

Exhibition Hall Guidelines
Common Ground Country Fair

2021

In this exceptional year we have had to make some changes. For this year only, we will be housing the Exhibition Hall in a tent.

Because this is a new experience for us, and due to unknown variables, wind and weather, and uneven ground, we are going to limit entries. We will not be having an art show or a photography competition. We will not have crafts such as quilts and ceramics this year. Sadly we will not have the children's apple pie contest or the fermented foods or dairy exhibits. There will be no canned goods or dried foods this year, no houseplants and no herbal products.

But WE WILL BE ACCEPTING vegetables and fruits, herbs and flowers, and grains. Honey and eggs and maple syrup, yes! We will be exhibiting and judging them just like in past years. And please bring your unique, huge and overgrown veggies, odd compost specials and giant pumpkins!

Purpose

The Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA) sponsors the Common Ground Country Fair, which encourages agriculturally based rural communities. The Exhibition Hall at the Fair maintains one of the original intents of agricultural fairs: to improve local farming by bringing farmers together to compare the outcome of their farming practices. Traditionally, exhibition halls served as a post-harvest forum where farmers could teach and learn from each other about their successes and failures. MOFGA and the Common Ground Country Fair host an exhibition hall for this very purpose.

Schedule

Thursday, September 23, 2021. We will accept entries from 7 a.m. until 6 p.m.

Friday, September 24, 2021. Entries accepted from 7 a.m. until 10 a.m.

Fairgoers with entries for the Exhibition Hall may proceed directly to MOFGA's Membership Tent for entrance prior to gate opening.

Exhibition Hall tent open to fairgoers from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m. Judging begins at 11 a.m. and continues through the day.

Sunday, September 26, 2021. Exhibition hall tent open to fairgoers from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Exhibits should remain in place until 5pm for the benefit of all Fairgoers. Please remove exhibits by 7:30pm on Sunday.

Eligibility

Competition in the Exhibition Hall is open to all organic growers in Maine. Entrants need not be certified organic growers, but must follow these practices:

- Soil fertility is achieved and maintained by using green manures, compost, animal manures and rock powders, seaweed, etc... Chemical fertilizers are not permitted;
- Crop rotation, predators, traps; biological insecticides or mechanical barriers control insects. Synthetic pesticides and natural poisons with long-term effects are not permitted;
- Crop rotation, green manures, mulching, and cultivation control weeds.
- Synthetic herbicides are not permitted.

Due to licensing and liability issues, we cannot accept entries of controlled substances. These include entries of cannabis, hemp, alcohol and their derivatives.

General Rules for Submitting Entries

All articles are to be entered in the owner's name and registered at the Exhibition Hall tent with the volunteers who will be there to assist you.

Pre-registration is the way to go! If you are planning to exhibit more than ten articles, pre-registration materials can be obtained by mail by contacting Amy LeBlanc, by Email at amy@whitehillfarm.com or by Phone 778-2685. Please get in touch promptly, and by the 15th of September.

Unless otherwise noted in the preceding text, all entries must be in place in the Exhibition Hall tent before 10 a.m. Friday. If there is a problem meeting the deadline,

we may be able to accommodate you if you call us early!

Judging Criteria for Vegetables and Fruits, Flowers and Herbs

The criteria for judging at the Common Ground Country Fair include the suitability of the entry for its intended use - table or storage. Uniformity is an important criterion for carrots or beans, but less so for some peppers. For instance, a collection can demonstrate the color changes typical to the variety. Size can be an advantage, up to a point, but it may be difficult to judge in some of the rare heirlooms. Heirloom fruits and vegetables are especially valued, since they help maintain the genetic diversity so important to food crops and are labeled at time of entry with special green tags to identify them as heirlooms. Entries in the vegetable, fruit, grains and herbs are judged by how well they measure up to the ideal standard for their type. If any item is judged to be excellent, it is awarded a blue ribbon. Good entries are awarded red and yellow ribbons. More than one entry in a category can receive a blue, red or yellow ribbon, as items are not judged against each other. Gift Certificates are awarded to the 1st Prize (Blue Ribbon) and 2nd Prize (Red Ribbon), and 3rd Prize (Yellow Ribbon) entries in the following categories: vegetables; fruits; nuts; grains; flowers; fresh herbs; and houseplants. Blue, red, and yellow ribbon winners may redeem their gift certificates at the following Maine seed companies:

- Fedco Seeds, PO Box 520, Clinton, ME 04927. Phone: 207-426-9900
- Johnny's Selected Seeds, Foss Hill Road, Albion, ME 04910. Phone: 207-238-5300
- Pinetree Garden Seeds, PO Box 300, New Gloucester, ME 04260 Phone: 207-926-3400
- Allen, Sterling & Lothrop, 191 US Route 1, Falmouth, ME 04015. Phone: 207-781-4142

Occasionally the judges may deem an entry to be exemplary and far superior to any others of its type. In this case the judges may award a Judge's Award. The Judge's Award will be accompanied by a \$10.00 cash premium.

Special Exhibition Hall Categories

- Great Pumpkin (by weight). Sample of one, named variety. Open to all ages. This category is for entries from the Cucurbita pepo species; this species includes acorn squash, summer squash, and the small gourds, as well as pumpkins. The stems are hard, with five sharply angled sides. Connecticut Field is an example of a very large variety.
- Biggest Squash (by weight). Cucurbita maxima; besides the giant pumpkin-like

squash Atlantic Giant, this species includes Buttercup, Banana, Hubbard, and Turban squash. The stem is round and corky.

- Great Zucchini (by weight). Common Ground Country fair's answer to what to do with the one that got away!
- Biggest Cabbage (by weight). One head cut from the roots, but including the wrapper leaves.
- Big Beet (by weight). Tops should be neatly removed.
- Giant Cuke (by weight).
- The Whatever Contest (vegetable oddities).
- Compost Bin Specials! For the largest and/or most unusual product of the compost bin!

Vegetables and Fruits

Individual entries: Vegetables and fruits may be rinsed or brushed, but should not be scrubbed, peeled, waxed, or otherwise changed from their natural state. If grown from commercial seed, specify variety. If grown from saved heirloom seed, please indicate. Vegetables should be presented in appropriate condition for fresh use or storage. For example green beans, should be young and smooth; onions should be ripened off, with their skins intact for long storage; carrots and turnips, etc., should have about an inch of tops left on, as if ready for storage. Tomatoes should be ripe, blemish free or with naturally sealed cracks, and presented neatly with stems all on or stems all off. Cleaning of vegetables should be limited and appropriate for each entry. For example, carrots should be rinsed but not scrubbed; tomatoes and peppers should be wiped clean; potatoes should have loose soil brushed off. Please provide your own white paper plates, small plates, or bowls, depending on the size of your entry. Please be sure to bring the correct number of articles for each exhibit.

Vegetables

- Artichokes: one would be great! Go for it!
- Beans: six pods of snap or runner beans, or one cup of shelled or dry beans. Include name of variety.
- Beets: sample of five small or three large, named variety, trimmed for root cellar storage.
- Broccoli: one head, named variety, presented in water.
- Brussels Sprouts: bowl of five, named variety.
- Cabbage: one head cut from the roots, but including the wrapper leaves.

- Carrots: sample of five, named variety, tops trimmed.
- Cauliflower: one head, named variety.
- Celery: one complete head, named variety, presented in water.
- Celeriac: sample of one, named variety. Roots and leaves should be trimmed for root cellar storage.
- Fresh Corn: sample of three ears, named variety, husks intact and NOT pulled back. (judges will open husks at time of judging). Sweet corn, white; Sweet corn, yellow; sweet corn, bi-colored;
- Dried corn: sample of three ears, named variety, husks intact and pulled back. Popcorn, field, dent, and flint. Sample may be from previous years crop but must be clearly noted as such on the entry tag.
- Cucumbers: sample of three, not overripe, named variety.
- Eggplant: sample of three small or one large, named variety.
- Elephant Garlic: one complete head, clean wrappers intact.
- Garlic for storage, 3 bulbs, named variety. Garlic intended for storage should be presented with all its wrappers
and properly / minimally trimmed.
- Garlic for display or value-added presentation, 3 or more bulbs, named variety. Bulbs may have wrappers removed for aesthetic reasons.
- Gourds: sample of three small or one large, named variety.
- Ground Cherries: sample of ten, five with husks pulled back showing the berry, and five with husks intact.
- Greens: sample of one large head or a bouquet displayed (in water) in a vase or jar. (examples: Asian vegetables, Lettuces, Broccoli Raab, etc.)
- Jerusalem Artichokes: sample of three tubers, named variety.
- Kale: sample of ten complete leaves, named variety, displayed in water in a vase or jar.
- Kohlrabi: sample of three small or one large, named variety.
- Leeks: sample of three, named variety. Tops should be neatly trimmed.
- Mangels: sample of three small or one large, named variety.
- Onions: sample of five small or three large; yellow storage type; sweet Spanish type; red; white; pickling or cocktail; scallion; shallots; Egyptian; potato onion. Tops of onions for storage should be neatly trimmed and cured.
- Mushrooms, Shiitake: One small log demonstrating mushrooms in production.
- Parsnips: sample of three, named variety. Tops should be neatly trimmed.
- Peas: one plate or bowl sample: peas in a pod for shelling (six pods); edible

