



OHA 115th CONVENTION JULY 2023 JUDGES ON JUDGING SESSION

Questions and Answers from the OHA Judging Committee

Q. Transparency Design - How much in front or behind the screening?

A. There is no set amount that has been defined as being in front or behind of the screening material.

Q. Invasives - Why do we have invasives on the show table, i.e., Lily of Valley and Hedera, as specimens? Also, why allow them in designs?

A. One has to be careful in what you consider to be invasive. The Ontario Government has a list of Plants that are named as restricted and invasive, and this is the list that OJES refers to. There are other groups such as the Ontario Invasive Plant Council and Ontario Wildlife Federation, etc., that have more lengthy lists that do include things like lily of the valley, etc. The show schedule can list specific plants that are not on the official government list but that is up to the Show Committee. No doubt more plants may be added to the official Invasive plant Regulation as time goes on.

Q. Can you send us a list of judges?

A. The current list of qualified and certified judges can be found on the OHA website. Look under Resources and click on the Judges Corner. They can be searched by district. Always check the website to be sure you are finding judges that have recertified and are still judging.

Q. Is the OJES, Second Edition 2019, still classified as "Publication 34," or has this description been eliminated?

A. Thank you for your inquiry regarding OJES (2019). It is no longer referred to as Pub 34. Publication 34 was an old term associated with judging standards back when OMAFRA was involved with the production. The full name is Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards for Floral Design and Horticulture, and referred to as OJES Second Edition (2019), but most commonly, it is referred to as OJES (2019).

Q. Do the Virtual Courses count for recertification, and if so, how does it get recorded?

A. Yes, they count. You need to keep track of the date; the topic covered and fill in on your recertification form.

Q. Can Judges use mini shows for exhibiting credentials?

A. Only if the mini Show is written as Standard with two divisions, Horticulture and Design. Each Division must have at least five classes.

Q. Must plant material be in water or water-retentive material in a design?

A. No. OJES 2019 on Page 157 states: Fresh plant material must be in water or water-retaining material unless such material remains turgid throughout the event. As an example, Aspidistra leaves may or may not be in moisture-retaining material because they would last a very long time without moisture being constant. It is the responsibility of the exhibitor to make sure that all plant material remains turgid.

Q. I recently participated in an OHA flower show in a design class with fresh coniferous foliage. In order to provide moisture to the arrangement, I filled the container (which in this case was a blue pumpkin that I grew) with vermiculite as a water retaining material. At the very top of the design around a candle I used a small amount of clean Bx mixed with vermiculite. The judge thought that I had used soil and left a note that it was not permitted (which is quite clear in the OHA judging standards). Of course, we all know that vermiculite is a mineral and that Bx is primarily peat (and relatively easy to discern from soil) As I like to use this type of media in some types of designs as it is a water retaining material and would hope to be able to use it in the future, I would appreciate clarification on whether vermiculite and/or soilless potting mixtures are permitted. It certainly seems far more environmentally friendly than oasis.

A. Soil is defined in OJES: “The upper layer of earth in which plants grow. No soil is permitted in floral design. Sand, pebbles, wood chips, etc. are permissible.”

Since BX is primarily peat moss and peat moss is a growing media it could be considered soil. Peat moss is a layer of earth in which plants can grow so peat moss would be considered soil.

If you use pure vermiculite (which is a mineral) you may need to add a tag stating what it is so the judge and passing committee are aware.

Q Is it necessary to have two leaves attached to the stem of a tulip? I know in my own garden, I have many tulips with only two leaves per stem and if I cut them, there will be no leaves left to nourish the tulip bulb. Is it O.K. to put in the Schedule that at least one leaf must be attached to the tulip stem? I feel more members will be able to enter the competition this way as we are struggling to get more members to participate in the competition.

I have read over the Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards book, and I can't find a minimum requirement for the tulip leaves, just a maximum. Or do the judges follow the guidelines set out in each individual society's flower show schedule?

A. The Schedule is the law of the Show. If you think one leaf is the best choice for your Society, then use that. There just needs to be at least one leaf.

Q. At a recent OHA event, a few judges had an informal discussion on where a judge is allowed to pick up horticultural specimens out of the vase if needed to examine the specimen. I was taught that I could. For example, to check if the correct number of specimens are in the vase or to check condition of stem or the underside of blooms?

