind or of each class may be limited by stating in the catalog "Limited to five entries" or "Limited to ten entries." It is far better to limit the entries than it is to accept all entries and pile them on top of each other.
It is as important to exhibit vegetables well as it is to exhibit grain, calves, and any food product properly. If vegetable exhibits are to have educational value or to be made at all, adequate space must be provided for them and they must be as well shown as any other fair exhibit.

**Provide Uniform Containers**

Potatoes, sweet potatoes, onions, tomatoes, peppers, and indeed nearly all kinds of vegetables are often displayed not only in insufficient space but in a confusing disarray of inappropriate and inadequate containers. Potatoes are shown in tin pails, crates, cheese boxes, soap boxes, hampers, peck baskets, market baskets, and in paper bags and grain bags. Such exhibits fail to arouse the interest of any but the exhibitors themselves.

Uniform trays, plates, and other containers should be provided by the management of the exhibition. These should be of durable construction in order to last from year to year and of such sizes and shapes as to show the vegetables to the best advantage. The following containers are suggested:

1. *A splint basket* having the circumference and diameter of the common half-bushel basket with somewhat less than half its depth and a capacity of one peck; a similar basket with a capacity of one-half peck. These baskets may be used for such vegetables as potatoes, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, onions, peppers, cucumbers, and for nearly all topped root crops, such as carrots, beets, turnips, parsnips, or winter radishes.

2. *A shallow tray* about 24 inches long, 12 inches wide, and 1 inch deep. This tray should be strong but light weight. These trays may be used for all bunched root crops, such as carrots, beets, turnips, and salsify, for sweet corn and popcorn, for slicing cucumbers, eggplant, cabbages, muskmelons, small type squashes, or other similar vegetables.

3. *A collection of earthenware plates or metal pie pans of various sizes.* Paper plates are not strong enough to be used except in a very limited way.

In the absence of adequate containers tomatoes, potatoes, sweet potatoes, onions, sweet corn, and slicing cucumbers can be arranged in low pyramids on tables. Cabbages, muskmelons, eggplant, and small squashes may be grouped on a table without containers.

Watermelons, pumpkins, the larger varieties of squashes, and a few other bulky vegetables are best shown without containers.
SCOPE AND ARRANGEMENT OF HOME-GARDEN EXHIBITIONS

The home garden is usually on a farm, but it may be a city backyard or vacant lot garden, a suburban or a company garden, a community garden, or some form of relief garden. Regardless of the place, the area involved, or the degree of intensity with which it is tended the object is always to provide the family with vegetable foods. Every complete farm garden should provide a representative assortment of vegetables.

Individual-Crop Displays

Altho individual crops are not the most important consideration in the home garden, they will probably always constitute the major portion of home-garden exhibits at most fairs and agricultural exhibitions. These displays differ very little from the commercial displays of the same vegetable except that the vegetables for the home-garden displays are never packed and are usually shown in smaller quantities. In judging them greater weight must be given to the factor of quality. (The suggested listing given on pages 15 to 16 will be found helpful in preparing the catalog for a home-garden as well as for a commercial display.)

Groups and Assortments

Well-balanced groups and assortments of vegetables should be given the most emphasis in home-garden displays. A group exhibit should reflect, to some degree, the efficiency of the garden as a whole. A gardener might in individual entries be awarded a prize for a superior plate of potatoes, yet would not score in the group exhibit because his garden failed to provide a satisfactory assortment of vegetables. Or he might show superior tomatoes or a superior muskmelon and yet raise no other vegetables of any kind.

Group listings in the home-garden exhibitions not only measure the ability of the gardener, but they form a far more attractive display, with greater educational value, than does the individual crop. However, group listings must not be made in a haphazard or unstudied way. "Biggest and best collection," as pointed out on page 6, is a most unfortunate listing. It always results in the showing of many crops that are out of season and long past their edible stage. It encourages the showing of crops of little dietetic or economic value, and worst of all it promotes poor gardening practices.
Include in the catalog list several groups and assortments, but hold these groups within definite limits. The following suggestions will serve as a guide. (See page 13 for group classifications.)

