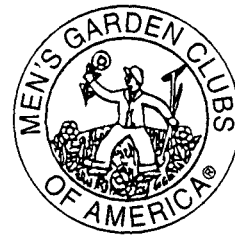


# ***YOUTH GARDENING COMMITTEE***

## ***HANDBOOK***



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# FOREWORD

Every affiliated Garden Club should have a Youth Gardening Program. The future of our Clubs is in the gardening hands and green thumbs of today's children. This **Chairman's Handbook** has been written to help the Youth Gardening Chairman organize and carry out a Youth Gardening Program.

The TGOA/MGCA Youth Gardening Committee wishes to thank all who have assisted with the **Handbook**. Special thanks go to Kermit Herr of the Bluffton-Pandora MGC. Kermit sent material that he had collected from many years of working with Youth Gardening. This material provided the base for this **Handbook**.

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(Revised 02/23/2010)

# YOUTH GARDENING COMMITTEE

## CHAIRMAN HANDBOOK

### INTRODUCTION

The Big Pumpkin and Giant Sunflower Program is just one small part of a larger Youth Gardening Program that The Gardeners of America, Inc. and Men's Garden Clubs, Inc. encourages local clubs to develop. The youth of today are the adults of tomorrow, so if we want a future where gardening is important, where flowers and vegetables are important to our well-being, where the environment is cared for, then we must interest our young people in the joy of gardening. This Handbook will assist the Youth Gardening Committee Chairmen of local affiliated Garden Club to set up and operate a Youth Gardening Program.

### PURPOSE

To encourage youth, ages 6 to 18, to become interested in gardening, to learn the joy and benefits of working with the soil, and to make them aware of the environment and its requirements for a better and cleaner America.

### OBJECTIVES

1. To develop a positive attitude about gardening in our young people.
2. To assist young people to develop new gardening skills.
3. To build confidence and good work habits through gardening.
4. To motivate an awareness of environmental problems, and establish programs involving youth in cleaning-up projects, beautification projects with lawns and flowers, and maintenance activities of public areas, communities, and homes.
5. To develop good citizenship and socially desirable behavior in schools, public places, and homes.

### ORGANIZATION OF YOUTH GARDENING PROGRAM

The local club should have a Youth Gardening Committee with a chairman. This Committee sets up the Youth Gardening Program, and works throughout the year on various activities in Youth Gardening. This Committee will start in February planning for the acquisition of seeds and plants, work into the start of the gardening season, on through the growing, showing, and harvest season, and end the season with an awards meeting or some other culminating program. Adjustments may have to be made where the gardening season lasts all year such as in the South and Southwest.

Decisions will have to be made. Does the Club want to start with the Big Pumpkin and Giant Sunflower Contest? Will there be an expansion to flower and vegetable seeds, or even plants such as tomato and pepper, or gladiolus, or dahlias, etc. Some of the important questions that the Youth Gardening Committee should consider include the following:

1. What type of gardening program is proposed? Home gardens? A beautification garden at a hospital, school, community building? Individual plots at a community garden?
2. What projects will be encouraged? Big Pumpkin and Giant Sunflower contest? Vegetables and flowers for exhibits and fairs?
3. What will be the membership requirements for Youth Gardeners?
4. How many youth can the local club work with comfortably?
5. What will the cost be? Where will funds come from?
6. What type of parental participation will be encouraged? Will there be a pairing of Youth Gardeners with local club members?
7. What is the available manpower from the local club?
8. What will be the club's liability in this program?

The local club Youth Gardening Committee should plan the Youth Gardening Program for the year. Involve organizations (i.e. Cooperative Extension Service, 4-H, Youth groups, interested governmental agencies, etc.) in the planning who have an interest in gardening, youth, area beautification, etc.

Many things need to be decided in addition to the previous questions. What seeds will be provided? How will parents be involved and how will their approval be obtained? If community gardens are developed, how will plowing, planting, fertilizing, and watering be taken care of? How many meetings will be held, and what will be discussed at each? Will there be displaying at fairs and special horticultural shows? What kind of culminating activity will take place? Will there be awards and certificates?

Consideration should be given to the age of the youth when obtaining seeds. A very young boy or girl will not want seeds that take a long time to germinate or take a lot of care. Older students are more willing to learn some of the finer points of gardening and can even act as mentors for the younger children.

The pairing of local club members with youth gardeners is very worthwhile. The Youth Gardener then has someone to ask for help and to tell of successes and failures.