A. OJES PG 20 refers to moving Hort Exhibits for proper assessment. (This is common in large shows like Fairs) but OJES makes no mention of removing a specimen from the container. If OJES is silent then yes, you can do it. Care should always be taken to disturb specimens as little as possible. Sometimes a judge does have to check stem counts. You can't always depend on a passing committee to catch all entry errors.

Q. Can I use soil in my design for effect?

A. No. OJES 2019, on Page 151, Soil, states: Soil is the upper layer of earth in which plants grow. No soil is permitted in floral design. Sand, pebbles, wood chips, etc. are permissible. (Soil contains bacteria, fungus, spores, etc., that cause rapid deterioration of cut plant materials.) Note: Pot-et-Fleur, Plants and Flowers, etc., should be listed under the Special Exhibits Division in a show schedule. See a listing of suggested classes in OJES 2019, on Page 118.

- Q. Our Flower Show committee has a question regarding payment to our judge and are wondering if you could offer any suggestions. We live in a rural area and many of the OHA judges are also OAAS judges. The OAAS district we are in is paying their judges a flat fee plus mileage. Being in a rural area, judges do have to travel a distance sometimes. This is not something our society has ever done; we pay our judges a flat fee of \$100.00. Our question is, are there any guidelines from the OHA regarding this matter. We know that it is not covered in OJES, only that a fee is to be agreed upon when hiring the judge.**
- A. OHA does not have guidelines for fees. It is left up to individual Societies to determine what they want or can afford to spend. Key is that it be agreed upon at the time of the invitation. (see OJES page 10). Consideration should be given to including travel costs in addition to a judging fee. The cost of travel is significant and often a judge comes from a distance of 1 to 2 hour. drive, In saying this a fee of \$100 would not be out of line. Nothing prevents a judge from saying what their minimum fee would be and a judge can always donate fees back if they feel the society or group is struggling.
- Q. I judged a show tonight that had a class entitled “A collection of spring flowers, 3 named varieties”. The exhibit was a few dandelions, mostly closed up, a few violets and an few tiny white just starting to open sprigs which looked like flowering chickweed to me. The dandelion and violet were named but the white one was not. It was not the only exhibit. How should I have judged it?**
- A. Judges must be open-minded when it comes to schedule interpretation. Check Scale of Points page 38 OJES named is only worth 5 points. Condition worth 50 points Distinction and Presentation 20 points. In comparison to other exhibits how many points would you deduct given the Condition of the exhibit.
- Q. Are Dahlias a Perennial or Annual or both? They have been seen on Show Table as both.**
- A. They are a Perennial, all be it a tender perennial in most of the province, but they do not fit the definition of Annual from OJES.
Annual: A plant that completes its life cycle from seed to seed within one growing year. The seed germinates to produce a plant with flowering shoots, which dies completely after seed production.
Perennial: Perennial (Herbaceous) - A plant that lives for more than two years, e.g., Hosta, Peony, etc. The stem dies to the ground each fall. Plants from bulbs, corms, tubers and rhizomes are herbaceous perennials, but should be classified separately in a show schedule. There are also many hardy evergreen herbaceous perennials, e.g., Iberis, Bergenia. Note: Shrubs are woody, not herbaceous, perennials.
- Q. In the Horticultural Division, can faded petals be removed from the back of a Dahlia specimen?**
- A. Yes. In OJES 2019, on Page 63, it states that the removal of faded petals from the back of the Dahlia bloom is permitted but must not spoil the form. (A few may be removed, but go too far and spoil the flower form, you will be penalized.) The Design Division always allowed manipulation of form and structure. One of my new favourite quotes comes from, in her own words, ‘an old judge with opinions’ is: *“If OJES doesn’t say you can’t, you can.”*
- Q. If a Show Schedule differs from OJES which takes precedence?**
- A. Always remember “the Schedule is the Law of the Show.” Read it very carefully to fully understand the rules and what is prohibited. The Schedule overrules OJES if something is specifically described in the Show Schedule.

Q. Can I use oiled leaves in my design?

A. Yes, unless the show schedule prohibits it.

OJES 2019, on Page 22, Tips In Preparation of Entries, states: Wiring, oiling, spraying with leaf shine, and artificial colouring is prohibited in the Horticultural Division. (Note, it does not say in the Design Division, where it is permitted).

Q. Can dyed or painted plant material be used in designs?

A. Yes, unless the show schedule prohibits it.

OJES 2019 on Page 157, states: Painted and/or artificially coloured plant material may be used unless otherwise stated in the regulations. It nowhere states that fresh plant material may not be painted or artificially coloured. (This is in the Design Division only!). OJES 2019 on Page 138, Dyed Plant Material, states: Dried or fresh plant material whose appearance is altered by dyeing is not permitted in the Horticultural Division. (Note, it does not say in the Design Division, where it is permitted!).