podded (six pods {includes Sugarsnaps}); dry (one cup shelled).

- Peppers: sample of five small or three large, named variety: green; sweet red; yellow; hot; other.
- Potatoes: sample of five small or three large, named variety.
- Pumpkin: sample of one named variety; field; pie; other. Also see Special Exhibition Hall Categories 'Great Pumpkin'.
- Radishes: sample of five small or three large, tops trimmed.
- Rhubarb: sample of five stalks, cleaned and neatly trimmed.
- Rutabaga: sample of one, named variety. Tops should be neatly trimmed.
- Squash: Summer, sample of three, named variety (includes edible gourds).
- Squash: Winter, sample of one, named variety.
- Swiss Chard: sample of ten complete leaves, named variety
- Tomatillos: sample of five, named variety with husks intact and NOT pulled back (judges will open husks at time of judging).
- Tomatoes: ripe only; sample of five small, three large, or a complete cluster, named variety. Stems should either be all on or all off for a neat presentation.
- Turnip: sample of one, named variety. Tops should be neatly trimmed.
- Any other vegetable not listed here, sample of five small or three large, to receive the same premium judged by type and variety.

Fruits: Specify if heirloom variety. All fruits should be named varieties. Sample of five unless otherwise stated.

- Apples: crabapples; green, red, or yellow apples.
- Apricots.
- Cranberries: one bowl sample (about 1 pint).
- Grapes: one bunch sample.
- Kiwi.
- Melon: sample of one.
- Peaches.
- Pears.
- Plums.
- Raspberries: 1/2 pint basket.
- Strawberries: one pint basket; alpine or standard.
- Watermelon: sample of one.
- Any other fruit to receive the same premium by variety or type.
- *Nuts:* Must be cultivated by exhibitor, not wild-gathered. 1-quart sample.

- Butternuts.
- Chestnuts.
- Hazelnuts.
- Walnuts.
- Any other type to receive the same premiums.

Grains: One small sheaf, consisting of 10-25 stems per sample (considering size) unless otherwise specified.

- Amaranth (sample of three small or one large).
- Buckwheat.
- Millet.
- Oats.
- Rye.
- Sunflower seed heads (sample of three small or one large)

Eggs: All eggs must be washed and cleaned. Eggs will be candled. Indicate variety of hen, duck, turkey, etc, if possible!

- Hen's eggs, white, one dozen.
- Hen's eggs, brown, one dozen.
- Hen's eggs, other colors, one dozen.
- Duck's eggs, one dozen.
- Other eggs, one dozen.

Honey Products

- Extracted honey; 1 pint or larger jar.
- Comb Honey.
- Creamed Honey; 1 pint or larger container.

Maple Products

Maple Syrup, 1 pint or larger jar.

Maple Candy

Maple Cream, 1 pint or larger container.

Flowers, Fresh Herbs

Flowers

- Single specimen with foliage, any flower by variety.

- Mixed bouquet, annuals.
- Mixed bouquet, perennials.
- Wildflowers and grasses. Note: Do not use any endangered or protected species. Such items will not be displayed or judged.

Fresh Herbs

- Fresh cut herbs in bunches: six or more varieties.
- Herb Plants, live, potted.

Herb wreaths.