## MEMBERSHIP

Youth Gardeners can include any children from 6 to 18 years old and may come from 4-H clubs, Boy and Girl Scouts, other youth groups, schools, inner city gardening groups, local club members' children, or any other group.

It is important to get permission from parents or guardians. The form should include the youth's name, address, phone, age, birth date, where the garden space is located, and the parent's names. Any allergies or handicaps should be included.

The club may wish to divide the Youth Gardeners into groups such as:

Tender Sprouts	6-8	Green Thumbs	9-11
Juniors	12-14	Seniors	15-18

Awards could be given within the classes and more experienced gardeners can help with the newcomers throughout the season.

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Hold planning meetings with youth. Discuss planning the garden, preparing the garden, soil preparation, fertilizing, and lime. Planting the garden. Care of the garden. Harvesting. Distribute seeds, bulbs, corms, and/or plants.
2. Pair local club members with Youth Gardeners. Members should visit the gardens at the beginning of the season, occasionally during the season, and near harvest. They should be available for questions.
3. If community gardens or beautification projects are involved, local club members should be responsible for overseeing the project. Liability should be considered in these instances.
4. Educational sessions with gardening films or slides, and question and answer sessions may be held during the gardening season. Include refreshments.
5. Early in the year a trip to a gardening center is worthwhile.
6. A summer picnic provided by the local club for the Youth Gardeners, their parents, and club members is a nice activity.
7. Exhibit at fairs and flower and vegetable exhibitions. (Appendix C includes pointers for showing at horticulture shows.)
8. Have a culminating activity for Big Pumpkin and Giant Sunflower awards and certificates for the Youth Gardeners.
9. Provide a report form for the Youth Gardeners to list their results on such things as: seed germination, plant growth, and amount of harvest.

## REPORT TO NATIONAL CHAIR

At the conclusion of the Youth Gardening season, send names, addresses, and pumpkin weights for the top three Big Pumpkin winners, and names, addresses, and Sunflower diameters for the top three Giant Sunflower winners to:

Cheri Kessen, 1205 Limberlost Trail, Rome City, IN 46784  
(518-355-5722). Email: [ckessen2001@yahoo.com](mailto:ckessen2001@yahoo.com)

Other information such as the number of Youth Gardeners, the groups involved, unusual activities, and items of interest to other clubs would also be appreciated.

## EXPENSES

Most clubs can handle the expenses of the Youth Gardening Program. Sometimes community-minded groups will help with funding. Many seedsmen will provide seeds free for the purpose. Dealers are often more than happy to provide the club with packets of seeds that have been left over at the end of the year. Use only seeds that have an acceptable second year germination.

If it is felt that a small fee must be charged participants, care should be taken that no youth is kept from gardening because of financial hardship.

## INVOLVING PARENTS

As mentioned earlier, parents or guardians must give permission for the Youth Gardener to participate in the program. Appendix A, "Notes to Parents/Guardians of Youth Gardeners," is set up so that it may be copied and given to parents and Youth Gardeners for their assistance.

## LIABILITY

If the local club is working with a community garden or public garden situation, the need for liability insurance should be considered. The insurance consultant for TGOA/MGCA states that "each local club should have liability coverage for premises owned, leased, or used, and any activities during the year such as monthly meetings, selling flowers, flower displays or exhibits, volunteer work at different community properties or projects, hosting conventions or meetings for the national association, and any other activities a local club could be involved in."

It would be worthwhile to check with the community officials concerning liability for community gardening activities.

## EXAMPLES OF EFFECTIVE YOUTH GARDENING PROGRAMS

Following are two programs that have been effective and will give ideas on "how to do it."



## WORKING WITH SCHOOLS by Bert Konzal, Phoenix, Arizona

Working with schools in a gardening program can be rewarding and gratifying for Garden Club members. In order to get a program started there are a few important steps you need to follow. The success of the program depends upon how well you attend to details before the program gets under way. Start with a small program. You can increase its size after the bugs have been worked out. Be sure you have teacher participation and administration support.