1. **Group of 15 vegetables**
   - Potatoes, sweet potatoes, or both
   - Tomatoes
   - Six from Group 3
   - Two from Group 4
   - Three from Group 5
   - Two from Group 6

2. **Group of 10 vegetables**
   - Potatoes or sweet potatoes
   - Tomatoes
   - Four from Group 3
   - One from Group 4
   - Two from Group 5
   - One from Group 6

3. **Group of 8 vegetables**
   - Potatoes or sweet potatoes
   - Tomatoes
   - Three from Group 3
   - One from Group 4
   - One from Group 5
   - One from Group 6

4. **Group of 5 vegetables to be used in boiled dinner**

5. **Group of 5 vegetables**
   - Three from Group 3
   - Two from Group 5

6. **Group of 8 storage crops** (late fall and winter exhibition)
   - Potatoes or sweet potatoes
   - Cabbage or Chinese cabbage
   - Two dried seeds from Group 4
   - Four from Group 5

7. **Group of 6 storage crops** (late fall and winter exhibition)
   - Cabbage or Chinese cabbage
   - Onions and two others from Group 5
   - Pumpkin or squash from Group 6

### Market-Basket Displays

When a small but competitive vegetable exhibit is desired in connection with a larger exhibition or with a meeting or an organized discussion, the market-basket display is recommended. Garden clubs primarily interested in flowers, farm-bureau units, home-bureau units, granges, household science clubs, consumers buying clubs, and many other groups will often have need for such a display.

The market-basket display may be used to educate the consumer to consider quality and the requirements of a balanced diet in buying vegetables. To those who produce their own vegetables, this display should develop a better appreciation of balance in the vegetable diet. It gives to both exhibitor and spectator a new appreciation of the beauty of vegetables. It gives the exhibitor free rein to exercise his artistic ability.

The market basket, which is the center of the display, may be of any desired shape and construction just so it has a capacity of one-half bushel. In some exhibits the capacity may be reduced to one-fourth bushel and in others it may be increased to a full bushel, but this is not generally advisable.
The basket may be decorated in any manner that will enhance the beauty or attractiveness of the vegetables. Flowers, aromatic herbs, crepe paper, or other means of adding color may be employed singly or in combination to create the desired decorative effect. In some exhibits the clean, undecorated basket may be most appropriate.

The basket should contain a group of high-quality vegetables constituting a well-balanced vegetable diet. It should include either potatoes or sweet potatoes or both, tomatoes, three or four leafy vegetables, one legume, and two or more root crops. For example, if there are enough potatoes to last a family a week, there should be a week’s supply of the supplementary vegetables from the other groups.

The arrangement of the vegetables in the basket again gives ample opportunity for artistic designing. Leafy vegetables may extend beyond the rim of the basket but they must not dangle from the sides. The vegetables may be mounded up above the top of the basket but not so high nor so loosely that the specimens will roll off when the basket is carried.

Each exhibitor must prepare a card or paper giving a list of the vegetables in the basket with the amounts by weight, by measure, or by number.

(Example)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes</td>
<td>7 1/2 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>4 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots</td>
<td>2 bunches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettuce</td>
<td>2 large heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet potatoes</td>
<td>2 1/2 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ripe tomatoes</td>
<td>4 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celery</td>
<td>2 large stalks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinach</td>
<td>Half-peck</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This card or paper will be exhibited with the basket. A part of the score will depend upon the balanced selection of vegetables as indicated on this card (see page 25).

Basis for Grouping Vegetable Displays

Any grouping or classification of vegetables other than that which follows the strict lines of systematic botany must necessarily be more or less arbitrary and therefore subject to change. Horticultural literature usually classifies vegetables in six groups, as follows:

1. Potatoes and sweet potatoes
2. Boiling vegetables
3. Greens or potherbs
4. Salad crops
5. Garnishes
6. Special crops

There are many modifications of this, the most frequent being a still further breaking up into subgroups. From the standpoint of vegetable cookery, this classification has little value.

