

2026
Open Class
Vegetable and Flower Show
Handbook



2026 Porter County Fair

217 E Division Rd, Valparaiso, IN

July 23 – August 1

OPEN CLASS GENERAL RULES FOR VEGETABLE AND FLOWER SHOW

- 1. Open Class is for Indiana amateur growers over age 18 not participating in 4-H. An amateur is a person who earns less than \$1000 annually in a horticulture-related industry.
- 2. A Department Superintendent is appointed to supervise each individual show – Vegetable Department and Flower Department.
- 3. Superintendents shall, when called upon by the judge or an exhibitor give an explanation of the rules governing an exhibit, and shall also decide all questions and disputes.
- 4. Superintendents shall prevent anyone from interfering with the judges while judging an exhibit; they are empowered to enforce rules governing the exhibits.
- 5. Superintendents shall refrain from expressing an opinion as to the merit or demerit of any exhibit when talking in the presence of a judge.
- 6. All exhibits must remain in place throughout the fair or as released by the superintendent.
- 7. A faithful observance of all rules governing the exhibits will be required and when in doubt as to the application or intent of a rule, the superintendent shall clarify the rule.
- 8. No distribution or posting of advertising shall be allowed.
- 9. The Porter County Fair will not act as a selling agent and no article can be shown with a “For Sale” sign in view.
- 10. The Fair Board is not responsible for loss or damage to any exhibit.
- 11. In the event of conflict between general and department rules, the latter shall govern.
- 12. There is to be no entry fee assessed in any department. Ribbons and premiums will be awarded for the first three placings and honorable mention for exhibits deemed worthy by the judges. Judges shall not award prizes to unworthy exhibits.

AWARDS FOR ALL DEPARTMENTS (except corn stalks)

- 1st Place - \$8 plus Sticker
- 2nd Place - \$7 plus Sticker
- 3rd Place - \$6 plus Sticker
- Honorable Mention – Sticker
- Best of Section – \$20 plus Ribbon
- Best of Show – Ribbon

VEGETABLE SHOW

Superintendent Darel Walker - 219.405.5908
182 E Buckskin Lane Valparaiso, IN

VEGETABLE SHOW DEPARTMENT RULES

1. **See General Rules on page 1.**
2. **Location** – The Vegetable Show area is located in the Expo East building of Porter County Fairgrounds. Use the east door to enter your exhibits.
3. **Timing** – Exhibits are due Thursday, July 23 from 8am to 10am. To accommodate working gardeners, exhibits will be accepted Wednesday July 22 from 5pm to 7pm.
Judging is Thursday, July 23 at 11am.
Exhibits are released Saturday, August 1 between 8p and 9p. The Superintendent shall discard any exhibits not picked up by 9pm.
4. **Limit** – Exhibitors cannot enter more than one item per section. All exhibits must be grown by the exhibitor or his/her family.
5. **Plants** – Some vegetables will not keep in good condition during the entire fair. The Superintendent reserves the right to discard any exhibits whenever they do not make a good appearance.
6. **Tools** – The Fair Board will furnish trays for vegetable exhibits.

TALLEST CORN CONTEST

Enter one stalk of corn grown from a recognized seed variety for grain purposes. Stalk should be entered with root system intact, in a 5-gallon bucket.

1 st Tallest Stalk - \$100	5 th Tallest Stalk - \$20
2 nd Tallest Stalk - \$80	6 th Tallest Stalk - \$20
3 rd Tallest Stalk - \$60	7 th Tallest Stalk - \$20
4 th Tallest Stalk - \$40	8 th Tallest Stalk - \$10

SCORE CARD FOR VEGETABLE EXHIBITS

POINTS

CONDITION – Freedom from dirt, disease and blemishes, proper degree of edible maturity.....	25
QUALITY – Crispness, firmness, flavor, etc.....	20
TRUENESS TO TYPE.....	20
UNIFORMITY – All specimens should be same size, shape, color.....	20
SIZE - Should conform to market demands... ..	15