The following steps will help you get started:

1. The first thing is to select a school recommended by a club member or a school in a location accessible to club members. Other points to consider in the selection of a school for this type of program are: What are the needs of the school? Is it a low income area? Is it an area of one parent families? Is there a high rate of vandalism at the school?
2. The Youth Gardening Committee Chairman and the Club President should meet with the school principal and interested teachers to determine if there is sufficient interest in a Youth Garden Project at the school.
3. If there appears to be sufficient interest to start a garden project, tour the school grounds with the principal to see if there is a suitable location for a garden plot, six to eight hours of sunlight, water accessibility, and security for the garden site.
4. The principal needs to put in writing those things the school will be responsible for and will provide for the duration of the project. These should include: security of the garden area, water hose, shovels, rakes, liability insurance, teacher participation, appointing a program coordinator, supervision of the children while in the garden area, integration of the gardening project into the Science, Math, and English curriculum, the number of pupils in each class, the number of classes to be involved with the gardening program, and the number of teachers.
5. The Garden Club must also identify in writing those things the club will do such as: supply seed, supply organic materials, rototill the soil, provide some tools, provide on-site assistance with the garden by club members on a regular basis. The club's Executive Board should approve the project before any work is started. The Board should also establish a budget for the project.
6. When items 4 and 5 have been accomplished and both parties agree to the specifics of the written documents, the next step is to determine the direct needs of the pupils. Based on this assessment, a decision can be made as to the type of garden that can be planned; vegetable, flower, or a combination vegetable and flower. Close cooperation between the program coordinator and the Garden Club Chairman is essential.
7. If the garden has a focus on food gardening, it may be eligible for a grant from the National Gardening Grant Program. Grant applications may be obtained from National Gardening Grants, 180 Flynn Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401.

8. When the School Gardening Project is under way, the local media should be contacted so they are aware of what is going on in the project. Prepare written copy explaining the objectives and goals of the project along with details of the program. The local newspaper Gardening Editor should be invited out to see the pupils working in the garden. Local TV stations are interested in youth gardening especially if the gardens' focus is on food gardening. Present the TV stations with written copy and invite them out at their convenience.

## YOUTH GARDENING CURRICULUM OUTLINE

### A. Soil Preparation

1. Types of soil.
2. Organic material, compost, manure, mulch.
3. Soil amendments, gypsum, sulfur, fertilizers.

### B. Seed Selection

1. Types of vegetables, length of growth, maturity.
2. Types of flowers, length of growth, blooms.

### C. Seed Germination

1. Each seed a fertilized egg.
2. Germination factors: time, moisture, warmth.
3. Study of root, stem, and leaf structure.

### D. Plant Growth

1. Need for sun, moisture, and plant nutrients.
2. Photosynthesis.

### E. Thinning of Seedlings

1. Purpose of thinning.
2. Techniques.

### F. Cultivation, Weeding, and Mulching

1. Need to cultivate and weed.
2. Need to mulch and water conservation.

### G. Crop Maturity - Time to Harvest

1. Vegetables: uses, food, shows, nutritional value, and how to prepare.
2. Flowers: uses, beauty and shows, sharing with family, teachers and senior citizen homes.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Pupils should be encouraged to enter their vegetables and/or flowers in the State or County Fairs and the local club show.

The Garden Club should establish a Youth Garden Award Program with each pupil participating receiving an award of some type. Ribbons should be given to the pupils with the most outstanding vegetables or flowers.

Arbor Day should be worked into the project so the pupils study about trees and why they are so important to the environment. They should plant a tree on Arbor Day to culminate their study of trees.

The Gardeners of America, Inc., / Men's Garden Clubs of America, Inc. Giant Sunflower and Big Pumpkin Contest should be a part of the Youth Gardening Project at the school. Pupils should take the sunflower and pumpkin seed home in May, plant them in their gardens at home and bring the results back to school in September.

## DEVELOPING A "YOUTH GARDENING PROGRAM"

by Eddie Rhoades, Marietta, Georgia

As Vice-President of the Marietta Men's Garden Club in charge of programs, I had long lamented the fact that we had no program directed toward youth. Our by-laws called for our organization to provide community educational services and to have a "Youth Gardening" program.

I had earlier volunteered to provide a speaker at a local grammar school and our past president, Bill Kuhnen, had agreed to go but he didn't know what to speak on that might interest young children. Since the date for this speaking engagement was several months off, I assured Bill that I would come up with something suitable.

One of our members-at-large, Roy Wyatt, writes a weekly column for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. It was while reading this column that I came across an article on gardening videos. One video in particular caught my eye. It was a fifteen minute gardening video called "Get Ready, Get Set, Grow" produced by the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens and narrated by a child. I thought fifteen minutes would be just right for the young students' attention span. When I presented this information to our Board of Directors, an approval was quickly granted to purchase the video. This video was a good foundation for a program but alone somehow didn't seem like quite enough.