In present-day teaching of vegetable cookery, the classification is based on the place of the various vegetables in the diet. Six classes are recognized.
1. Potatoes and sweet potatoes
2. Tomatoes, which because of their dietetic value and the many ways in which they may be served, are given special class distinction.
3. Green stem and leafy crops
4. The legume crops
5. The root crops
6. The fleshy fruit crops

The following grouping combines the best elements of both classifications from the exhibition standpoint and may be used as a guide by both exhibitors and judges:

**Group 1.** Potatoes and sweet potatoes

**Group 2.** Tomatoes

**Group 3.** Asparagus
- Cabbage, all forms
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Chinese cabbage
- Collards
- Cress
- Dandelions
- Endive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 3. Asparagus</th>
<th>Italian broccoli</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage, all forms</td>
<td>Kale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cauliflower</td>
<td>Lettuce, all forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celery</td>
<td>Mustard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese cabbage</td>
<td>New Zealand spinach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collards</td>
<td>Parsley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cress</td>
<td>Rhubarb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dandelions</td>
<td>Spinach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endive</td>
<td>Swiss chard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Group 4.** Beans, snap
- Beans, green shell
- Lima beans in the pod
- Peas in the pod
- Soybeans, edible in the pod or green shelled
- Sweet corn (altho not a legume)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 4. Beans, snap</th>
<th>Parsnips</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bean, snap green shell</td>
<td>Radishes in season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lima beans in the pod</td>
<td>Rutabaga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peas in the pod</td>
<td>Salsify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soybeans, edible in the pod or green shelled</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet corn (altho not a root crop)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Group 5.** Beets
- Carrots
- Celeriac
- Kohlrabi
- Onions (altho not a root crop)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 5. Beets</th>
<th>Pumpkins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrots</td>
<td>Squashes, all kinds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celeriac</td>
<td>Watermelons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kohlrabi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onions (altho not a root crop)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Group 6.** Cucumbers
- Eggplant
- Muskmelons
- Peppers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 6. Cucumbers</th>
<th>Storage vegetables include Group 1; cabbage, Chinese cabbage and celery from Group 3; the dried seeds of Group 4; all of group 5; and pumpkins and squashes from Group 6.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cucumbers</td>
<td>Pumpkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggplant</td>
<td>Squashes, all kinds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muskmelons</td>
<td>Watermelons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peppers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SCOPE AND ARRANGEMENT OF COMMERCIAL VEGETABLE DISPLAYS

Commercial vegetable displays should be confined to the vegetables that are grown and sold in commercial quantities in the region. Only those kinds that reach edible or marketing stage at approximately the time the exhibition is to be held should be listed. Early spring crops should not be listed for late summer and fall exhibitions, nor should fall crops be listed for midsummer exhibitions. After heavy frosts have come, it is unwise to list other than the storage crops. In greenhouse regions separate classes should be set up for greenhouse crops.

The big state fairs must, of course, list crops produced anywhere in the state. In a state having the varied climatic conditions of Illinois this makes it practically impossible to avoid some regional out-of-season listing.

The more important a crop is in a region the more it should be broken up into variety and group classes. For example, if sweet corn is only one of several crops, the list might read: Sweet corn—"Best 10 ears of white" and "Best 10 ears of yellow." But if sweet corn is one of the most important crops in the county the list would more satisfactorily read: Sweet corn, white: "Best 10 ears of White Cory," "Best 10 ears of Howling Mob," "Best 10 ears of Country Gentleman," "Best 10 ears of Stowells Evergreen." Sweet corn, yellow: "Best 10 ears of Golden Gem," "Best 10 ears of Golden Bantam," "Best 10 ears of Whipples Early Yellow," "Best 10 ears of Golden Cross Bantam."

The quantity to be shown will vary somewhat with local conditions. In general the standard sales unit should determine the quantity but often a convenient fraction of the sales unit may be used. Vegetables that are sold by the dozen bunches should be shown by the bunch unit. Vegetables that are sold by the bushel may be shown by the bushel, by the half bushel, or by the peck. Vegetables that are usually sold by the peck should be shown in that quantity. Vegetables that are sold in bags should be removed from the bags and should be shown in dozen or half-dozen units, or by the peck, or by a convenient weight unit, such as 5 or 10 pounds.