VEGETABLES

Section No.	Vegetables	Quantity Required	Section No.	Vegetables	Quantity Required
701	Green Beans	20	728	Squash - Acorn	1
702	Wax Beans	20	729	Squash - Butternut	1
703	Red Beets	5	730	Squash - Patty Pan	1
704	Broccoli	3	731	Squash - Spaghetti	1
705	Brussell Sprouts	5	732	Squash - Zucchini	3
706	Green Cabbage	1	733	Squash - Yellow Summer	3
707	Red Cabbage	1	734	Tomatoes - Reg.	5
708	Carrots	5	735	Tomatoes - Roma Type	5
709	Cauliflower	1	736	Tomatoes - Cherry	12
710	Corn - Sweet (In husk any type)	5	737	Turnips	5
711	Cucumbers (slicers)	5	738	Largest Cabbage	1
712	Cucumbers (pickling)	5	739	Largest Tomato	1
713	Egg Plant	1	740	Largest Red Beet	1
714	Kale	3	741	Largest Squash	1
715	Kohlrabi	5	742	Freak Vegetable	1
716	Mushmelon	1	743	From Garden to Table Plate with five Vegetables Large. Size 1 small size 5 each	
717	Onions - Yellow	5	744	Tallest Sunflower Stalk should be entered with root system in tact, in 5 gal. bucket.	
718	Onions - White	5	745	Longest Diameter Head Heads must be entered with a stem at least 6" long	
719	Onions - (any other)	5	746	Head with Most Seeds Heads must be entered with a stem at least 6" long.	
720	Peas	10	747	Watermelon	1
721	Peppers (Hot)	5			
722	Peppers (green - Bell Type)	5			
723	Peppers (mild-any type)	5			
724	Potatoes - white	10			
725	Potatoes - red	10			
726	Pumpkin	1			
727	Rhubarb - Stalks	6			

VEGETABLE SHOW ENTRY FORM

Please bring entry form with exhibit on Wednesday, July 22 from 5pm to 7pm or on Thursday, July 23 from 8am to 10am to the Vegetable Exhibit Area. Enter Expo East through east door.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Please indicate section numbers below:

1.	6.	11.	16.
2.	7.	12.	17.
3.	8.	13.	18.
4.	9.	14.	19.
5.	10.	15.	20.

FLOWER SHOW

Superintendent Colleen Blasko – 219.508.5382

FLOWER SHOW DEPARTMENT RULES

1. **See General Rules on page 1.**
2. **Location** – The Flower Show area is located in the Expo East building of the Porter County Fairgrounds. Use the south door to enter your exhibits in the Flower Show and have them placed.
3. **Timing** – Not all exhibits are brought in on the same day. Consult the Handbook for the three days during the fair when new exhibits are submitted and placed. (Placement Day) This keeps the Flower Show exhibits fresh and provides room for many Classes.
4. **Limit** – One exhibit is allowed by an exhibitor for each Class/Subclass. Exhibitors may enter as many Classes as desired. Exhibitors from the same family or exhibitors using the same garden may participate in the same Class, but cannot submit exhibits from the same bush/tree/cultivar.
5. **Plants** – Exhibits from trees, shrubs and perennials must be grown by the exhibitor in your garden for at least one year and annuals for at least 6 weeks. Exhibits need not be grown from seed by the exhibitor.
6. **Tools** – Prior to the fair, a hard copy of the Handbook and Identification Tags (ID Tags) for exhibits may be picked up at the Fair Office 219.462.0321 or contact the Flower Show Superintendent. Knowing the rules in the Handbook and completing ID tags ahead of time is highly recommended. These tools will also be available on Placement Day and during the fair.
7. **ID Tags** – Each exhibit in the Flower Show must have an ID Tag attached which is the responsibility of the exhibitor to complete. The exhibitors full name is required, an address is not, however address labels may be used. The Section and Class are required. The botanic name (Genus/species) is recommended for each exhibit. ID Tags with complete botanical names will be given more points. Neither the Flower Show Superintendent nor staff will help complete your ID Tag. Use the attached strings to tie the ID Tag to the vase.
8. The staff will place the exhibit on a shelf in the Flower Show area according to the Section and Class on the ID Tag with the Tag facing out and the name hidden. Exhibitors are not allowed in the Flower Show area at this time.
9. Exhibits must be placed in a clear glass vase of water, not soil. Vases and

water are available on Placement Days at tables outside the south doors for your convenience. Exhibitors may use their own clear glass vase, but the Porter County Fair is not responsible for it. Exhibitors must have name and address on the bottom. If not, they will become the property of the Porter County Fair.

10. No foliage should be below the water line.
11. Clear plastic wrap may be used in the vase neck to secure the flower stem for posing, but it must not appear above the top of the vase.
12. Exhibits may not be treated in any manner with sprays on leaves other than water. Exhibits can be clipped and groomed.
13. No ribbons will be awarded unless the exhibit is worthy, even if it is the only exhibit in the class.
14. Trained judges view all the exhibits that day and award stickers are placed on the ID tags. Exhibits are displayed for 3-4 days at the fair.
15. Judges may not enter exhibits on days when they judge.
16. Judges' decisions are final. Direct questions to the Superintendent.