Later, while reading through an old out of print Men's Garden Club of America, Inc., publication called "A to Z Gardening", I came across an ad in the back of the book concerning comic books with a conservation theme. This would make a great give-away to go along with the video. We initially purchased five hundred comics than shortly ordered five hundred more. When the books arrived we rubber stamped our club's logo in a space on the back of each to help publicize our club and increase our visibility. At this point, I thought we had enough material for a complete program but there was more to come. In Readers Digest, I read an article that offered free seed packets to those with a qualifying educational gardening program. Lastly, the American Association of Nurserymen sent me information on ordering 250 balloons imprinted with "Discover the Pleasure of Plants."

Now the pieces all seemed to fit together nicely like a completed jigsaw puzzle. We would show our video, pass out free seeds, balloons, and comics, then close with a question and answer period.

There are almost two hundred Men's Garden Clubs across the nation and there is evidence that this "Youth Gardening" program will soon be adopted by most of them due to being inexpensive and easy to present.

In 1987, during the month of April alone Bill Kuhnen presented this program to over six hundred grammar school students. We already have bookings for a thousand students in 1988 and are still accepting bookings. We plan to set up a booth for this program at the North Georgia State Fair for added exposure. Bill Kuhnen deserves special recognition for working so hard on presenting this program; sometimes twice a day.

As you know, children today don't have the luxury of visiting Grandma and Grandpa on the farm to experience nature and gardening firsthand. Even though gardening is rated the number one outdoor activity, few children have an opportunity to enjoy the pleasures of gardening.

It is hard to judge the impact of a program like this on a child's future. We can hope that after seeing who we are and what we stand for maybe they will come to have a love of gardening and an appreciation for nature as we do. Maybe they will become our future Garden Club Members and carry on our traditions.

## YOUTH GARDENING AWARDS

As discussed in both of the preceding Youth Gardening Programs, an important part of Youth Gardening education is providing awards for those who are diligent and have good gardens and produce. The top three winners in the Big Pumpkin and Giant Sunflower Contests are given certificates from the National TGOA/MGCA Office. The local MGC should provide ribbons and certificates for local winners. Or the club may want to give gardening books, tools, etc. to winners.

Youth Gardening T-shirts are now available. Contact TGOA/MGCA for prices and sizes.

In addition to awards for winners, the local MGC should consider giving every Youth Gardening participant a certificate.

Members-at-large may also sponsor one or more youth gardeners, specifying awards for those who have successful gardens.

## FURTHER SOURCES OF MATERIALS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Get Ready, Get Set, Grow. This 15 minute VHS videotape is an excellent introduction to gardening. It is narrated by a youngster and explains what plants are, how they grow, and how to plant a vegetable garden. Two booklets, "A Kid's Guide to Good Gardening," and "Ideas for Parents and Teachers" are included. Available from Brooklyn Botanical Gardens, 1000 Washington Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11225. \$ 29.95 plus \$ 2.50 postage.

A Child's Garden. Doty Hildebrand, et.al. 1984. Available from Educational Materials, Chevron Chemical Company, Public Affairs Department, 575 Market St., San Francisco, CA 94105. \$ .50 each, 50 at \$ .45 each. A 54-page booklet that contains a lot of information. It was written for teachers but can be used by Youth Gardening groups. It included classroom experiments as well as plant growing information.

The Youth Gardening Book. Revised edition, Lynn Ocone, Eve Pranis, 1987. Available from National Gardening Association, 180 Flynn Ave., Burlington, VT 05401. \$ 12.95 plus \$ 2.00 postage. This book contains over 75 educational garden projects for children. An excellent book written for teachers, parents, and youth leaders. Actually goes through the planning that MGC Youth Gardening Committees must do.

Youth Gardening Grants. The National Gardening Association, "Gardening Grants", 180 Flynn Ave., Burlington, VT 05401. The NGA provides grants of seeds, supplies, and equipment to 100 youth gardening projects each year. Application deadline is usually in November for the following year. Contact NGA for information and application forms.

The National Gardening Association is very active in Youth Gardening. They have a

"Grow Lab" project that has been developed for elementary school classrooms. They also give awards of carts, composters, cultivators, chipper/shredders, etc. to 10 winners each year in their National Gardening Grant Project. For information about these activities and a variety of gardening booklets contact: The National Gardening Association, 180 Flynn Avenue, Burlington, Vermont 05401.