When the catalog calls for the vegetables to be graded and packed, the package or container should conform to the market customs and usages. The vegetables should be shown packed in their containers ready to receive the lid or cover. Watermelons, pumpkins, and winter
squashes should not be packed. They should be shown in units of three or six, arranged on racks or tables, or even neatly arranged on the floor.

**Suggested Entry List**

The following suggested entry list, together with suggested quantities, may be used as a guide in arranging the catalog list of entries for a commercial vegetable display. The list should contain only those vegetables grown commercially in the region. The quantities and the subclasses should be adjusted to local conditions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind</th>
<th>Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beans</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green pod snap</td>
<td>1 peck; or 1/2 peck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wax pod</td>
<td>1 peck; or 1/2 peck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beets</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunched</td>
<td>2 bunches of 5; or 1 bunch of 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topped</td>
<td>1 peck; or 1/2 peck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cabbage, trimmed</strong></td>
<td>3 heads; or 2 heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carrots</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunched</td>
<td>2 bunches of 5; or 1 bunch of 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topped</td>
<td>1 peck; or 1/2 peck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cauliflower, trimmed</strong></td>
<td>3 heads; or 2 heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cucumber</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pickling</td>
<td>1 peck; or 1/2 peck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slicing</td>
<td>Group of 10; or group of 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eggplant</strong></td>
<td>3; or 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Italian broccoli</strong></td>
<td>3 heads; or 2 heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kohlrabi, bunched</strong></td>
<td>2 bunches of 5; or 1 bunch of 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lettuce</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head</td>
<td>3 heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cos</td>
<td>3 heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lima beans in pod</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large type</td>
<td>1 peck; or 1/2 peck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small type</td>
<td>1 peck; or 1/2 peck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Muskmelon</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantaloupe type</td>
<td>Group of 5; or group of 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large type</td>
<td>Group of 5; or group of 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Onions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American red</td>
<td>1 peck; or 1/2 peck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American white</td>
<td>1 peck; or 1/2 peck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American yellow</td>
<td>1 peck; or 1/2 peck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European</td>
<td>Group of 10; or group of 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parsnips, topped</strong></td>
<td>1 peck; or 1/2 peck</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Peppers
- Chili: 1 peck; or ½ peck
- Mango: 1 peck; or ½ peck
- Pimento: 1 peck; or ½ peck

### Popcorn on cob
- Pearl: 6 ears; or 3 ears
- Rice: 6 ears; or 3 ears

### Potatoes
- Early: 1 bushel; ½ bushel; or 1 peck
- Late: 1 bushel; ½ bushel; or 1 peck

### Pumpkins
- Large cheese: 3; or 2
- Large stock: 3; or 2
- Small sugar pie: 3; or 2

### Rutabagas, topped
- Group of 5; or group of 3

### Salsify, topped
- Bunch of 6; or bunch of 3

### Squash, fall
- Table Queen: Group of 5; or group of 3
- Fordhook: Group of 5; or group of 3

### Squash, summer
- Cucuzza: Group of 5; or group of 3
- Crookneck: Group of 5; or group of 3
- White scalloped: Group of 5; or group of 3

### Squash, winter
- Boston Marrow: Group of 3; or group of 2
- Cushaw: Group of 3; or group of 2
- Hubbard: Group of 3; or group of 2
- Turban: Group of 3; or group of 2

### Sweet corn
- White: 10 ears; or 6 ears
- Yellow: 10 ears; or 6 ears

### Sweet potatoes
- Big Stem Jersey: 1 peck; or ½ peck
- Nancy Hall: 1 peck; or ½ peck
- Porto Rico: 1 peck; or ½ peck
- Yellow Jersey: 1 peck; or ½ peck

### Tomatoes
- Green pickling (large varieties): 1 peck; or ½ peck
- Large purple: 1 peck; or ½ peck
- Large red: 1 peck; or ½ peck
- Large yellow: 1 peck; or ½ peck
- Small red preserving: 1 peck; or ½ peck
- Small yellow preserving: 1 peck; or ½ peck

### Turnips
- Bunched: 2 bunches of 5; or 1 bunch of 5
- Topped: 1 peck; or ½ peck
Crops Poorly Suited to Exhibition Purposes

Leaf lettuce, radishes, Swiss chard, spinach, mustard, peas, and asparagus are so subject to wilting that they should seldom be listed for exhibition. These crops can be used for one-day exhibitions, but seldom for longer periods except as they are used in groupings.