SPECIAL RULES FOR DESIGN EXHIBITS (SECTIONS A AND B)

1. Design must be created by the exhibitor.
2. Floral designs may be arranged in containers that are not clear glass and are provided by the exhibitor, as well as under cloths and any desired accessories, including wet floral foam. Name and address on the bottom of the container is required. Porter County Fair is not responsible for your items. See pick-up info in Handbook for each Placement Day.
3. Designs are permitted to include purchased fresh plant material.
4. Plant material may not be dyed or otherwise treated by application of any substance. It may be clipped, stripped, bent or otherwise manipulated. No artificial plant material is permitted.
5. Accessories are permitted. Religious symbols used must be displayed in a respectful manner and in accordance with local church policy. All national flags must be displayed according to proper flag etiquette.
6. Designs are displayed on white shelves, and an under cloth is required. Maximum size listed includes the under cloth.
7. Exhibitor must complete their ID tag. Botanic names are optional.
8. Exhibitors place their design with ID tag alongside in the location designated by the Superintendent.
9. Designs will be viewed by the judges from the front only.
10. Best of Section and Best of Show may or may not be awarded.

Exhibits are submitted between 7am and 9am, closing at 9am. Please allow enough time to complete your ID Tag for each exhibit. Pick up any personal items on Sunday 6pm-7pm or Monday 7-9am. Thereafter, items become property of Porter County Fair. Contact Superintendent, if needed.

See SPECIAL RULES FOR DESIGN EXHIBITS on page 6.

SECTION A – MINIATURE DESIGN

Class 1 Creative design

Must be sized 8”L x 8”W x 8”H or less.

Class 2 Creative design using herbs only.

Must be sized 8”L x 8”W x 8”H or less.

Class 3 Creative design using one Genus of flower.

Must be sized 8”L x 8”W x 8”H or less.

Class 4 Creative design in a mug.

Must be sized 8”L x 8”W x 8”H or less.

SECTION B – STANDARD DESIGN

Class 5 Creative design in a can. Leave the label on the can.

Must be sized 14”L x 14”W x 14”H or less.

Class 6 Creative design using flowers of one color.

Must be sized 14”L x 14”W x 14”H or less.

Class 7 Creative design using only foliage of different shades and textures.

Must be sized 14”L x 14”W x 14”H or less.

Class 8 Creative design using uncultivated plants.

Must be sized 14”L x 14”W x 14”H or less.

Class 9 Creative design with a fair theme.

Must be sized 14”L x 14”W x 14”H or less.

Class 10 Creative design using only hydrangeas and fresh plant material.

Must be sized 18”L x 18”W x 18”H or less.

SECTION C – RHIZOMES

Only one leaf is exhibited.

Class 11 Hosta (Plantain Lily).

A. Green, all shades, solid color.

B. Blue, all shades, solid color.

- C. Yellow, all shades, solid color.
- D. White margin, center green to blue color which is distinct from white.
- E. Yellow margin, center green to blue color which is distinct from yellow.
- F. Green or blue margin, Center color yellow, white, or chartreuse which is distinct from the margin color.
- G. Green or blue margin, Center color green or blue which is distinct from the margin color.
- H. Streaked or mottled.
- I. Bloom only, one stem.
- J. Mini Collection – Five different leaves less than 5” each in its own vase, each having its own ID tag with botanic names.
- K. Large Collection – Five different leaves more than 5” each in its own vase, each having its own ID tag with botanic names.

SECTION D – BULBS, TUBERS

One stem with bloom(s) unless otherwise stated.

Class 12 Allium.

Class 13 Caladium, exhibit the leaf, no bloom required.

Class 14 Canna.

Class 15 Crocosmia (Montbretia).

Class 16 Dahlia.

- A. Solid color
- B. Bi-color.
- C. Dinnerplate with bloom(s) 5” wide or more.

Class 17 Gladiolus (Sword Lily).

Class 18 Hemerocallis (Daylily).

- A. Yellow.
- B. Orange.
- C. Red.
- D. White or cream.
- E. Purple.
- F. Bi-color.
- G. Other color not named above.
- H. Bouquet of three stems of the same cultivar.
- I. Bouquet of five stems of five different cultivars. Botanic names not required.

