



Suggested 4-H Garden Exhibits



What do you exhibit? Check in your county 4-H Handbook/Fair Book for the garden exhibit requirements suggested by your 4-H Council, because your exhibit requirement could be different than these listed.

NOTE: Each of the single-vegetable exhibits contains one type of vegetable and is judged as one class. (Example: All tomatoes together, all onions together, etc.)

A collection consists of a group of different vegetables judged as one exhibit. Example: A collection of three could have one plate of tomatoes, one plate of potatoes, and one plate of green beans; a collection of four would have four different vegetables; and a collection of five would have five different vegetables.

See Table 1, *Standards for Preparing 4-H Vegetable Garden Exhibits*, on page 4 or check your county 4-H Handbook/Fair Book for the number of vegetables required per plate. Also, read carefully the section of Suggestions for Preparing 4-H Vegetable Garden Exhibits. For herb exhibits, see Table 2, *Standards for Preparing 4-H Herb Exhibits* on page 9. Now plan your exhibit and do your best!

I. Produce Exhibit (All Levels)

Options:

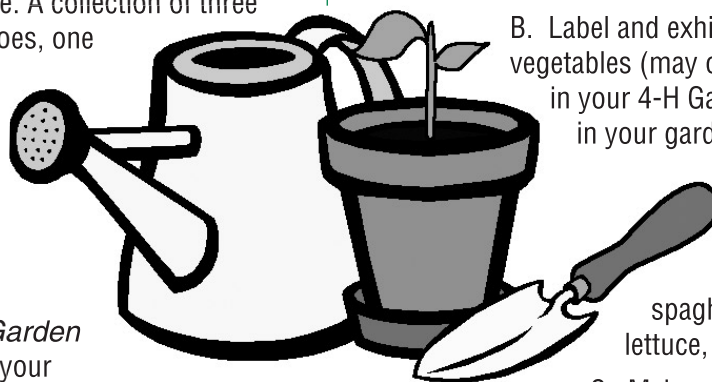
- Single plate of vegetable you grew (maximum of five different exhibits).
- Collection of three plates, four plates, or five plates of different vegetables you grew.
- A pot (8-inch maximum) of an herb you grew (maximum of three exhibits).
- Any combination of A, B, or C.

II. Special Activities (Judged Separately)

(Anyone may complete these, but members in Levels C and D of the garden project SHOULD exhibit one of the following activities in addition to the Produce Exhibit.)

Options:

- Exhibit four plates containing two cultivars of two different kinds of vegetables from your garden. For example: Display tomato *Rutgers* and tomato *Roma* on two plates and spinach *Melody* and *America* on two plates. Label the cultivars you exhibit.
- Label and exhibit three unusual vegetables (may or may not be discussed in your 4-H Garden Manual) you grew in your garden this year. If not listed in the vegetable display chart, check with your Extension office. Example: spaghetti squash, head lettuce, cowpea.
- Make a poster of five commonly found diseases in vegetable gardens, the damage caused by each, and the control options for each.
- Make a poster of five commonly found vegetable garden insects: beneficial (good guys) and/or injurious (bad guys), benefits or damage caused by each, and the related management practices (how to keep the beneficial, and how to control the injurious insects).
- Make a poster of a maximum of 10 pests (diseases, insects, weeds, and/or rodents) you found in your garden this year, damage caused, control measures used, and results.
- Make a poster explaining a computer garden program.



- G. Make a poster showing a picture story of what you did in your garden this year. Example: how you planned, planted, and maintained your garden.
- H. Make a poster showing your financial record.
- I. Make a poster of pictures showing your experiences in hydroponics.
- J. Make a poster explaining various career options working with vegetables/herbs.

“Just For Fun” or Additional County Options (varies by county)

- 1. Largest (by weight) pumpkin/squash
- 2. Largest (by weight) watermelon
- 3. Largest (by weight) tomato
- 4. Largest (by weight) potato
- 5. Largest (by weight) onion
- 6. Largest (by weight) head of cabbage
- 7. Largest (by diameter) sunflower
- 8. Unusual growth forms

Suggestions for Preparing 4-H Vegetable Garden Exhibits

All produce exhibited must be that which you have produced in your 4-H project. County fair handbooks and the State Fair Handbook at http://www.state.in.us/statefair/fair/entry/4h_ffa_prem_list.html for 4-H garden classes give helpful suggestions for exhibiting 4-H garden vegetables. Following are some additional suggestions.