Special-Crop Displays

Special-crop displays and exhibitions, such as watermelon festivals, cabbage and kraut festivals, onion days, potato days, or asparagus days, are held only in highly localized regions in which the particular crop is of unusual importance. Such displays are usually not wholly educational in purpose, but are intended to advertise the region and the crop to people who have not heard of it before. However, the displays do have marked educational value.

In planning special-crop exhibitions the following suggestions may be helpful.

1. Use large displays broken up into many classifications. A small display will attract little attention.
2. Each commonly grown variety should be a class in itself.
3. Divide the classes into adult and junior or 4-H club classes.
4. The quantities shown should be much larger than in general exhibitions.
5. Emphasize size and volume.

In a watermelon festival, for example, each of the varieties commonly grown in the region, such as Tom Watson, Kleckley Sweet, Cuban Queen, Dixie Belle, and Irish Gray, should form a class. Each of these classes should then be broken up into subclasses somewhat as follows: “Best Tom Watson over 50 pounds,” “Best group of three Tom Watson over 40 pounds,” “Best group of 10 Tom Watson over 30 pounds.” The junior classes should be the same except that the groups should be smaller.
SUGGESTIONS FOR EXHIBITORS
Choosing Vegetable Specimens for Exhibition

No exhibitor can hope to win against worthwhile competition if he does not choose his specimens carefully. First of all, determine the type to exhibit. Study of the descriptions and pictures of the variety in the seed catalog will be helpful.

Having determined the type, go to the garden and from a large number of specimens choose the type specimen. Now from the largest number of specimens available choose those which most nearly approach the type specimen. Always choose a few alternate specimens to replace any that become injured, lost, or overripe.

In general, select fair-sized specimens in preference to the largest size. Overgrown specimens are rarely typical and usually they are coarse in texture and lacking in flavor (watermelons, pumpkins, and winter squashes are exceptions). Never exhibit a deformed or ill-shapen specimen; these have their place in freak vegetable shows but not in quality shows.

The best stage of maturity for exhibit specimens is determined somewhat by the length of time the exhibit is to stand, but extremes of immaturity and overmaturity should be avoided.

Muskmelons continue to ripen after they are picked; hence they may be picked before they are ripe. If the display is to continue for only one or two days pick them on the “full slip,” but if the display is to continue for a week or more pick them on the “half slip.”

Watermelons should be ripe, but not overripe and mealy.

Tomatoes are subject to rapid spoilage. If the display is for only one day, pick them fully ripened, but if it is to continue for a week or more, pick them just as they reach full color, which is a few days before they are fully ripened.

Snap beans should be picked when the pods are full grown and the beans are from one-fourth to one-half grown.

Lima beans should be picked as soon as the seeds reach full size, before they begin to ripen.

Mango peppers should be picked while still green in color, but pimento peppers should be red.

Carrots, beets, and turnips, when bunched, should be immature and succulent. Beets and turnips should be about half grown, while carrots may be somewhat larger. When topped, these should be mature but not overgrown, coarse in texture, nor pithy.

Early potatoes may be immature and the skin may peel. Late potatoes should be mature, altho this is not always possible.
**Sweet corn** should be in the pre-dough stage.

**Summer squashes** should be immature, whereas **winter squashes** and **pumpkins** should be mature. Both should be harvested with the stem attached.

**Cabbages** should be mature and solid-headed, but not overmature, split, or cracked.

**Slicing cucumbers** should be full grown but not yet beginning to mature.

Other things being equal, and varietal characteristics considered, specimens with the more intense or **deeper shades of color** are preferred to those with lighter or duller shades. Deep yellow carrots are preferred to light yellow. Deep red beets and cabbages are preferred to the lighter reds. Pure white cauliflower is preferred to the ivory-white shade. Dark green spinach is preferred to the lighter green. The deep yellow muskmelon is preferred to the lighter yellow specimens of the same variety.

