

Preparation of Entries for Exhibiting

The exhibitor is concerned with providing the highest quality possible, from the time of selecting specimens to placing them in the proper classes.

- List or mark in the schedule the plants you are growing that are or will be at the proper stage for exhibiting.
- Cut flowers and foliage the evening before the Show or in the early morning, selecting specimens of quality. (Take a bucket of warm water out with you!)

PREPARING PLANT MATERIALS FOR HARDENING

Be sure to check 'Conditioning' tips below before hardening!

Remove lower foliage cleanly. Upper foliage must be attached unless otherwise stated. Specimen blooms should not have side buds, remove carefully if necessary. Make a fresh cut, on a slant, with the end of stems under water. Place in a wide bucket in warm water for at least three hours, preferably overnight. Store in a cool, dark, humid, draft-free place. Re-cut stem ends before placing in show containers.

CONDITIONING

It is well known that some cut flowers, foliage and wood materials do not readily absorb water, and require further treatment prior to hardening, to prevent wilting during the Show.

Ornamental branches generally benefit from splitting the cut ends. Some also may require removal of the thick outer layer of bark.

Some cut flowers which exude a white latex or sap benefit from burning the stem ends, e.g., Poppies, Asters, Zinnias, Dahlias & SUNFLOWERS!

Other cut flowers benefit from placing stem ends in 5 cm (2") of boiling water for a minute or two before placing in cold water, e.g. Dahlias, Roses and Rudbeckia. Protect bloom with a paper collar. (Use this method to revive wilted blooms!)

Some spring bulbs prefer being placed in 5 cm (2") of cold water.

GROOMING

Grooming is essential. Remove evidence of insects, disease, dust, stains, pollen, and any other foreign material from blooms and foliage.

*Source: Ontario Judging & Exhibiting Standards for Horticulture & Floral Design
(Publication 34 / 2003)*