- 1. For county fair 4-H garden exhibits, *read very carefully the rules in your own county 4-H handbook*. Entering too many or too few specimens per plate with respect to the numbers called for in your handbook will give the judge cause to lower your placing. Be sure to read the rules and follow them.
- 2. Some “dos” and “don’ts” in exhibiting vegetables (based on common errors noted in judging 4-H garden exhibits at county fairs) include:
 - a. DO exhibit exactly the required number of specimens per plate and number of plates per exhibit (see No. 1 above).
 - b. DO label exhibits as required.

- c. DO harvest onions two to three weeks before exhibiting. This makes it easier to display clean, attractive specimens. Unpeeled onions will be judged more favorably than onions that have been peeled.
- d. DO prevent damage to the skin of vegetables by harsh washing or brushing. If vegetables are dirty — particularly such vegetables as carrots, beets, onions, potatoes, and sweet potatoes — wash them very carefully in lukewarm water with a soft cloth or sponge without rubbing. For caked-on dirt, allow vegetables to soak until dirt can be wiped off. After washing, rinse in cold water and place on paper toweling to dry. For other vegetables, gently wipe off dirt with a soft, moist cloth and allow to dry.
- e. DO keep three to four wrapper leaves on cabbage. Judges will more likely give a lower score if wrapper leaves are removed than if leaves have a small amount of damage from insects.
- f. DO NOT exhibit large fruits of pickling cultivars of cucumbers as slicing cucumbers or exhibit very small fruits of slicing cultivars as pickling cucumbers.
- g. DO NOT cut windows in sweet corn, but determine maturity and freedom from worms by “feeling” the ends of sweet corn and by taking samples for home use the day prior to selecting sweet corn for exhibit.
- h. DO NOT apply mineral oil or wax to vegetables.
- i. DO NOT exhibit sunburned vegetables. Slight yellowing of the shoulders of red tomatoes and whitish streaks on green peppers often are due to slight sun-burning.

- 3. **Vegetables in a collection exhibit must be of different species (kinds).** Cherry tomatoes and large tomatoes are only one species (kind) of a vegetable. Slicing cucumbers and pickling cucumbers are also one species (kind) of vegetable, as are different cultivars (kinds) of peppers. Therefore, if you want to display cherry tomatoes, you must select another vegetable other than tomato for the other plates in your collection exhibit. Placing will be lower if two vegetables of the same species are included in the same collection exhibit.

Much confusion exists in exhibiting summer squash, pumpkins, and winter squash. Please pay close attention to what you grow and what species it is. Note that there are four species of *Cucurbita* vegetables included in Table 1, page 4: *Cucurbita pepo*, *Cucurbita maxima*, *Cucurbita moschata*, and *Cucurbita argyrosperma*. Collection exhibits can include members from the different species, but not from within a species. For example, if you included a pumpkin (*C. pepo*) in your collection, you could not also include an acorn squash (*C. pepo*); you could, however, combine a pumpkin and butternut squash (*C. moschata*).

4. The overall appearance of vegetables is very important. They must first be fresh, crisp (not wilted), free of any mechanical injuries such as cracks, cuts, or bruises, and free of any damage from insects and diseases. Of equal importance is the matter of UNIFORMITY. For example, the nearer 20 pods of beans are to same length and diameter, the better. Exhibits lacking uniformity can be seen at a glance, and the judge may automatically rule out giving a blue or even a red ribbon.
5. When exhibiting herb plants, be sure to grow the plants in the container to be displayed. Plants that have been dug from the garden or transplanted from another container immediately before exhibiting are likely to be in shock and may wilt. Choose a container that is an appropriate size for the plant (see Table 2, page 9).