Give careful attention to **uniformity** when choosing exhibit specimens. Uniformity expresses itself in many ways—in varietal characteristics, size, shape, degree of maturity, and color.

**Harvesting and Preparing Vegetables for Exhibition**

While the following suggestions are subject to modifications, they may be used as a guide in harvesting and preparing vegetables for any exhibition.

**Asparagus.** Tie in 12-ounce to one-pound bunches with butts even. Place ribbons, cord, or rubber bands near the base and just below the tips.

**Beans, snap.** Seeds ¼ to ½ size. Remove injured or discolored pods. Do not wash. Top of container may be faced.

**Beets, bunched; carrots, bunched; turnips, bunched.** Remove dirty, discolored, or injured leaves. Tie tightly in bunches of 5. Wash thoroly but do not scrub or otherwise injure outer skin.

**Beets, topped; carrots, topped; turnips, topped.** Remove tops ½ inch above the crown. Clean and wash, except when shown as storage crops.

**Cabbage, early and late except storage cabbage.** Trim fully.

**Cabbage for storage.** Leave stem and all roots attached. Remove only those outer leaves that are injured or diseased.

**Carrots, bunched.** See Beets.

**Carrots, topped.** See Beets.

**Cauliflower.** Cut stems, allowing 4 to 6 leaves to remain. Trim the leaves 1 inch above the curd.

**Celery.** Remove all discolored or unbleached outer stems. Wash thoroly.

**Chinese cabbage.** Remove all discolored and coarse outer leaves.
Cucumbers for pickling. Select only well-shaped specimens less than 4 inches long. Do not wash.

Cucumbers for slicing. Select those that are full grown but not matured. May be washed.

Eggplant. Select specimens that are smooth and free from bronzing, full grown but not mature. May be wiped but not washed.

Italian broccoli. Cut the stem as far below the head as it is succulent. Show primary heads without tying. Tie secondary heads in bunches of 1 pound.

Kohlrabi. Remove roots just below the ball. Let 4 to 6 upper leaves remain. Tie tightly in bunches of 5.

Lettuce, head; Cos lettuce. Remove all discolored or injured outer leaves.

Lettuce, leaf. See Spinach.

Lima beans. Harvest when seeds are full grown but not ripened. Remove injured, discolored, or poorly filled pods. Do not wash. Top of container may be faced.

Muskmelons. Harvest on "full slip" or "half slip." Clean but do not wash.

Mustard. See Spinach.

New Zealand spinach. Use only the succulent terminals. Wash thoroly.

Onions, bulb. Remove roots just below base. Remove ragged and dirty outer scales only. Remove tops well above apex of the bulb.

Onions, green. Remove roots just below base. Tie in bunches of 6 to 8. Trim tops to even length. Wash thoroly.

Parsnips. Same as topped turnips.

Peas in pod. Select peas full grown but not matured. Sort out all injured or discolored pods.

Peppers: mango type. Use smooth specimens full grown but still green.

Peppers: pimento type. Use smooth specimens fully colored.

Potatoes, early. Clean and wash.

Potatoes, late. Clean but do not wash.

Pumpkins. Select mature specimens with stems attached. Do not wash.

Radishes. Grade for size, shape, and color. Tie in bunches of 6 to 10. Wash thoroly.

Rhubarb. Tie in 3- to 5-pound bunches. Clean but do not cut at base. Remove leaves about an inch above the stem.

Salsify. Prepare same as topped turnips, then tie tightly in bunches of 3 or 6.

Spinach; mustard; lettuce, leaf. Cut entire plant just below crown. Remove discolored or injured leaves. Wash thoroly, being careful to avoid injuring leaves.
**Vegetable Exhibitions**

Squash, summer. Select immature specimens, with stem attached. May be washed.

Squash, winter. Select mature specimens, with stem attached. Do not wash.

Sweet potatoes. Select well-shaped, mature specimens. Clean but do not wash.

Sweet corn. Harvest well-filled ears in pre-dough stage. Do not pull husks from the tips. Allow short shank and husks to remain intact.

