

## Tips for the Show Bench 2017

In addition to these tips please read the show schedule and Society's rules as set out on the inside cover.

**Roses** should have only one bloom per stem, whether for scent or the vase of 3 stems (excluding cluster flowered class).

**Dahlias** Blooms should face the front, preferably with some foliage on the stem, and no buds.

**Peas & Beans (in their pods)** Pods should be cut with short stalk and be uniform in size, colour and maturity (this applies to all vegetables and fruit).

**Onions & Shallots (prepared)** Tops neatly tied and trimmed. Do not remove too much of the outer skin and measure carefully. Sand may be used to display.

**Artichokes, globe** Single large head with well-closed solid fleshy scales.

**Garlic** Solid, clean, uniform, well-ripened bulbs with thin necks, dried stem approx. 2.5 cm.

**Rhubarb** Fresh not cut (i.e. with heel still on), leaf trimmed to approx. 7.5 cm.

**Tomatoes** Rich colour with fresh calyx and stalk intact. Truss is 1 single truss (not branched)

**Potatoes** Medium sized (175-225 gm.) uniform shape, clean skin (never scrub the skin).

**Courgettes** Young, uniform shape and colour, length approx. 15 cm. Round cultivars approx. 15 cm. with or without flowers.

**Cucumbers** Young, green, straight and well matched with short stalks. With or without flowers.

**Culinary Herbs** Fresh, healthy, clean leaves with no sign of disease or age.

**Root Vegetables (other than those mentioned)** must have their leaves cut off, leaving approx. 7.5 cm. of stalk.

**Currants** Strigs with full complement of ripe currants, stalks fresh and intact.

**Berries** Ripe and no blemishes, with green stalks and calyx attached.

**Bread** should be well risen. evenly baked and golden brown

**Cakes** should be well risen, even in shape and baking. No cooling rack marks on the top and the sides should be smooth, indicating a well lined tin. Fruit should be evenly distributed and no sign of flour pockets.

**Victoria Sponge** Recommend making by the creaming method. Should be evenly baked in one or two tins, both halves being of the same thickness. Top should be flat without air bubbles, pale golden brown without cooling rack marks and with a light sprinkling of caster sugar. Traditional filling is raspberry jam.

**Swiss Roll** Whisked sponge mixture, no fat. Carefully rolled with no cracks, join underneath, ends trimmed neatly, light layer of caster sugar from rolling. Even spongy texture.

**Gingerbread** make by melting method. Tins used usually square or oblong. Top flat, glossy, evenly baked. Texture fairly open, spongy but moist. Benefits from being stored for at least a week prior to exhibiting, to soften crust and mature flavour.

**Scones** should be even in shape, size and colour. Suitable size is 5-6 cm. in diameter and almost the same in height. Texture light and springy. No glaze but may be dusted with flour before baking. Fluted cutter for sweet scones, plain for savoury and take care not to twist cutter.

**Biscuits** should be rolled, cut and uniform in size, approx. 3 mm. thick and usually 5-6 cm. in diameter. Use a fluted cutter for sweet biscuits, plain for savoury. Baked through until crisp and should snap when broken.

**Fruit Tarts** should be cooked on a plate/shallow dish with lining layer of pastry, fruit filling, and covered by a layer of pastry. Can use sweet or short crust pastry, finished with light scattering of caster sugar. Fruit filling true in flavour, adequately sweetened and in good proportion to pastry.

**Jellies & Marmalades** Jars should be clear and clean with no trademarks. Jars should be well filled and twist top lids should be new and put on immediately when hot and should 'pop' when opened. Cellophane and wax disc should be put on when cool. Labels should be neat and straight. Jelly should be bright and clear with no air bubbles and should 'tremble' but hold its shape. Marmalade should have no scum or air bubbles and the peel tender and evenly sliced.

**Fruit Curd** must have a 'breathing' top (i.e. wax circle and cellophane top). Twist top lids are not acceptable. Consistency should be spreadable but not runny. It should be sieved to remove any egg spots, peel and scum. It must be kept refrigerated as it is not a preserve.

**Chutney** Colour should be bright and even throughout, consistency reasonably firm and uniform with no air bubbles or free vinegar. Cover/lid should not be liable to corrosion (i.e. not metal) and must prevent evaporation so do not use waxed disc and cellophane cover. Label should state date made and be at least 2 months old.