

Horticulture Competition Handbook

Adult

IMPORTANT DATES

Online or Paper Entry Form deadline	Friday, January 10, 2025
Deliver items to the Florida Center — located at the Florida State Fair. (see page 7)	Friday, January 31, 2025 9:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Saturday, February 1, 2025 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Items exhibited	February 6th – 17th, 2025
Entry pickup	Tuesday, February 18, 2025 11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Saturday, February 22, 2025 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

For more information, contact
The Creative Living Department @



Phone: 813-734-2810

Email: CreativeLiving@floridastatefair.com



Benefits of Competing?

The Florida State Fair is proud to showcase the bounty of talented people from around the state. Not only do we provide you the opportunity to win ribbons and prize money... it's also a great way to share your talent with a larger community. In appreciation... all exhibitors receive a FREE ticket to attend the fair.

Competition Overview

Entry Fee: Adult Division \$3 per entry

Entry Fees are non-refundable

All information regarding Creative Living Competitive Exhibits can be found at www.floridastatefair.com >> PARTICIPANTS (top of page) >> CREATIVE LIVING (drop down)

How to enter online – page 7

General Rules – page 8

The paper entry form is available on the last page.

Exhibitors are encouraged to read this handbook in its entirety.

To enter as a group or organization contact Creative Living office at 813-627-4309.

For Youth Competitions see the Youth Horticulture Competition Handbook.

Eligibility

- The Horticulture Adult Divisions are open to all Florida residents ages 18 and up.
- There are three (3) divisions in the Horticulture Competition for Adults.

1. Individual Plant Division – page 3

- ✓ Bromeliads
- ✓ Flowering Plants
- ✓ Cacti & Succulents
- ✓ Foliage Plants
- ✓ Ferns
- ✓ Palm & Cycads
- ✓ Orchids
- ✓ Bonsai

2. Containers & Collections Division – page 3

3. Special Competitions Division – page 4 & 5

Entry Rules

1. All entries must be from their own private collection and must have been owned and grown for at least **3 months** prior to the Show.

NUMBER OF ENTRIES

Individual Plants Division 50.101

2. No more than **ten (10) Individual Plants** per person will be accepted for judging.
3. Exhibitors can enter a variety of different species in one genus. **No duplication of species allowed.**

Container & Collections Division 50.102

4. No more than **three (3) Containers & Collections** per person may be submitted for judging, however only one entry per class.

Special Competitions Division 50.103

5. Exhibitors can enter all **five (5) Special Competitions**, however only one entry per class.

SIZE & WEIGHT OF ENTRIES

6. The maximum plant size cannot be any larger than 48 inches in diameter and must weigh less than 40 pounds (Plant and container weight total).

PREPARATION OF ENTRIES

7. Exhibitors can enter a variety of different species in one genus. No duplication of species allowed.
8. Individual Plants should be entered in the correct Division and Class on the entry form. Assistance will be available for plant identification when delivering the plants to the Fair.

If you would like to know the botanical name of your plant, the **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service has a helpful plant database:**
<http://plants.usda.gov/java/>

9. All plants must be of exhibition quality. The Fair reserves the right to reject any plant that is substandard, either in quality or maturity.
10. Plants and flowers must be cleaned, trimmed, and free from insects or disease; they must be submitted in proper clean containers (Free of mold, moss, leaves, and acorns).
11. **No double pots, stands or saucers may be used.** Clean clay pots & nursery pots are acceptable for display. Absolutely no cans will be accepted. Hanging plants must be hanging from a secure device.
12. **Water plants well before being brought to the Fairgrounds.** Plants will be watered regularly during the Fair. Special watering instructions for individual plants must be provided when plants are submitted.

13. The Fair reserves the right to reject additional entered items when all available exhibit display space is filled.
14. Every precaution will be taken to protect your plants; however, the Florida State Fair Authority, its officers and agents are not responsible for any accident, loss or damage.
15. Each adult exhibitor will receive one (1) daily admission ticket to the Fair.
16. All entries will be displayed at the Fair whether they receive an award or not.

Judging & Awards

The Fair ensures that the judges we employ are knowledgeable in the division in which they are judging and will be impartial. Judges reserve the right to reassign entries to a more appropriate division or class. Judging will be done using a scorecard to assist in keeping decisions as objective as possible. **The decision of the judge(s) is final.**

If, at the Judge's discretion, an entry does not merit a placing, the Judge shall give no award under any circumstance. This rule applies whether there is one or more exhibits in the Class.

