

Garden and Orchard Displays



Image: Breckinridge County 4-H

The Vegetable and Orchard Display Contest is a perfect opportunity to showcase a wide variety of the items you have grown.

How to Create Your Project

You will need at least five different types of produce in the display. Fruits, vegetables, flowers, and herbs may be used. The more varieties of produce displayed the higher level of skill and competency demonstrated. The items displayed must be grown by the exhibitor.

Selecting a Container

Select an appropriate container for the display. It can be a box, crate, basket or something more creative. The entire display must be less than 24 inches x 36 inches. Ideally the container will be large enough to clearly display the items but not so large as to not appear full. You may use fabric, straw or other materials to line the container and add bulk. Items can be a single layer but it may be more attractive to use more than one of each item to give the display a full, abundant look. Make sure at least one of everything is clearly visible and labeled or otherwise identified in the display. It is important that the supporting items not be so prominent as to distract from the produce displayed.

Produce Selection

The produce selected should be an ideal size for best quality, spotlessly clean but not waxed or otherwise artificially shined. It is also important that produce be in perfect condition. Select only blemish free items. Judges will scrutinize for insect and disease problems. Items harvested even a few days prior to judging may wilt or shrivel, contributing to a lower score. Herbs, flowers and certain vegetables, like corn, will shrivel quickly. Freshness is important. Similarly, immature or overripe items should be avoided. Be aware that items are typically transported to the fair on a Monday and not judged until the following day. Even a few days can turn a beautiful display into a shriveled, wilted display. Try to coordinate your project assembly and drop off for produce to be as fresh as possible.



4-H is a community of young people who are learning **leadership** and **citizenship** and **life skills**.

Materials Needed

- At least five types of different produce.
- A suitable container, such as a box, crate, basket or something more creative. The container must be less than 24 inches x 36 inches.
- Labels or signage to identify produce by name.

State Fair

Project Information

- Division 6015: 4-H Horticulture and Plant Science
- Class 574: Garden and/or Orchard Displays

Contact your county Extension agent for information about exhibiting your display in your county's fair. Each county may exhibit one project in the Kentucky State Fair 4-H Vegetable and Orchard Display Contest.

Visit the 4-H Horticulture webpage at <https://4-h.ca.uky.edu/content/horticulture> for additional information.



Labeling

Labeling is an important part of the display. This not only clearly identifies the varieties for judges but can provide an insight into the grower's record keeping. The more specific the label information the better. As an example, "tomato 'Better Boy'" is preferred to "tomato red" or "tomato beefsteak". Labels including the specific variety information will score higher than generic terms. (In horticulture, the word "variety" refers to a plant that is slightly different from other plants of its kind. 'Better Boy' is a variety of tomato.) If this information is not recorded at planting time it may be hard to recall specific varieties at harvest. A sample record sheet is provided at the end of this fact sheet. This record sheet is very basic. For a more detailed record sheet to use with your project see the 4-H Vegetable Gardening Project Booklet (4BC-07PA). This booklet is available at your county Extension office and also online.

It can be challenging to decide the best way to identify produce varieties. If well done, particularly if images are used, a chart or sign can be used to itemize all the varieties. It is often more clear if items are labeled individually. Be careful how you choose to label items. Anything that punctures or damages the produce is considered unacceptable. Avoid using pins or toothpicks to attach labels. Various small adhesive labels can be used, but again, should be of such a size not to upstage the produce itself. If at a glance all you notice is labels, you may want to go with a smaller label. Labels should be large enough to read clearly but not so large as to obscure the items. If multiples of an item are used it is not necessary to label each one, particularly if they are grouped together in the display.

Visit the 4-H Horticulture webpage, <https://4-h.ca.uky.edu/content/horticulture> for the Kentucky State Fair guidelines and scoresheet for this project.

References:

Exhibiting and Judging Vegetables, UK Extension Publication 4BC-08PO
Gardening Helper's Guide, Purdue Extension Publication 4-H-1041-W
KY State Fair Catalog, Division 6015 4-H Horticulture and Plant Science Entries
KY State Fair Evaluation Sheet, Lot 6015, Class 574

Garden and Orchard Display Sheet prepared by Jamie Dockery, Horticulture Extension Agent for Fayette County, and Ashley Osborne, Extension Specialist for 4-H Youth Development, 2020.

4-H Horticulture and Plant Science Record Sheet

1. Draw your garden area. Label in each crop and crop variety you planted.

2. Fill in the table below. Add additional rows as needed.

Crop	Variety	Date Planted
Example: Tomato	Better Boy	May 10

3. Keep a log of each crop and variety and the date you harvest and amount harvested. Add additional columns and rows as needed.

Crop	Variety	Harvest Date	Amount Harvested	Harvest Date	Amount Harvested	Harvest Date	Amount Harvested	Harvest Date	Amount Harvested
Example: Tomato	Better boy	July 3	2 tomatoes (1.6 pounds)	July 8	4 tomatoes (3.2 pounds)				