For **information on seeds**, send a stamped self-addresses envelope to:

America the Beautiful Fund  
219 Shoreham Building  
Washington, D.C. 20005

For **250 balloons** imprinted "Discover the Pleasure of Plants", write to:

American Association of Nurseymen  
1250 I Street, N.W., Suite 500  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
(Request item no. 2-41570)

And finally, don't forget the organizations both national and local that may be able to help.

The National Youth Gardening 4-H Council, 7100 Connecticut Ave., Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815.

Your County Cooperative Extension Service agent or the 4-H specialist.

Your County Agricultural Council (if you have one).

Local garden stores and plant nurseries.

Local hardware stores or any stores that sell garden supplies.

Any local businesses interested in programs for youth.

The TGOA/MGCA Youth Gardening Committee strongly recommends that every MGC appoint a Youth Gardening Chairman and start a Youth Gardening Program if you don't already have one. The future of TGOA/MGCA depends on the gardening interest of our young people.

"The Nature of Harvest is the Nature of Planting" was the motto in the store of Kermit Herr, who has spent 34 years with the Bluffton-Pandora MGC and Youth Gardening. The Committee thanks Mr. Herr for a large amount of the material in this manual, and we agree with him that "What you will harvest depends on how you care for your garden. And this applies to life, what you sow, think, and do is what you reap in life. Do your best."

# APPENDIX A

## NOTES TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF YOUTH GARDENERS

The Gardeners of America, Inc., / Men's Garden Club Youth Gardening Program is a planned and supervised program that will help meet the need for a worthwhile summer activity for your child. If you desire your child's participation in the gardening activity, it will be necessary for the Young Gardener to take care of the garden. Twice a week at a given time during the summer is usually enough. Camp activities and gardening are compatible if proper arrangements are made. Parents are asked not to work in the garden, but are welcome to give advice - at all times.

1. **Be interested** in the child's garden.
2. Go over garden plans and help the child develop one which will fit into your backyard or in the community garden, and will be appropriate to his age. Designate areas for the garden and help mark it off from the rest of the yard.
3. When supplies are received, check them over with the child and **be interested** to watch part of the planting, but do not do the planting for the child.
4. **Continue your interest**, but refrain from helping more than necessary during the remainder of the garden season.
5. **Praise** the products of the garden whether they be flowers or garden vegetables. Use some for the table, but save the best for the Horticulture Exhibits, which are the climax of the gardening program.
6. **Attend the meetings** at which your child receives recognition for the completed garden project.
7. **Keep interest in gardening by occasionally mentioning the fun of watching things grow!** In most states where the growing season extends to most of the year, it is possible to plan an early garden, and then another garden in September. Where the gardening season is a single season, interrupted by winter, gardening interest need not stop. Growing houseplants and even vegetables in hanging baskets or containers, indoors under lights or on a windowsill, can be exciting.

### HOME AND COMMUNITY GARDEN VISITS

Garden projects planted within the area should be visited by some of the advisors, to give advice, encouragement, and evaluate the results of the pupil's efforts.

Checking gardens is an important factor in the educational success of the program. Youth need **encouragement, reminders, and constructive criticism to succeed.** They need to have their

successes recognized. Home or community garden projects introduce an easy and natural contact with the Youth Gardeners.

## LABELING OF VARIETIES IS A NECESSITY

When the seeds, plants, and bulbs are distributed to the Youth Gardener, they are labeled as to variety. It is of utmost importance that these names be written on labels for garden use, and also written in the youth garden plan on paper, which is carefully filed for future use. If the label in the garden is lost or misplaced, the plan will specify the exact variety. Labeling helps in making exhibits - the public will learn about that variety. Labeling helps the grower and the public.

## HORTICULTURE SHOWS

The showing or displaying of vegetables and flowers produced by the Youth Gardener is a fitting culmination to the garden program. It gives the Youth Gardener the opportunity to experience the satisfaction that comes with success. It presents a situation for the development of leadership in organizing and managing an exhibit. It is rewarding, as ribbons and awards are given by accredited judges for exhibits and special prizes are provided to the best exhibits.

## GARDEN CARE REMINDERS

1. Cultivating, mulching, and weeding go hand in hand in making a successful garden.
2. For succession crops in your garden watch the planting dates on your seed envelopes. Thin the crops.
3. During dry weather soak your garden, don't just sprinkle.
4. Do not over water if plants are in containers or potted. Cultivate or loosen soil surface, cut back some stems, disbud when required, and keep dead flowers picked off, whenever possible.

