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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

PREPARING VEGETABLES TO EXHIBIT AT FAIR

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By this time, you know if your vegetable garden is flourishing, or, if you are like me, needs a little help. If you are one of the fortunate gardeners who are looking at a coming bounty, then you may want to exhibit your success with pride at the local Fair. I especially like the exhibits because in this rather challenging climate, one can see what is really possible.

Know your Fair rules. Look at the Fair Premium book to get familiar with local rules and regulations. It is always disappointing to come with your exhibit only to be disqualified because you didn't follow procedures in the Fair book. Entering items correctly and entering the correct number of specimens for a particular exhibit are common oversights.

Know the qualities Fair judges look for in vegetable exhibits.

Uniformity – specimens should be alike in size, shape and color.

Condition and quality – vegetables should be edible and in prime condition

Typical of type for the variety in shape, color and size

Specimens that are typical of that vegetable found in the store – no monster zucchinis!

Cleanliness – wipe soft-skinned vegetables with a damp cloth. Wash or lightly brush soil from root crops

Arrangement – carefully place specimens to show their most attractive and desirable characteristics

Know how to prepare different vegetables for exhibit. I recommend the Oregon 4-H Horticulture Contest Guide for Vegetables, Publication 4-H 2334 found on the web at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/4h/4-h2334.pdf>.

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Learn the best ways to transport vegetables to the Fair. Handle vegetables carefully. Avoid bruising and prolonged exposure to sun or heat. Wrap individual fruits in paper and place in a strong container. Take extra specimens along as replacements.

In the next *Extension Spotlight* article, I will go over some tips for exhibiting flowers at the Fair.

Mike Bauer is Extension Educator for the University of Idaho Extension in Bonner County. University of Idaho, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Idaho counties cooperating. Cooperative Extension programs are available to all without discrimination.

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