Class 19 Liliaceae (Lily).

- A. Lilium ‘Stargazer’.
- B. Other variety of Oriental or Asiatic Lily

- C. Calla Lily.
- D. Elephant Ear.

Class 20 Any other worthy bulb, tuber, rhizome not named in Sections C&D.
 Class 21 Seed pod from any bulb, tuber, or rhizome on a stem.

SECTION E – GRASSES AND SEDGES

Include three stems, no blooms/plumes required.

Class 22 Poaceae (Ornamental Grasses)

- A. Small – Under 18” blade length on plant.
- B. Medium – 18” to 36” blade length on plant.
- C. Large – Over 36” blade length on plant.
- D. Any grass with a bloom/plume, three stems with three blooms/plumes.

Class 23 Sedge

- A. Cyperus
- B. Carex

SECTION F – ROSES (Rosa)

One stem with bloom(s) unless otherwise stated.

Class 24 Floribunda, Hybrid Tea, Grandiflora.

Class 25 Climbing Roses.

Class 26 Miniature Roses.

Class 27 Shrub Roses.

Class 28 Fragrant - Any rose, only the fragrance of the bloom is judged.

OTHER

Class 29 Catch All - Any fresh plant material stem that doesn't qualify for a class today. This Class is not eligible for Best of Section or Best of Show.

~~~~~ **MONDAY, JULY 27** ~~~~~

Exhibits are submitted between 7am and 9am, closing at 9am. Please allow enough time to complete your ID Tag for each exhibit. Pick up any personal items on Wednesday 6pm-7pm or Thursday 7-9am. Thereafter, items become property of Porter County Fair. Contact Superintendent, if needed.

**SECTION G – SHRUBS AND TREES**

One stem no longer than 18” with foliage attached to the stem. Bloom not required unless stated.

Class 30 Buddleia (Butterfly Bush) with bloom.

Class 31 Hibiscus with bloom.

Class 32 Hydrangea with bloom.

- A. Arborescens (Smooth like Annabelle, Incrediball, etc).
- B. Macrophylla (Bigleaf like Mophead, Lacecap, etc) Blue.
- C. Macrophylla (Bigleaf like Mophead, Lacecap, etc) Pink.
- D. Macrophylla (Bigleaf like Mophead, Lacecap, etc) Other color not named above.
- E. Paniculata (Cone shape like PeeGee, etc).
- F. Quercifolia (Oakleaf)
- G. Bouquet of three stems of three different varieties. Botanic names not required.

Class 33 Conifers, cone/seed/fruit is not required.

Class 34 Broadleaf Evergreens.

Class 35 Deciduous Shrub.

- A. With fruit.
- B. Without fruit.

Class 36 Deciduous Tree.

- A. With fruit.
- B. Without fruit.

Class 37 Native Tree.

Class 38 Native Shrub.

Class 39 Seed pod or cone from any tree or shrub on a stem.

## **SECTION H – HERBACEOUS PERENNIALS**

One stem with bloom(s) unless otherwise stated.

Class 40 Achillea (Yarrow).

Class 41 Alcea (Hollyhock).

Class 42 Asclepias (Milkweed).

Class 43 Campanula (Bellflower).

Class 44 Coreopsis (Tickseed).

Class 45 Dianthus (Pinks, Carnations, Sweet William).

Class 46 Echinacea (Coneflower).

- A. White.
- B. Orange.
- C. Red.
- D. Yellow
- E. Purple.
- F. Other color not named above.

Class 47 Pteridophyta (Fern).

- A. Painted.
- B. Other variety.

Class 48 Gaillardia (Blanket Flower).

Class 49 Heliopsis (Ox-eye, False Sunflower).

Class 50 Heuchera (Coral Bells) and Heucherella (Foamy Bells). Bloom and leaf required, but leaf is not required to be attached to the stem of the bloom.

- A. Green.
- B. Purple.
- C. Other color not named above.

Class 51 Kniphofia (Red Hot Poker).

Class 52 Leucanthemum (Daisy).

Class 53 Lobelia (Cardinal Flower).

Class 54 Nepeta (Catmint).

Class 55 Perovskia (Russian Sage).

Class 56 Phlox (Tall Garden Phlox).

- A. Pink.
- B. White.
- C. Purple.
- D. Other color not named above.

Class 57 Liatris (Blazing Star, Gayfeather).

Class 58 Platycodon (Balloon Flower).

Class 59 Rudbeckia (Black-eyed Susan).

Class 60 Salvia, a perennial variety.

Class 61 Sedum (Stonecrop).

- A. With bloom.
- B. Without bloom.

Class 62 Stokesia (Stoke's Aster).

Class 63 Veronica (Speedwell).

Class 64 Vines, not longer than 18" and can have a support in the water.

- A. Flowering Vine with at least one bloom.
- B. Non-Flowering Vine that does not produce blooms.
- C. Vine with a fruit attached, not a woody branch.

Class 65 Groundcover that is not Sedum.

- A. With bloom.
- B. Without bloom.

Class 66 Seed Pod from any herbaceous perennial on a stem.

Class 67 Any other worthy perennial not named in Section H.

Class 68 Bouquet of five stems of five different herbaceous perennials.  
Botanic names not required.

**OTHER**

Class 69 Catch All - Any fresh plant material stem that doesn't qualify for a class today. This Class is not eligible for Best of Section or Best of Show.