Table 1. Standards for Preparing 4-H Vegetable Garden Exhibits

Kind of vegetable	Latin name of vegetable	Number of specimens per plate ¹	Size and/or weight specifications	Notes on appearances and maturity characteristics
Beans (snap, green or wax)	<i>Phaseolus vulgaris</i>	20 pods	Pods 1/4" to 1/3" in diameter, 4 1/2" to 8" long.	Uniform, brittle, firm, free of strings; seeds not distinct in pods.
Beans (navy, kidney shell-out, etc.)	<i>Phaseolus vulgaris</i>	1/2 pint shelled	Select tender, plump seeds of uniform size.	Uniform in color by cultivar.
Beans (lima-large or small)	<i>Phaseolus lunatus</i>	20 pods or 1/2 pint shelled	For shelled display select only green, tender, plump seeds of uniform size. Whitish seed indicates over-maturity.	For pod display select green, firm pods containing at least 3 seeds. Cultivars other than green judged accordingly.
Beets (round, flat and long types)	<i>Beta vulgaris</i>	5	3/4" to 2 1/4" in diameter.	Firm, not fibrous. Top to 1/2". Trim side roots but not tap root.
Broccoli	<i>Brassica oleracea</i> var. <i>italica</i>	1 head	Minimum head diameter 3".	All buds in head should be firm and tightly closed.
Cabbage (round, flat, and pointed)	<i>Brassica oleracea</i> var. <i>capitata</i>	1 head	Heads 2 to 5 lbs., round types; 1 to 4 lbs., pointed types; 5 to 12 lbs., flat types.	Heads should be solid, dense, crisp, and green or red in color. Leave 3-4 wrapper leaves for display. Must be free of insect damage.
Cabbage (Chinese type)	<i>Brassica rapa</i> var. <i>pekinensis</i>	1 head	Heads oblong or cylindrical shaped, 8" to 18" long.	Heads should be compact, dense, crisp, green or white in color, and free of insect damage.
Carrots (all cultivars)	<i>Daucus carota</i>	5	4" to 10" long (depends on cultivar); 1/2" to 2" diameter at crown.	Bright orange to reddish-orange; avoid greening on carrot shoulder. Top to 1/2". Remove side roots.
Cauliflower	<i>Brassica oleracea</i> var. <i>botrytis</i>	1 head	Minimum head diameter 5".	Curds tight, white, not discolored. Cut back leaves to 1" above top of head (trim it as it is in stores). Note: quality cauliflower is hard to grow in spring as it grows best in fall.

¹For county fairs, exhibit exactly the amount or number of specimens given in the county 4-H handbook.

Table 1 (Continued). Standards for Preparing 4-H Vegetable Garden Exhibits

Kind of vegetable	Latin name of vegetable	Number of specimens per plate ¹	Size and/or weight specifications	Notes on appearances and maturity characteristics
Celery	<i>Apium graveolens</i> var. <i>dulce</i>	1 bunch	Minimum of 12" total length.	Green color, free from disease and insect damage.
Corn (sweet – yellow, white, or bicolor)	<i>Zea mays</i>	5 ears	Minimum cob (part covered with kernels), length 6".	Kernels should be plump and milky; ears well filled. Do not trim silks or remove wrapper husks or make windows. Remove shank from the ear.
Cucumbers (slicing)	<i>Cucumis sativus</i>	5	Maximum diameter 2½"; minimum length 6".	Medium to dark green; no yellow showing. Free from injury, sunburn, or disease/insect damage.
Cucumbers (pickling, dill)	<i>Cucumis sativus</i>	5	7/8" to 1¼" diameter; Length 2¾" to 4".	Firm, crisp, medium green to dark green. Free from injury, sunburn, or disease/insect damage.
Eggplant	<i>Solanum melongena</i> L. var. <i>esculentum</i>	1	3½" to 5" diameter for round types; 2" to 4" in diameter, and 4" to 10" long for long types.	Must be uniformly colored, firm, and dense. Cut stem to ½" to 1".
Kohlrabi	<i>Brassica oleracea</i> var. <i>gongylodes</i>	5	1½" to 3" in diameter.	Crisp, not woody. Cut leaf stems back to ½" above enlarged stem, and remove root.
Muskmelon (cantaloupe)	<i>Cucumis melo</i> L.	1	2 to 8 lbs.	Full-slip means melon can be completely separated easily from stem. Well-netted, free of cracks.
Okra	<i>Hibiscus esculentus</i>	5 pods	Pods 2" to 6" long, 1" diameter.	Green, crisp, tender, not woody.
Onions (white, yellow, red)	<i>Allium cepa</i>	5	1½" to 4" in diameter.	Outer scales dry; bulb firm, free from sun-burn. Allow leaves to dry; top to ½" of stem.
Parsnips	<i>Pastinaca sativa</i>	5	Crown diameter 1½" to 2"; length 8" to 12".	Roots should be firm and crisp, not woody. Top to ½".

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Table 1 (Continued). Standards for Preparing 4-H Vegetable Garden Exhibits