Swiss chard. Use only succulent stems with entire leaves attached. Tie in bundles of 3 to 4 pounds.

Tomatoes. Use only perfectly shaped specimens, not fully ripened, but well colored, smooth, and free from cracking. Show blossom end up. Top of container may be faced.

Turnips, bunched. See Beets.

Turnips, topped. See Beets.

Watermelons. Select well-formed specimens, large for the variety, and just matured. Wipe but do not wash.

**Arranging Group Displays**

When each exhibitor makes his own group arrangement, he has unlimited opportunity to exercise his creative and artistic ability. Endless variations in the background, the tables, the borders, the arrangement, and the color schemes are possible with individual initiative and individual skill. There can be no set rules or regulations. However, a few simple suggestions may be helpful.

Determine first the dimensions, kind, and height of tables, kind and height of background, and the means of lighting the space assigned to you. With this information at hand the next step is to plan the display. An unplanned, haphazard display is not likely to win against worthwhile competition.

If the background is of medium height and the lighting is satisfactory, the neutral colors such as tan or dark green are usually best for decoration. The background should focus attention on the vegetables, not on itself. Border decorations should frame the picture, not become the focal point. Make the spectators and the judges look at the vegetables—not at a blaze of crepe paper.

Plan the exhibit to have one, and only one, focal point of interest. Usually this focal point should be central, but not always. It will vary with the lighting and with the general arrangement of the space. Build the remainder of the exhibit around or centering toward the focal point.

Unless some variation of the “horn of plenty” idea forms the focal point, mass effect is usually preferable to the jumbled effect. For
example, have all muskmelons or all sweet corn of a given variety together rather than scattered. If two varieties of a vegetable are being shown, they should be separated.

When the focal point is central, it is usually more effective to place the brightly colored vegetables toward the center and the duller colored kinds nearer the borders. When there is a stair-step or pyramid arrangement, the larger kinds are usually more effectively placed near the base or on the lower level and the smaller kinds nearer the apex or on the upper levels.

When there is a high background it is often possible, and sometimes very effective, to use the upper portions of it for the display of some of the smaller and lighter-weight vegetables. If the entire display is to be on a flat surface, place the larger and more bulky vegetables in the rear and the smaller ones forward.

Place all vegetables in positions to show them at their best. Turn their best sides to view. Make the entire exhibit as neat and attractive as possible. Finally print or type the variety labels neatly and attach them to the specimens in such manner as to add to the attractiveness of the whole. Dirty or poorly printed labels that are hard to read mar the appearance of a display.
JUDGING VEGETABLE EXHIBITS

The judge must first know whether vegetables are to be judged as home-garden displays or as commercial garden exhibits. When judging from the commercial viewpoint, the question of most importance is, "Which of these several entries would sell most readily and bring the best price on the market?" From the home-garden viewpoint the main question is, "Which of these several entries would supply the most of the best-quality foods to the families of the exhibitors?"

Judges should have superior knowledge of the materials they are to judge and the ability to analyze and evaluate the relative merits of specimens submitted for competition. There are no definite rules or regulations in vegetable judging, and no score cards. Indeed, it is doubtful if a single score card could be made that would be applicable to all conditions under which vegetables are exhibited. A judge should, however, always write out a score card of his own for his guidance before he begins the actual work of judging, and he should use it. Only the ablest and most experienced persons can do good judging without such help.

Quantity, quality, condition, and uniformity are basic factors which must always be considered in judging any vegetable exhibition. In scoring most home-garden displays, these factors bear practically all the weight. When in commercial displays the catalog calls for the vegetables to be displayed in packages or containers, the package and also the packing must be given consideration in scoring. When each exhibitor is required to make up his own exhibit, neatness, attractiveness, and educational value must be given weight. When each exhibitor is required to print or type his own labels and attach them to the specimen, these also must be judged.

A discussion of each of these points and a suggested range of weights to be given to each under varying conditions will prove helpful as a guide for all judges and especially for amateur judges.

Quantity (score 5 to 10 percent). Adherence to the number, weight, or measure called for in the catalog should be given a score of 5 to 10 percent. When the number or amount exhibited is less than that specified in the catalog, the entry should be marked down severely and in some cases eliminated. An exhibit of a number or amount greater than that called for should be marked down but not so severely.