Awards Information

First Place – State Fair Ribbon **\$12**

Second Place – State Fair Ribbon **\$7**

Third Place – State Fair Ribbon **\$4**

Individual Plant Best of Class – State Fair Ribbon **\$20**

Best of Class awards will be chosen from the First-Place winners in each class within the Individual plant division. (Adult) There will be 8 awards.

Containers/ Collections & Special Competitions Division (Adult)

Best of Division – State Fair Ribbon **\$20**

Best of Division Awards will be chosen from the first-place winners in each of these Divisions.

Best of Show – State Fair Ribbon **\$50**

Best of Show awards will be chosen from the (8) Best of Class winners & (2) Best of Division winners.

Honorable Mention Ribbons may be awarded, at the discretion of the judge(s).

Divisions & Classes

Individual Plants – Adult Division 50.101

Class Description (Plant Family)

- 1 Bromeliad
- 2 Flowering Plants
- 3 Cacti & Succulents
- 4 Foliage Plants
- 5 Ferns
- 6 Palms & Cycads
- 7 Orchids
- 8 Bonsai
- 9 Species not listed

Individual Plant Guidelines

- **Individual plants should be entered in the correct plant family on the entry form.** You will need to know the genus & species of the plants you bring to exhibit. Assistance will be available for plant identification of the genus and species when you deliver your plants to the Fair if you are unsure. For a more detailed list of types of individual plant genera, see page 6. In addition, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service has a helpful plant database: <http://plants.usda.gov/java/>
- No more than **ten (10) Individual Plants** per person will be accepted for judging.
- Exhibitors can enter a variety of different species in one genus. **No duplication of species allowed.**

Judging Criteria for individual plants

Form – 25%

Color – 25%

Size – 25%

Condition – 25%

Containers & Collections – Adult

Division 50.102

Class Description

- 1 Dish Garden
- 2 Terrarium
- 3 Plant Collection (any kind of plants)
- 4 Flowering Plant Collection
- 5 Hanging Containers (any kind of plants)
- 6 Ornamental Planter
- 7 Florida Native's Collection

Containers & Collections Guidelines

- No more than **three (3) Containers & Collections per person** may be submitted for judging.
- Only one (1) entry is allowed per class.
- Entered item(s) may not be more than two (2) feet in any direction.
- **Dish gardens** must be in attractive containers only. No aluminum tins.
- **Terrariums** must have lids.
- **Ornamental Planters** are plants in an attractive container or weathered wood
- All plants must be growing and well-established.
- Do not use colored sand or gravel.
- Feature the plants, not accessories.
- **Collections** must be six different species, in one container.

Judging Criteria for Containers & Collection

Judging will be for overall beauty and interest.



The 2024 Horticulture Best of Show winner was Joyce Braden.

Divisions & Classes

Special Competitions Division 50.103

Class Description

- 1 Wood Pallet Planter (vertical)
- 2 Fairy Garden
- 3 Succulents in Alternative Planters
- 4 Cracked Pot Garden
- 5 Largest Green Cabbage

Special Competitions Guidelines

- Exhibitors can enter all **five (5) Special Competitions**.
- Only one (1) entry is allowed per class.
- Must have at least six (6) different kinds of plants (excluding Succulents in Alternative Planters)
- All plants must be living (No artificial plants).
- Entered item(s) may not be more than four (4) feet in any direction.
- Entered item(s) must weigh less than 40 pounds (Plant and container weight total).

Wood Pallet Planters Guidelines

- ✓ Must be able to be displayed vertically and stand freely.
- ✓ Pallets can contain any variety of plants

Wood Pallet Planters Resources [click here](#)

Images of Wood Pallet Planters [click here](#)

Fairy Garden Guidelines

- ✓ Must have a nice balance of accessories and plants. Fairy Garden components (plants & accessories) can be obtained from any source.
- ✓ Must have at least six (6) plants of any kind
- ✓ Can use colored sand and gravel

Fairy Garden Resources [click here](#)

Images of Fairy Gardens [click here](#)

Succulents in Alternative Planters Guidelines

- ✓ Succulents must be displayed in a non-traditional planter or container.
- ✓ Can use any amount of plants of any kind.

