

ENTERING HORTICULTURE IN NGC FLOWER SHOWS

I. UNDERSTANDING NOMENCLATURE – The system of naming plants based on international rules agreed upon by botanists to provide a uniform system which permits only ONE valid scientific name. Most plants are identified by their BINOMIAL name. It consists of two terms denoting genus & species in that order, e.g. *Lillium longiflorum*. If the plant is a hybrid, the cultivar name is added, e.g. *Lillium longiflorum* ‘Casa Rosa’

- A.** The family is the largest botanical grouping of interest to gardeners.
1. Members of the same family share certain structural characteristics.
 2. There are over 200 plant families, some with hundreds of genera & thousands of species.
 3. Family names are always capitalized, italicized (or underlined if not typed) & they always end in aceae.
 4. We do not use the family name when identifying plants in NGC Flower Shows
- B.** The genus is the first name in the botanical name of a plant & is made of closely related species.
1. It is always capitalized & italicized (or underlined if not typed).
 2. Genus names are based in Latin, so have masculine (-us, -is, -er), feminine (-a, -ra) or neuter (-um, -e, -re) endings.
 3. Sometimes the genus & common name are the same & sometimes they are similar. e.g. *Rosa*/Rose
Begonia/Begonia
 4. In NGC FS this is the first name in our plant identification.
- C.** The species is the second name in the botanical name & is the specific or descriptive name.
1. It always begins with the lower case letter & is printed in italics (or underlined).
 2. It agrees with the gender of the genus, e.g. *Campanula lactiflora* (feminine), *Cercis canadensis* (masculine).
 3. The species name gives added descriptive information about the plant.
 - a. Color: *albus* – white, etc.
 - b. Size: *graniflorus* - large-flowered, etc.
 - c. Foliage: *latifolius* – broad-leaved, etc.
 - d. Growth habit: *repens* – creeping, etc.
 - e. Place of origin: *japonica* – Japan, etc.
 - f. Person’s name: *fortunei* – Robert Fortune, etc.
 4. In NGC FS this is the second name in our plant identification.
e.g. *Nicotiana alata*, *Plectranthus argentatus*, *Juniperus horizontalis*
- D.** A variety name added to the binomial is a further subdivision & describes a naturally occurring trait or variation.
1. The variety is written in lower case letters, italicized (or underlined) with or without the the abbreviation var. preceding it. *Pinus glauca* var. *albertiana* or *Pinus glauca albertiana*
- E.** A cultivar name describes a variation derived through horticultural means.
1. The cultivar is enclosed in single quotes with the first letter capitalized, the word not italicized; or with cv. placed before it & the quotes eliminated. *Tagetes patula* ‘Lemon Drop’ or
Tagete patula cv. Lemon drop

II. PREPARING CONTAINER GROWN PLANTS FOR THE FLOWER SHOW

- A. Grooming** – remove any damaged foliage, clean the foliage of evidence of spray, dust, insect damage. Clean soil surface of debris. Limited trimming of foliage is permitted. Container must be clean & in proportion with amount of plant material. However, naturally grown moss covered containers are acceptable. Flowering plant should have any spent blooms removed.
- B. Staging** – involves the proper presentation of the specimen.
1. Container must conform to schedule requirements & be in proportion to the plant material.
 2. Plant should be centered in the pot.

C. Transporting entries to the flower show.

1. Protect from mechanical damage as well as sunlight & hot air.
2. Place the plant in a box big enough & deep enough to hold the pot securely. Use newspaper to further protect the plant & keep from moving.

D. Filling out the horticulture entry card.

1. Correct & complete scientific botanical labeling is highly educational & is **required** for an exhibit to receive a Top Exhibitor Award.

III. JUDGING CONSIDERATIONS FOR CONTAINER GROWN PLANTS

A. Plant should be average or slightly above average for type or cultivar.

B. Insects, disease & mechanical damage are faults for which the exhibit must be penalized, but mechanical damage (water spots/tears) is faulted less than insect & disease.

C. Container itself is considered part of the plant's culture.

1. Clean, unbroken container. Free of salt build-up or other removable stains. Patina is allowed.
2. Of proper size for plant.
3. No distracting pattern or inappropriate color.
4. Double potting is accepted unless schedule prohibits. Inner container must not be visible.

D. Foliage plants are grown primarily for attractive, interesting leaves, not blooms.

1. May have insignificant flowers blooming at time of judging, but this characteristic does not place it in a flowering class or section. The presence of bloom is a merit however, indicating maturity, and proper culture.