Quality (score 45 to 60 percent). Inherent characteristics of a vegetable that give it desirability, usefulness, palatability, or sales
appeal determine its quality. The variety, degree of maturity, smoothness, ease of preparation, loss due to necessary paring, color, texture, flavor, and similar points must be considered. Obviously these will differ with different vegetables. In the muskmelon the degree of maturity, in potato the loss due to necessary paring, in the tomato smoothness, and in the watermelon flavor will usually be the dominant consideration.

**Condition** (score 10 to 20 percent). Condition differs from quality in that it is determined by external factors. Freshness, crispness, turgidity, succulence, freedom from mildews, rots, wilts, and blights, and freedom from insect or mechanical injury all are characteristics of condition. In extreme cases, poor condition may eliminate an entry. Insect and mechanical injuries, growth cracks and imperfections that were present when the vegetables were chosen for an exhibition should cause an entry to be marked down severely. Soft rots, mildews, and severe wilting that have obviously occurred since the vegetables were put on exhibition, altho very unsightly, should not cause so severe a deduction in scoring.

**Uniformity** (score 10 to 20 percent). Are the entries uniform as to varietal characteristics, size, shape, color, degree of maturity, and similar considerations? Lack of uniformity is a more serious fault in a commercial display than in a home-garden display. In the extremes it represents the difference between carefully graded and ungraded produce.

**Package or container** (score 5 to 10 percent). Is it appropriate, strong, durable, neat, and clean? Does it enhance the sales appeal of the vegetables it contains?

**Packing** (score 5 to 10 percent). Does the arrangement of the entries in the package add to or subtract from the sales appeal of the vegetables?

**Labeling** (score 5 to 10 percent). Labeling may be scored separately or as a part of the arrangement. Are the labels clean, neat, and easy to read? Are they appropriate in size? Do they add to the educational value of the exhibit? Are they attached to the specimens in an attractive manner?

**Arrangement** (score 10 to 20 percent). Arrangement is scored chiefly in group displays. Neatness, attractiveness, and educational value of the display as a whole must be considered.
Suggested Score Cards for Typical Conditions

1. Individual crop entries from home gardens:
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Uniformity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Individual crop entries from commercial gardens:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Uniformity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Commercial entries—score to include package and packing:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Uniformity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
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</table>

4. Home-garden group displays—score to include arrangement and labeling:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Uniformity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Commercial displays—score to include packages, packing, arrangement, and labeling:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Uniformity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
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</table>

6. Market-Basket Displays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Uniformity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15</td>
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</table>

   Arrangement of vegetables in basket: 15
   Balanced selection of vegetables: 15
   Miscellaneous considerations: 5

Market-basket displays usually excite the keenest of competition. In scoring them the judge must consider not only the quality of the vegetables and whether they constitute a balanced vegetable diet, but also the arrangement of the vegetables and the artistic appearance of the basket. Quality must necessarily be judged from the specimens that are exposed to view and those that can be reached and examined without disarranging the contents of the basket. Whether the vegetables constitute a well-balanced vegetable diet is determined by checking the kinds and amounts as stated on the list which is submitted as a part of the entry (see page 12).
### Period of Harvesting and Marketing Illinois Vegetables

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<tbody>
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<td>Asparagus</td>
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<td>Beans, snap</td>
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<td>Beets, early</td>
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**Greenhouse crops**

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DISPLAYS of vegetable crops at many county and community fairs, and even at larger fairs, in Illinois do not do justice to these Illinois products. The failure of these exhibitions to assume the importance they deserve may be due partly to the fact that the boards and committees responsible for such displays have been handicapped by having little precise information on how to plan for them, how to prepare a catalog or a list of entries, and on what points awards should be based. This circular is an attempt to meet this need and also to supply certain information to exhibitors and judges.

Exhibitors will find suggestions on how to choose specimens for display, how to prepare them for exhibit, and how to arrange them to best advantage.

Judges will find suggestions about standards, about weights to be given to the various points involved, and on necessary differentiations to be made between products from home gardens and those from commercial gardens.