OJES 2019 on Page 146, Painted Plant Material, states: Dried or fresh plant material whose appearance has been altered by the application of paint. Schedule to govern. This is not permitted in the Horticultural Division. (Note, it does not say in the Design Division, where it is permitted!)

Q. The 'Rule of Thumb' about the 1/3 to 2/3 rule, is that still relevant?

A. Yes, generally in most cases, but not all. Although not specifically addressed in OJES 2019, on Pages 149 and 150, it is a guide in getting the proper proportion and scale. For example: in the Design Division, a design that does not have the proper height or width looks compacted and tight, and the container would look out of proportion and too large for the design. In the Horticultural Division, a giant-sized Dahlia cut with a short stem and placed in a small bud vase would look out of proportion and scale and is not how the plant grows and should be shown. In OJES, on Page 63, it states: One set of leaves beneath the flower head is required and two or more sets of leaves are preferred. In the Special Exhibits Division, Pot-et-Fleur, an over-sized potted plant mixed with short, small cut flowers spoils the proportion and scale and sets the potted plant as a bull's eye, and out of proportion to the rest of the exhibit. Examples of designs where it might not work are Abstract, Assemblage, Collage, Kinetic, New Style (Nuovo Stile), Pavé, etc.

Q. How do you deal with misplaced entries in a Virtual Show.

A. The same as an in-person show. The Show Chair should contact the person entering and let them know they have placed something in the wrong spot and get permission to move it. A Show Chair should not move an entry without the Competitors permission. In terms of Judging, you must judge what you are presented with if something is not in the right class, then make a polite comment so the competitor knows why it did not place.

Q. Where do you find the forms for keeping track of updates, seminars, demonstrations, etc.?

A. You can keep track on the OHA Judges Recertification Form that's available on the web. Go to the Show Page, scroll down to Judging Forms and applications and click on the blue link. Or start a document that you track the dates and topic sessions covered. You can then cut and paste the information onto the form later. If you are up for renewal, a renewal form will get sent to you by the Registrar in Feb or March 2023 with the renewal deadline date of April 30. If you are not renewing and retiring from Judging, please send an email to Sharon so that she can take you off the list. We strive to keep the list as up to date as possible.

- Q. How do we deal with Virtual shows for Judges looking for entry credits for their Judging renewal?**
- A. Check the Judges renewal form on the website. It has been changed to allow Judges to count one Virtual Show due to the Covid restrictions.
- Q. How should honorariums for judges be dealt with? There seems to be two opposite ideas amongst judges.**
- A. OJES page 10 is same as the old OJES. There has been no change in wording. It is reasonable for a Judge to receive an honorarium for the work they do. But it needs to be set before you agree to judge a show. It can be a simple question for the Judge to ask the person who has contacted them, “What is the regular *amount on an honorarium for a show of this nature?*”
If the Judge feels it is unreasonable then they can either a) politely decline the job or b) suggest a fee they feel is more appropriate to attend at a show of that particular size. It is often dependent on travel, time and cost to get to the Show and how big the Show is. Judges are not looking to get rich on Judging but there are costs associated with getting to a show.
- Q. I am interested in knowing more about entering an OHA Judging School. Can you please tell me what is involved?**
- A. An OHA Judging School is a two or three-year set of courses with six two-day sessions. Each session takes place at a different time of the year. There is a cost to attend, which is reflected in the cost of running the school, which differs in different areas of the province. The fees usually range anywhere from \$75 to \$150 per session. Students are required to maintain a 70% average in each session and are allowed to use make-up exams for up to two missed exams. Students are also required only to miss two sessions over the entire course to be able to graduate. You need to be a member of an OHA Society to be enrolled. Check the OHA website at <http://www.gardenontario.org> under ‘Shows’ and then scroll down to ‘Upcoming Judging Schools,’ where future schools and updates are listed. Since schools are sporadic throughout the province, a list of prospective students is maintained by the Judging Schools Coordinator. If you’d like to be notified of upcoming schools, you will be notified by email. You decide whether the forthcoming school is feasible for you to attend and enroll with that school principal.

For more information, questions, concerns or discussion topics, please email the OHA Judging Committee at ohajudges@gmail.com.