Kind of vegetable	Latin name of vegetable	Number of specimens per plate ¹	Size and/or weight specifications	Notes on appearances and maturity characteristics
Peppers (bell type)	<i>Capsicum annuum L.</i>	5	3" to 4" diameter, 3½" to 5" length.	Green, firm with thick walls, smooth, not wrinkled. Clip stems to within ¼" of top.
Peppers (chili or Serrano types)	<i>Capsicum annuum L.</i>	5	Small types ½" to ¾" diameter; 1" to 2½" long.	Small hot peppers, thick walls, smooth. Mature color green or red.
Peppers (banana/ long wax/ Hungarian types)	<i>Capsicum annuum L.</i>	5	1" to 2" in diameter; 5" to 8" long.	Sweet, bright, waxy greenish-yellow in color. Hot to sweet. Firm fruits, straight to curved.
Peppers (Pimiento type)	<i>Capsicum annuum L.</i>	5	2" to 3" in diameter, 3" to 4½" long.	Cone or "top" shaped. Firm, smooth, red in color. Clip stems to within ¼" of top.
Peppers (Cayenne types)	<i>Capsicum annuum L.</i>	5	½" to 1" diameter; 3" to 7" long.	Long, slender fruits. Mature color is red.
Peppers (Jalapeno type)	<i>Capsicum annuum L.</i>	5	1" to 1½" wide; 2½" to 3½" long	Dark green color; firm; fruits straight to curved.
Peppers (Tabasco type)	<i>Capsicum frutescens</i>	5	1" to 1½" long; ¼" to ¾" wide	Small, pointed pepper. Red when mature.
Potatoes (any color)	<i>Solanum tuberosum</i>	5	Diameter 2¼" to 4". Weight 5 to 10 ozs.	Firm and well shaped, free from peeling skin and greening.
Pumpkin (table, canning, ornamental)	<i>Cucurbita pepo</i>	1	Medium to large type. Diameter 12" to 15"; weight 11 to 25 lbs.	Skin hard, smooth, and deep orange color when mature. Stem length should be 1" to 4".
Pumpkin (sugar pie types)	<i>Cucurbita pepo</i>	1	Small to medium type. Diameter 7" to 9"; weight 5 to 10 lbs.	Deep orange when mature. Stem length should be 1" to 4".
Pumpkin (other)	<i>Cucurbita pepo</i>	1	Any other.	Orange, yellow, white, or multi colored. Stem length should be 1" to 4".

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Table 1 (Continued). Standards for Preparing 4-H Vegetable Garden Exhibits

Kind of vegetable	Latin Name of vegetable	Number of specimens per plate ¹	Size and/or weight specifications	Notes on appearances and maturity characteristics
Radish	<i>Raphanus sativus</i>	5	Diameter 1" to 1½".	Red, firm, globe shaped, not fibrous. Top to ½". Trim side roots but not tap root.
Rutabaga	<i>Brassica rapa var. napobrassica</i>	1	Diameter 4" to 6".	Firm, smooth; side roots clipped but not taproot. Cream yellow or tan color.
Squash (banana or other large winter squash type)	<i>Cucurbita maxima</i>	1	Diameter 6" and up; 12 lbs. or more.	Medium thick, yellow-orange, orange, or pink flesh, hard rind.
Squash (hubbards — blue green or golden)	<i>Cucurbita maxima</i>	1	Diameter 8" to 10"; length 12" to 16"; 10 to 15 lbs.	Skin usually warty, hard, and tough when mature.
Squash (buttercups or turbans)	<i>Cucurbita maxima</i>	1	Diameter 6" to 8"; 2½ to 5 lbs.	Blossom end marked with prominent button. Skin hard when mature. Stem length 1" to 4".
Squash (butternut)	<i>Cucurbita moschata</i>	1	Length 9" to 12"; 3 to 4 lbs.	Dark buff-colored skin with hard shell when mature.
Squash (cushaws)	<i>Cucurbita argyrosperma</i>	1	12 to 15 lbs.; diameter 9" to 10" at blossom end; 20" long.	Striped white and green, hard and smooth skin. Stem length 1" to 4".
Squash (scallops/ 'Patty Pan')	<i>Cucurbita pepo</i>	1	Diameter 3" to 5".	Exhibit while skin is still very tender; color green, white or yellow.
Squash (straight- or crookneck — i.e. summer squash)	<i>Cucurbita pepo</i>	1	Diameter 1½" to 2½" Length 5 to 7".	Exhibit while skin is still very tender; green, white, or yellow
Squash (acorn)	<i>Cucurbita pepo</i>	1	Diameter 3½" to 6"; length 3½" to 7½"; 1 to 2 lbs.	Skin dark, glossy green, and sharply ridged when mature. Orange ground color also denotes maturity. Stem length 1" to 4".