## USING VEGETABLES

Vegetables should be harvested at the proper time to get the best flavor and most food value. Root crops such as beets, carrots, and radishes, if harvested too soon, will not have developed their full nutritional value and if allowed to get too old will be tough and of poor value. To get the best taste, vegetables should be used soon after harvesting. Tomatoes should be allowed to develop a full red color on the vine.

Much nutritional value of vegetables may be lost in handling and preparing them. Using the following instructions should help:

1. Do not crush or bruise vegetables. Keep cold until ready to prepare them.
2. Trim off leaves of crops such as beets, carrots, and kohlrabi when harvesting to prevent

shriveling. Peel only when necessary.

3. Vegetables, to be peeled or chopped raw, should be prepared just before using.
4. Cook all vegetables quickly in as little water as possible, and only until the vegetable is nearly tender. Steaming is best.
5. To save vitamins when cooking vegetables, do not add soda or too much salt or stir more than necessary.
6. Some vitamins and minerals dissolve in cooking water. Save and serve with vegetables, or use in soups or gravies.

## USING FLOWERS

Flowers are attractive in the garden, but they are also useful for cutting to use for indoor decoration. To get the most bloom for outdoor use, the plants should be pruned by pinching out the tops (tips) when the plants are 5" to 6" high.

Flowers such as marigolds and zinnias will have longer stems and larger blooms if they are **disbudded**. When the flower buds begin to develop, pinch out all side buds on the stem leaving one flower to develop. Disbudded stems will be easier to arrange and will produce better specimens for exhibiting at fairs and shows.

The following pointers will help lengthen the time flowers will last:

1. Use a sharp knife to cut flowers, as this tool is less likely to bruise or crush the stem. Early morning or late evening is the best time.
2. After flowers are brought in from the garden, cut the stem ends again, under water if possible, and on a definite slant. This will permit greater water absorption. Do this each day to prevent plugging of stem water tubes.
3. Place flowers in slightly warm water. Keep in a cool place several hours before arranging or for show, etc.
4. It is important that faded blooms be removed from the plants in the garden. If the plant is permitted to go to seed, flower production tends to stop.

# APPENDIX B

## POINTS FOR SHOWING AT HORTICULTURE SHOWS

VEGETABLES, FLOWERS, and FRUITS can be exhibited at fairs and horticulture shows. The Vegetable Sections are always very popular with spectators, especially at harvest time.

When vegetables and fruits are exhibited, they are shown in **their prime**, and **at the time they are best for eating**.

**Beans** - same variety, uniform in maturity, diameter and color good, the same length and curve of bean pod. Best quality and flavor is just before swelling of the seeds is noticeable. A small portion of the stem should be present.

**Beets** - leave 1/2" top, uniform in color and size, small tap root, no secondary roots, no blemishes. One variety and labeled.

**Broccoli** - full head, not less than 3" in diameter, head should be tight, regular outline of bud uniform in size with neither under- nor over-mature. No insect damage.

**Brussel Sprouts** - neatly trimmed from main stem, uniform, not less than 1" in diameter, color green, with no loose leaves.

**Cabbage** - show in class it is grown - whether pointed, round or flat, heads solid, stem cut square from tap root, course outer leaves removed, **but do not peel excessively to remove green color, or red** at the case may be, **unless it is Savoy type**. No insect damage.

**Cantaloupe/Muskmelon** - pick when ripe as indicated by a slightly sunken stem scar, and stem pulls easily from fruits. Should be free of irregularity, not flat, good size, color as to variety. Should be firm, with no soft spots and show no indication of wilting.

**Carrots** - 1/2" tops neatly removed. Should be uniform in size, shape, and color, same length, free from secondary roots, not bleached, free from green at shoulders, and should be brittle.

**Cauliflower** - head at least 4" in diameter - some late varieties can qualify with 4" diameter, leaves removed except to protect head. The head should be smooth, dense, uniform pure white or purple, stem cut square off tap root.

**Cucumbers** - sizes should be uniform for the variety, round, not much curve, end blunt, not pointed, and portions of stem showing. **Do not wax**, but clean with a soft brush to avoid reducing natural bloom. Bloom is its garden growing color. Do not remove spines. Be sure to enter in proper class whether slicers or pickles. Label as grown.

**Eggplant** - medium size, not immature, nor over-grown, no irregular shape, color deep purple or whatever color, glossy, not dull, no bronze or green-white streaks, blossom scar should be small and circular, green calyx with stem attached. Do not wash, but use a soft brush. It must be firm, not wilted.