~~~~~ **THURSDAY, JULY 30** ~~~~~

Exhibits are submitted between 7am and 9am, closing at 9am. Please allow enough time to complete your ID Tag for each exhibit. Pick up any personal items on Saturday 8-9pm. This is the end of the fair. Thereafter, items become property of Porter County Fair. Contact Superintendent, if needed.

SECTION I – HERBS

Three separate stems, deflowered unless otherwise stated.

Class 70 Basil.

Class 71 Chives.

Class 72 Cilantro.

Class 73 Dill.

Class 74 Lavender.

- A. With bloom.
- B. Without bloom.

Class 75 Lemon Balm.

Class 76 Lemon Verbena.

Class 77 Parsley.

- A. Curly.
- B. Flat.

Class 78 Mint.

Class 79 Oregano.

Class 80 Rosemary.

Class 81 Thyme.

Class 82 Sage, culinary type.

Class 83 Bloom on any Herb, one stem with bloom, foliage will not be judged.

Class 84 Any other worthy Herb not named in Section I.

Class 85 Bouquet of five stems of five different herbs with or without flowers.
Botanic names not required.

SECTION J - ANNUALS

One stem with bloom(s) unless otherwise stated.

Class 86 Ageratum (Floss Flower).

Class 87 Any annual grass.

Class 88 Antirrhinum (Snapdragon).

Class 89 Begonia.

Class 90 Calibrachoa (Million Bells).

Class 91 Celosia (Cockscomb).

Class 92 Centaurea (Dusty Miller).

Class 93 Cleome (Spider Plant).

Class 94 Coleus.

A. With bloom.

B. Without bloom.

Class 95 Cosmos (Mexican Aster).

A. Solid color.

B. Bi-color.

C. Double.

Class 96 Euphorbia (Spurge).

Class 97 Impatiens.

A. Solid color.

B. Bi-color.

C. Double.

D. Hawkeri (New Guinea, sun impatiens).

Class 98 Helianthus (Sunflower).

A. Yellow petals.

B. Other color petals.

Class 99 Lantana.

Class 100 Marigold.

A. Solid color.

B. Bi-color

Class 101 Nicotiana (Flowering Tobacco).

Class 102 Pelargonium (Geranium).

Class 103 Petunia.

A. Solid color.

B. Bi-color.

C. Double.

D. Spray, multiple branches on one stem and three or more blooms.

Class 104 Salvia, an annual variety.

Class 105 Verbena.

Class 106 Vinca.

Class 107 Xerochrysum (Strawflower).

Class 108 Zinnia.

A. Solid color.

B. Bi-color.

C. Cactus zinnia.

Class 109 Any Annual Vine with a bloom and foliage.

Class 110 Seed Pod from any annual on a stem.

Class 111 Any other worthy annual not named in Section J.

Class 112 Bouquet of five stems of five different annuals. No botanic names.

OTHER

Class 113 Catch All - Any fresh plant material stem that doesn't qualify for a class today. This Class is not eligible for Best of Section or Best of Show.

JUDGING SCALE FOR DESIGN - SECTIONS A AND B

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| Conformance..... | 20 points |
| Design..... | 40 points |
| Artistic Concept..... | 20 points |
| Expression..... | 10 points |
| Distinction..... | 10 points |

JUDGING SCALE - SECTIONS C THROUGH J

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Cultural Perfection..... | 50 points |
| Condition and Grooming..... | 20 points |
| Distinction (color, size, substance)..... | 10 points |
| Complete ID Tag with botanic name..... | 20 points |

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