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Table 1 (Continued). Standards for Preparing 4-H Vegetable Garden Exhibits

Kind of vegetable	Latin Name of vegetable	Number of specimens per plate ¹	Size and/or weight specifications	Notes on appearances and maturity characteristics
Squash (zucchini or cocozelle)	<i>Cucurbita pepo</i>	1	Zucchini types diameter 1½" to 2"; length 5" to 8". Cocozelle types diameter 2" to 2½"; length 7" to 9".	Exhibit while skin is still very tender (very young); delicate green, green, grey, black, to gold skin, and stripes of these colors.
Sweet Potato	<i>Ipomoea batatas</i>	5	1¾" to 3¼" diameter; 3" to 9" length; 6 to 18 ozs.	Roots should have deep orange flesh with smooth, thin, copper-colored skin.
Tomatoes (red for canning)	<i>Lycopersicon esculentum</i>	5	4 to 12 ozs.	Firm, smooth, free of cracks, 90% deep red color. Stems off.
Tomatoes (red for market)	<i>Lycopersicon esculentum</i>	5	4 to 12 ozs.	Firm, smooth, free of cracks, 60-90% of surface showing red color. Stems off.
Tomatoes (pink or purple)	<i>Lycopersicon esculentum</i>	5	6 to 12 ozs.	Firm, smooth, free of cracks, 60-90% surface showing mature color. Stems off.
Tomatoes (yellow or orange)	<i>Lycopersicon esculentum</i>	5	5 to 10 ozs.	Firm, smooth, free of cracks, 60-90% surface colored yellow or orange. Stems off.
Tomatoes (small, cherry, pear)	<i>Lycopersicon esculentum</i>	12	Any size, uniform.	Firm, smooth, free of cracks, 90% or fully colored red or yellow. Stems off.
Tomatoes (Roma or paste types)	<i>Lycopersicon esculentum</i>	5	2½ to 4 ozs.	Firm, smooth, free of cracks, at least 90% deep red color; not puffy. Stems off.
Turnips	<i>Brassica rapa var. rapifera</i>	5	Diameter 2" to 3".	Firm, smooth, side roots clipped but not tap root. Flesh white or yellow. Trim tops to ½".
Watermelon	<i>Citrullus lanatus</i>	1	5 to 30 lbs.	Select only if sample melons are found to be ripe. Cut stem to ½".

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Table 2. Standards for Preparing 4-H Herb Exhibits

Type of herb	Latin name of herb	Size and plant specifications	Special comments on appearances and maturity characteristics
Basil (all types)	<i>Ocimum basilicum</i>	6" to 9" tall for dwarf types; 12" to 28" tall, all others.	Not yet in bloom. Color and size should be characteristic of cultivar.
Catnip	<i>Napeta cataria</i>	Up to 3" tall.	White to pale pink flowers.
Chamomile (all types)	<i>Chamaemelum nobile</i>	Height: 2½" to 4" perennial types; 12" to 24" annual types.	Compact, dense plant. Flowers white or yellow.
Chives	<i>Allium schoenoprasum</i>	6" to 12".	Not in bloom. Note: Garlic Chives are a different species.
Coriander (Cilantro)	<i>Coriandcum sativum</i>	Up to 24" tall.	Bushy plant, deep green leaves. White flowers.
Dill	<i>Anethum graveolens</i>	18" to 36" tall.	Feathery green leaves. Because of spindly growth habit, may need support.
Lavender (all types)	<i>Lavandula sp.</i>	Height range: 18" to 36".	Bushy plants; should be blooming. Color and size should be characteristic of cultivar.
Mint (all types)	<i>Mentha sp.</i>	Height range: 6" to 30".	Upright plant. Color and size should be characteristic of cultivar. Flowers pink to purple in color.
Oregano	<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	16" to 18" tall.	Dark green leaves, can have tiny pink flowers.
Parsley (all types)	<i>Petroselinum crispum</i>	Height 12" to 24".	Leaves can be either flat or curled. Should not be flowering.
Rosemary	<i>Rosemarinus officinalis</i>	Height up to 36".	Bushy perennial shrub. Dark green leaves. Flowers white, pink, blue in spring.
Sage (all types)	<i>Salvia officinalis</i>	Height 18" to 24".	Bushy perennial. Size and color should be typical of cultivar.
Sweet Marjoram	<i>Origanum majorana</i>	Height 12" to 16".	Compact plant, tiny white flowers.
Thyme (all types)	<i>Thymus sp.</i>	Height 1" to 12".	Dwarf, compact plants. Creeping varieties can form dense mats. Many types have pink, purple, or white flowers.

Notes:

- Maximum container size for State Fair is 8-inch pot.
- Herbs should be in your care for a minimum of three months for state fair exhibits.
- Winning herbs at county fair can be replaced with same herb from your project collection if necessary, due to poor plant health following county fair display.

Online Resources

- Purdue University Department of Horticulture, <http://www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/conhort.html>
- Purdue University Department of Entomology, <http://www.entm.purdue.edu/entomology/ext/ext-publications.html>
- Purdue University Department of Argonomy, <http://www.agry.purdue.edu/ext/pubs.html>
- Indiana State Fair, <http://www.IN.gov/statefair/>

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