**Endive** - minimum diameter is 10", fringed, and broad leaf - separate classes, outer leaves green, centers creamy white and prominent, root cut off square, regular arrangement of leaves, with no removal gape, must be fresh, tender, and crisp.

**Kale** - minimum spread of 12" or more diameter, uniform color, leave curled, and regularly spread, roots cut off square, no wilting or insect damage.

**Kohl Rabi** - roots trimmed below ball - square, color pale green or light purplish according to variety, same variety, smooth, flesh firm, crisp, and tender. The skin should be firm, not tough.

**Lettuce** - types are crisp heads, butterhead, Cos, and looseleaf. Head lettuce should be 6" in diameter, except Bibb should be 3" to 4". Heads should be tight but soft, intense color varies with variety, and should have bright appearance, roots trimmed off neatly, outer damaged leaves removed, check for soft-rots in the center. No signs of insects.

**Lima Beans** - same variety, well grown with at least 4 seeds showing in pod, uniform in size and shape, equal maturity, pod should be flexible, remain green, no tendency to yellowing, smooth with no vacant spaces, free from blemishes, a portion of stem present, **labeled**. Shown only in pod form, unless in dried form.

**Okra** - pods should be tender, they should be uniform in size and shape, and straight, not twisted, with stem of 1". Good color as to variety.

**Onion** - any group should be uniform in size, shape, and color, and same variety. Spanish should be at least 5" in diameter, others can be 2" and over, either globular or flat in shape, some are bottle shape, with small necks, roots trimmed carefully, no indication of splitting or doubling. You will be **penalized if shell is peeled too much exposing fleshy portion**. Bulbs should be clean, free from rot, sprouting and insect damage. Use same variety in class.

**Parsnip** - should be uniform in size and shape, 1 1/2" to 2 1/2" in diameter at crown, smooth, uniformly tapered. Avoid damage to tap roots which should be long, color light cream and small core, with no skin blemishes or abrasion.

**Peppers** - vary as to variety, color, and shape. Some are thin and long, or blocky, or oblong. They may be shown in green or colored states, but **not mixed**. Edible in any stage, and crisp. Should be labeled. No evidence of sun scald. Judges may taste, even hot ones, smooth and bright with no purple tint at any stage, with stem.

**Popcorn** - husks removed, except ornamental or strawberry corn. Color, shape, size should be uniform. **Labeled**. Ears vary as to variety. Ears well filled, no gaps, and free from insect damage. Strawberry husks should be attached, but peeled back, with stem.

**Potato** - numerous shapes, sizes, and colors. One variety per class. Only mature specimens, smooth, free from knobby irregularities, eyes shallow, and clean. Dig ten to fifteen days before exhibiting to allow time to cure. Wash carefully and dry quickly. No greening of skin, must be uniform, with no evidence of disease, no skin broken, and average size. **Label**.

**Pumpkin** - for perfection, there are many sizes and shapes. They should be uniform in shape, size, and color. The ribs should be deep, uniform, no flat spots, or with skin breaks or damage from any cause. A portion of the stem present. **Be sure to enter in the right class, if it is for HEAVIEST or for PERFECTION. READ SCHEDULE CAREFULLY.**

**Radish** - must be crisp, bright in color, free from long tap roots (allowed for All-Season and winter varieties). Fresh, unwilted, and free from damage. No skin breaks. The same variety with specimens uniform. Summer and winter varieties should have 1/2" tops. They should look crisp, good color, not broken tap root and same variety.

**Squash** - many number of varieties in summer and winter kinds. If for HEAVY be sure they are entered in proper class, or if for PERFECTION, watch which class. All, with few exceptions, are exhibited mature, proper sizes, and shape as to variety. They must be uniform, with no skin breaks. Summer squash varieties are **not mature**, as this is the way they are used most readily, although some mature are baked. Must be free from blemish or damage, with portion of stem present. Note: True pumpkins have ridged stems, while True squash have smooth stems. In any entry, stem must be present. **Labeled.**

**Sweet Corn** - judging varies in requirements. Some say unhusked, some say husked. **Read schedule and COMPLY.** If unhusked, judge will open and examine for tenderness, quality, and insect damage. Ears should be uniform, silk removed, and same variety. **Labeled.**

**Sweet Potato** - shape and color vary as to variety. Same variety and **labeled.** Uniform in size and shape, free from irregularities, blemishes, or any other damage, with skin unbroken. Sweet potatoes should be dug two weeks before exhibiting so as to cure, should be firm, not wilted. Should be clean. May be carefully washed and promptly dried.