2. Of special concern:

- a. Foliage:

- 1) Abundant according to type or cultivar.
- 2) Characteristic, even growth showing symmetry & typical growth pattern.
- 3) Fresh, attractive color with variegation clearly marked.
- 4) Form, size typical of type or cultivar.
- 5) Firm substance.
- 6) Treating with leaf enhancing substance is prohibited.

- b. Stem/s:

- 1) Proportionate to foliage.
- 2) Support leaves in typical manner.
- 3) Compact internodes, not elongated.

E. Flowering plants are grown for their bloom & should be flowering when exhibited.

1. Quantity of blooms should be typical of type or cultivar.

- a. Generally, quality blossoms, of average or above average size should be spread evenly over plant with one-fourth to one-half flowers open for full credit. Remainder in bud, with spent blooms removed.

2. Stem/s should be sturdy & strong enough to support flower/s.

3. Compactly spaced foliage, distributed to enhance bloom.

4. Flower/s true to cultivar or type.

IV. Scale of Points Judges Use to Judge Horticulture – Arboreal, container-grown plants & cut specimens

A. Plant Identification - 5pts – Legible. Plant identified with genus, species, cultivar as appropriate.

1. A specimen **cannot** receive a Top Exhibitor Award if not properly named.

B. Cultural Perfection - 60 pts

1. Peak of Perfection – Degree of maturity & appropriate for exhibiting.

2. Quantity – Number of specimens as defined by schedule. Number of blooms, proportional to size of specimen.

3. Color – Flowers & overall specimen.

4. Form – Balanced, appropriate to type.

5. Substance – Firmness of tissue.

6. Texture – Surface quality

7. Size – Ideal for type, average or slightly above.

8. Foliage/stem – Proportion, form, amount, color, condition if applicable.

C. Condition/Grooming/Staging - 25 pts

1. Healthy/Free of blemishes as evidenced by above qualities, no mechanical and/or insect damage.

2. Grooming – the exhibitor has full control over the preparation of the exhibit.

3. Staging, including container. Clean & appropriate.

D. Distinction - 10 pts – the degree of superiority in all qualities.

V. Collections – Must consist of a minimum of 5 different specimens exhibited in individual containers.

A. Must use space provided staging specimens to present “best appearance.”

B. Placement of specimens is important for ease of judging & identification and is the responsibility of the exhibitor.

C. For overall unity, individual specimens are exhibited in identical or compatible containers.

D. All specimens must be of equal & superior quality for exhibit to receive a ribbon, **as the lowest scoring specimen in the exhibit will determine the highest ribbon possible.**

E. Each cut specimen is judged individually.

1. Cultural perfection – Emphasis is on vigor, typical growth habit or symmetry, substance, size, color, state of maturity, & floriferousness where applicable.

2. Condition & grooming – Specimens free of blemishes, clean, well groomed in compatible pristene containers (if provide by exhibitor. When provided by committee it is not judged).

3. Distinction

a. An unusual collection is considered more distinctive than a common one.

b. No points are allotted for decorative effect, and containers that are provided by the show committee play no role in the Scale of Points; however, “staged to present best appearance” is a consideration. If containers are provided by the exhibitor, they should be clear, unmarked & as uniform as possile considering variations in specimen sizes for inappropriate containers can also affect the distinctive quality of an exhibit.

4. Uniformity – Exhibitor should exercise care in the selection of specimens to insure that they are as uniform as possible.

5. Labeling

a. Each specimen must be clearly labeled using correct binomial or genus & cultivar names so each is identified by location. May be done with a chart or individual cards.

b. All graphics must be neat & legible.

c. Collections should always be placed by the exhibitor to ensure proper labeling.

VI. Filling out the RIFGC Entry Card for the Feb. Show

Division: II (All hort is division II)

Section: H 400 – H 900 (consult schedule for the section the specimen is in)

Class: Class H 401a or b – H 903 (consult schedule for class #)

Entry Number: Do not fill out, this will be determined by committee

Plant Information

Genus: Not the family name ending in aceae. See I. B. above. Examples: *Juniperus*, *Pinus*, *Thuja*, *Buxus*, *Ilex*, *Saintpaulia* (African Violet), *Hippeastrum* (Amaryllis), *Rhododendrum*, *Pelargonium* (Geranium), etc. Consult a plant book or catalog to identify the plant before coming to show.

Species: See I. C. above. Examples: *horizontalis*, *pungens*, etc. Consult plant book or catalog.

Variety: See I. D. above, add if known, may not have one

Cultivar: See I. E. above, add if known, may not have one

Common Name: if known