Succulents in Alternative Planters Resources

Images of Succulent Planters [click here](#)

Cracked Pot Garden Guidelines

- ✓ Can use any kind of plant
- ✓ Must be made from at least 4 broken pots

Cracked Pot Gardens Resources [click here](#)

Images of Cracked Pot Gardens [click here](#)

Largest Green Cabbage Guidelines

- ✓ Entries will be judged by weight

Florida Gardening Resources [click here](#)

Cabbage Growing Resources [click here](#)

Judging Criteria for Special Competitions

Judging will be for overall beauty and interest.

2024 Horticulture (Best of Class winners)

Bromeliads	Angie Irwin
Flowering Plants	Ronyee Collins
Cacti & Succulents	Joyce Braden
Foliage Plants	Ronyee Collins
Ferns	Cathy Moore
Palms & Cycads	None Awarded
Orchids	Ludo Van Den Bogaert

2024 Horticulture (Best of Division winner)

Containers & Collections	Cathy Moore
Special Competitions	Vicky York



Kim Wilson has supervised the Horticulture Competition & taken care of the plants during the fair for over 33 years. Without her dedication and care these beautiful plants would not have been shared with the public.

Special Competitions Examples



Wood Pallet Planters



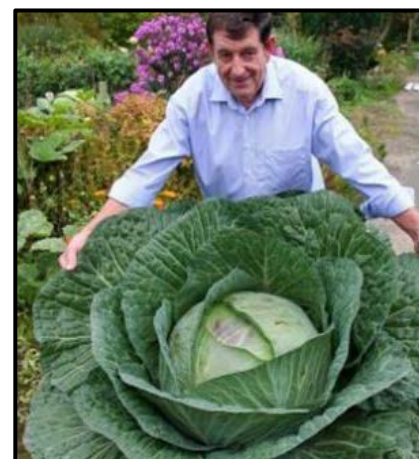
Succulents in Alternative Planters



Fairy Gardens



Cracked Pot Gardens



Largest Green Cabbage

Types of Individual Plants Division 50.101

No more than **ten (10) Individual Plants** per person will be accepted for judging.

Bromeliads Class 1

Types of Bromeliads

- Aechmea
- Guzmania
- Billbergia
- Cryptanthus
- Dyckia
- Neoregelia
- Tillandsia
- Vriesea
- Other Genera

Flowering Plants Class 2

Types of Flowering Plants

- Annual
- African Violet
- Anthurium
- Azalea
- Beaucarnea
- Camelia
- Episcia
- Geranium
- Gardenia
- Gloxinia
- Heliconia
- Hibiscus
- Iris
- Ixora
- Lily
- Poinsettia
- Rose
- Other Genera

Cacti & Succulents Class 3

Types of Cacti & Succulents

- Aeonium
- Agave
- Aloe
- Ariocarpus
- Astrophytum
- Cephalocereus
- Cereus
- Ceropogia
- Crassula
- Cryptocereus
- Echeveria
- Echinocactus

- Epiphyllum
- Euphorbia
- Ferocactus
- Gasteria
- Gymnocalycium
- Haworthia
- Hoya
- Kalanchoe
- Mammillaria
- Notocactus
- Opuntia.
- Rhipsalis
- Sedum
- Stapelia
- Other Genera

Foliage Plants Class 4

Types of Foliage Plants

- Acanthus
- Aglaonema
- Alocasia
- Anthurium
- Aphelandra
- Aralia
- Araucaria
- Asparagus
- Aspidistra
- Begonia
- Calathea
- Chlorophytum
- Cissus
- Codiaeum
- Cordyline
- Dieffenbachia
- Dracaena
- Fatsia
- Ficus
- Hedera
- Herbs
- Ilex
- Iresine
- Maranta
- Monstera
- Philodendron
- Plectranthus
- Pothos
- Sansevieria
- Scindapsus
- Spathiphyllum

- Syngonium
- Tradescantia
- Other Genera

Ferns Class 5

Types of Ferns

- Asplenium
- Cytomium
- Davillia
- Nephrolepis
- Platycerium
- Polypodium
- Other Genera

Palms & Cycads Class 6

Types of Palms & Cycads

- Caryota
- Chamaedorea
- Cycas
- Phoenix
- Rhaps
- Other Genera

Orchids Class 7

Types of Orchids

- Brassavola and Hybrids
- Cattleya
- Cymbidium
- Cypripedium-Paphiopedilum
- Dendrobium
- Epidendrum and Hybrids
- Oncidium and Hybrids
- Phaius
- Phalaenopsis
- Vanda
- Other Genera