**Tomato** - slicing tomatoes or large are in red, pink, yellow, and white colors. There are some blends, but enter as to variety. Shapes vary, must be uniform in color, size, and shape, fully ripe, but firm, free from blemishes, with no evidence of cracks, or rot. The calyx must be in place with short stem, no bulges, lobes, or irregularities. **Label and follow schedule. Read schedule carefully, especially requirements for miniature** which have almost same requirements as above.

**Turnips** - with 1/2" tops neatly cut off. Should be minimum size about 1 3/4" diameter, with 3" tap root, good color, bright, free from blemish, uniformity is important. Some are white and some purple skinned. **Label.** They should be crisp, free from disease.

**Watermelons** - should be typical as to variety, also in size, color, shape, and markings. Shape should be uniform, symmetrical without tapered ends or bottlenecks. A portion of stem present to avoid bleeding or prevent rot, no decay showing, no sun-scald, or insect damage, and not shown overripe. Immature specimens are hard, and greenish in appearance. Melons should not be washed but carefully cleaned with soft cloth. **Labeled as to variety.** If questionable, judges have right to tap melon.

#### POINTERS FOR FLOWERS - BOTH CUT AND POTTED

**Asters** - is an annual. Watch for development more rapidly from one side than the other, which is a fault. Stems should be strong to support the flower without sagging. Uniform in size, shape, free from

disease, or insect marks, and must have good color. If buds are evident, none should show color for the show, or it will be disqualified, as if a bud should show color, it means two or more blooms per class, when it calls for only one.

**Chrysanthemum** - to be shown disbudded, or as a spray or as a potted plant. Must be true to form, size, and color. Evidence of very recent disbudding is a fault. Foliage must be clean, and flower must be clear in color and with no sign of over-maturity.

**Dahlias** - to be top blooms (if frost does not arrive before show) sizes, colors, and shapes are to conform as to variety and schedule. Blooms must be symmetrical, no multiple centers, or oval centers. Center of bloom should be round, tight, with some bloom to come. Damaged or spent petals removed from the back is a fault, although some leeway will be allowed. Nodding and down facing blooms is a fault. Two sets of leaves attached to stem is sometimes required. **Read schedule as to requirement.** Foliage is necessary for all varieties.

**Gladiolus** - must be generally judged according to the North American Gladiolus Council. What to look for is size of flowers. The 100 size should have at least 15 buds, with 5 open, 4 in color, flower-head 16" to 24". The 200 size should have 18 to 22 buds, with 6 open, 4 in color, flower-head 22" to 26". The 300 size should have 22 to 26 buds, with 8 to 10 open, 5 in color, with flower-head of 30" minimum. **Stem length below flowers should be 35% to 45% of total length of the specimen.** It must have foliage and be unblemished, stem straight, can have a slight curve at top, all buds face the same way, and regularly spaced. Spike should taper gracefully, with good clean colors, with no variations between florets. Form and substance is good evidence of culture. Watch undersize of florets as to variety. **Label.** For both Gladiolus and Dahlias, study catalogs and quarterly magazines and attend and make exhibits at shows, a good way to learn.

**Marigolds** - very prominent good foliage, uniform blooms. Open centers are faults. Flowers should face up, with buds showing being a fault. When schedule calls for one bloom, and there are side-shoots, some showing color it will be disqualified and calls for disbud. No single centers or washed-out look of the flowers. Disbud early, as this gives the main bloom a better chance to grow larger. Stem or spray must have foliage. Length of stem is necessary, as it shows good culture.

**Zinnias** - apply the same for Marigolds, except Zinnias are more apt to **mildew**, a fungus disease. Watch size of flowers as to variety. There can be singles and doubles as to variety, in both large and small or dwarf. Petals should be regularly arranged, with overlap neatly arranged. Good depth as to size of bloom is important. Color should be clear, not washed out, or muddiness in some shades. Watch insects and blemished leaves or petals of flowers.

**Roses** - are shown according to the American Rose Society. Enter according to schedule. Weak stems or too short are faults. Double centers will disqualify. Singles should be shown wide open. Other bloom should be partly open, the stage depending upon the number of petals of the variety. Center showing in double bloom will not qualify for judging. Clear colors are important and streaked petals or bluing, or green petal blotches are faults. There should be at least two sets of leaves attached to the stem. Watch for fungus and disease on roses.