Bonsai Class 8

Types of Bonsai

- Bonsai – upright
- Bonsai – slanting
- Bonsai – cascade or semi-cascade
- Bonsai – multiple trunk of any of the above
- Bonsai – any other style

How to Enter Online

We encourage you to enter online, using ShoWorks. The Florida State Fair has implemented ShoWorks, an online entry program. ShoWorks is an industry-standard used by over 50 fairs nationally. This user-friendly program can be trusted to accurately enter you into our competitions and allows for efficient communication via e-mail. We are excited to have ShoWorks to better facilitate entering Florida State Fair competitions.

- **Take a moment to look through this Competition Handbook to see which division and class your entry is eligible to compete in.** Then, follow the easy steps listed below to enter the competition you have chosen.
- **To Enter Online using ShoWorks.**
Go to www.floridastatefair.com and at the top of the home page select the **PARTICIPANTS** TAB and you will see in the dropdown list a link for **CREATIVE LIVING**. Select the [ENTER ONLINE](#) link on the left side of the page.
- **Everyone must register as a new exhibitor even if you have competed in the past.**
- **Note that sessions expire after 20 minutes** of inactivity, so “save the cart” if you plan on leaving the computer for more than 20 minutes.
- When registering, please verify that all information that you entered into ShoWorks is correct. Please pay special attention to capitalization, full names of cities/counties and use proper spelling (no abbreviations).
- If you [ENTER ONLINE](#) you will need to pay with a credit card at that time. You will not be able to delay payment as we were able to do in the past.

Mailing Paper Entry Forms

- **Entry Forms must be postmarked by Friday, January 10th, 2025.**
Failure to complete any portion of the entry form may result in disqualification.

Mail Entry Form to:

Creative Living Competitions – Horticulture
Florida State Fair
P.O. Box 11766
Tampa, FL 33680

Make checks payable to: Florida State Fair Authority

Delivery of Entries

- **All entries must be delivered to Florida State Fair Authority on either:**
Friday, January 31, 2025, 9:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Saturday, February 1, 2025 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Deliver entries to:

Florida State Fair Authority
Florida Center Bldg.

Enter off of Orient Road thru the Service entrance on the west side of the fairgrounds.

Map with directions to the Florida Center available on the [Creative Living webpage](#).

- Entries arriving at the Fairgrounds after Delivery and Shipping Deadlines may be disqualified.

Retrieving Entries

- See the calendar for Pickup dates, times, and locations (page 1).
- Entries not picked up on designated dates can be arranged for a special pick-up appointment by emailing CreativeLiving@floridastatefair.com.
- All entries not claimed by April 1st of the same year will be recycled, disposed or donated through our program department.



General Rules

Disclaimer

Please be advised that competitive exhibits are entered at the exhibitor's risk. The Florida State Fair does not insure and is not responsible for any loss, damage, or theft of entries, even if the loss, damage, or theft occurs as the result of the handling of the exhibit by staff, volunteers, contractors and/or visitors. If the exhibitor desires insurance coverage, this coverage should be secured from a personal insurance agent before entry, and the policy written to cover the period of exhibition and transportation. Reasonable care will be taken to prevent loss or damage to exhibits. Unauthorized persons are not permitted in the building after closing hours.

Division/Class Cancellation

The Florida State Fair management reserves the right to return entries and cancel any division or class in which, in its judgment, the entries are insufficient to secure adequate competition.

Entry Errors

Florida State Fair management is not responsible for finding errors in entries. Exhibitors are responsible for any and all errors that were submitted online or on entry and summary forms. No exhibitor shall be entitled to an award which has been disallowed as the result of his own error. The Florida State Fair management shall withhold the payment of awards for exhibits that are ineligible and may recover awards that have been paid for ineligible entries that are disclosed during post-audits of Fair records. However, exhibitors with cause are entitled to question the validity of any disallowance. Such exhibitors should inform the Florida State Fair management immediately, in writing, giving their name, address, a complete description of the entry, and the reason for requesting reconsideration. Requests will not be considered later than ninety (90) days after receiving notice of disallowance.

Premium Payments

Premium Awards will be paid according to the Judging Criteria Record Sheets. **Premium checks will be void after 6 months from the date on the check. PLEASE CASH PREMIUM CHECKS IMMEDIATELY. After 6 months, all uncashed checks will be voided, and replacement checks will not be issued.**

Substitutions

Substitutions, if necessary, must be within the same department as the original entry. Substitutions must be completed by the last day of the entry delivery period. You cannot transfer your entry to another exhibitor.

Previously Entered Entry

Any entry that has been exhibited at a previous Florida State Fair is not eligible for entry in this year's Florida State Fair. ***This excludes Horticulture & Aquarium Beautiful entries.***

Verification

Exhibitors wishing to verify that the Florida State Fair has received submitted entry forms and fees must include a self-addressed/stamped envelope when submitting entry forms. Online submissions will receive a confirmation code once entries are submitted.

Responsibility

The Florida State Fair shall not be responsible for exhibits remaining on the fairgrounds after designated release times. All still exhibits or display elements remaining on the Fairgrounds after the designated release time will be treated as abandoned property and will be disposed of on or before September 1st of the same year.

Removal of Entries

An exhibitor may not remove his or her entry from the Florida State Fair once it has been accepted. Entries must be on exhibit at the official opening of the Fair or at any other time specified in the Competition Handbook and shall not be removed from the Fairgrounds prior to the release date printed in the handbook, except (at the discretion of the Florida State Fair management) in cases of positive evidence of sickness, accident and/or death, or other circumstances that are in the best interests of the Fair.

Eligibility for Fair Employees

Florida State Fair Authority employees are eligible to compete in the Creative Living competitions except for those who directly work for the Creative Living Department.

Dishonored Checks

A penalty of \$25.00 per dishonored check must be paid if a check in payment of entry fees or other applicable fees is refused by the bank. Only cash, certified check, or money orders are acceptable for penalty payment.

Design

The Florida State Fair assumes total design control over the presentation of the exhibits. Entries designed for hanging and not so equipped will be hung in a manner deemed appropriate by the Fair. No exhibit changes will be made once the entries have been displayed. Once an entry has been received by the Florida State Fair, no further handling of entry by exhibitors shall be permitted. Relocation and final placement shall be accomplished by Florida State Fair personnel. Entries requiring assembly/disassembly must include detailed instructions and sketches for assembly/disassembly. Instructions should indicate lifting points, unsecured parts and any other information required for such handling. Where necessary, bank pins will be utilized to attach exhibits for display.

2025 Florida State Fair

Horticulture Competition Entry Form

OFFICE USE ONLY

Exhibitor # _____

Total Fee _____

Paid YES NO

Type Cash MO

Check Ck No.

Entry Forms must be postmarked by Friday, January 10th, 2025.

Failure to complete any portion of the entry form may result in disqualification.

Please print legibly

Exhibitors Name (First, Last)			
Mailing Address			County
City	State	Zip Code	<input type="checkbox"/> Check if you are a new exhibitor
Phone ()		Email	

Entry Fee: Adult Division \$3 per entry

Exhibitors may enter no more than 10 individual plants per person for judging. And no more than three (3) Containers & Collections per person may be submitted for judging. Use additional entry forms if necessary.

#	DIVISION #	CLASS #	Name of Plant (Botanical & Common Name)	FEE
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
Total Amount Due				\$

I hereby certify that I have read the Florida State Fair General Rules for the Competitive Exhibits Program (Page 8) and the above item(s) is/are entered for exhibition strictly in accordance with these rules, by which I agree to be governed. I also agree that the Florida State Fair may use my name, likeness, or photograph (including, but not limited to photographs of my entry), in any manner relating to my participation in the Competitive Exhibits Program, free of charge and without further notice or consultation.

I understand that the 2025 Creative Living Competitions & Exhibits are held in conjunction with the 2025 Florida State Fair and agree that the Florida State Fair is not liable or responsible for any delay, change of dates or cancellation of the 2025 Florida State Fair due to the following unforeseeable circumstances: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake; or (c) other potential disaster(s) or catastrophe(s), such as epidemics, pandemics, or explosions.

Signature of exhibitor _____

Date _____

Mail Entry Form to: Creative Living Competitions – Horticulture

Florida State Fair
P.O. Box 11766
Tampa, FL 33680

Make checks payable to: Florida State Fair Authority