

**All Gardens
Great & Small**
by
York Co.
Horticultural Agent
Tom Becker



Enter Hanging Baskets At The Fair

With the fair season upon us, gardeners are preparing their hanging baskets for judging. Basket displays that are simple, containing two or three colors and two plant types plus a texture or trailing plant look best. For example, traditional combinations like red geraniums and vinca vines or pink or white geraniums with dusty miller look great late in the summer.

As your hanging basket increases in size, consider the surrounding plantscape and the location's exposure to sun and shade. Most baskets are displayed at eye level. Larger baskets may require higher placement. Too few or too many baskets can spoil the effect of some displays. For example, a basket

with yellow marigolds with purple or cascading petunias provides a singular striking appearance. In this case, this hanging basket requires a simple color background and should be placed at the proper eye level for the best effect.

Before selecting your best hanging basket to enter at the fair, think of how you select clothing - there are many possibilities, and your choice will ultimately depend on your personal taste. Generally, plants with a good hanging or trailing form are favored by judges. But, feel free to experiment and enter baskets with unusual container plants. Here's a few ideas: jacobean lilies, lantana, dwarf zinnias, portulaca, verbena, ageratum, snapdragon, dwarf dahlia varieties, tuberous bego-

nias and salvia. Try to avoid entering hanging baskets with plants that are too large and upright.

Foliage plants that are most attractive in hanging containers include: asparagus fern, pothos, English ivy, ferns, Swedish ivy, vining philodendron, air plant, grape ivy, wandering Jew, baby's tears, artillery plant, coleus, and hoyas.

Flowering types include begonias, climbing geranium, fuchsias, shrimp plant, and bougainvillea. But don't feel limited to just only ornamental plants. Even culinary materials like leaf lettuce, parsley, radishes, nasturtiums and basil look good in baskets.

It's often a toss up with judges as to whether the plant or the container should provide the greatest visual appeal. A fully developed hanging plant usually camouflages the container allowing the plant, rather than the container to be the outstanding feature.

Common containers include wood, ceramic, plastic, and moss covered wire. Prior to entering the fair, water the baskets completely and trim extraneous branches or flowers. Normally, because baskets dry out within 1 or 2 days, keeping plants watered is a major concern at the fair. A convenient method of

watering wire baskets at home is immersing the container in a tub of water, allowing the water to saturate the basket.

Need an idea for next year's fair? Try a new trailing plant like alyssum, ivy geranium, fuchsia or dusty miller. Or, be your own judge at the fair.

Which hanging basket received first prize? What combination of plants was used and what substitutions would look best at your home? But, most of all, if you can't decide what you like best, just enjoy the flowers and foliage displays at your local community fair.

Ayrshire Princess

(Continued from Page B1)

not have a professional fitter getting their cattle ready. We should do our own work. It discourages me when those who win haven't prepared their own animals. I take pride in doing my own fitting."

Her speaking and leadership skills serve Susan well as a member of the Kennard-Dale High School vo-ag and FFA program, where she is a scholastic honor roll student. Entering her sophomore year, Susan is treasurer of the school's FFA chapter and carries a variety of projects, including dairy animals, dairy employment, market swine, lamb finishing, and diversified livestock.

After several years of non-participation as a chapter, several Kennard-Dale FFA members teamed up this spring to practice for and participate as in the state parliamentary procedure competition. Susan, with her enjoyment of public speaking, finds it very challenging, and was especially pleased that their fledgling team placed fifth at the state contest.

With her avid interest in cattle and dairying, Susan is eyeing a career in the field, perhaps working with sire analysis or as an A.I. organization field repre-

sentative.

"I'd like to continue using what I've learned in judging and utilize that in my future job," she said. While Penn State is on her list for college consideration, Susan is also looking at the many other options available for agricultural studies, both in and out of state.

Meanwhile, she continues to enjoy her Ayrshire Princess role and the opportunity it affords to participate in shows and breed events. Her fall schedule is already filling up, with upcoming 4-H regional and area fair competitions, as well as the Madison judging competition. Because of those commitments, she has had to forgo participation in the school's marching band, where she plays French horn, since practices conflict with her commitment to cattle shows.

In 1999, the National Ayrshire Association's annual convention will be hosted by regional breeders in Maryland. Part of that convention will be selection on a new national Ayrshire Princess. And, while she hasn't made up her mind for certain, there is a good chance that Susan Richardson, the 1998 Pennsylvania Ayrshire Princess, will be in the running.

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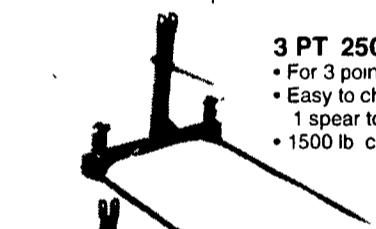
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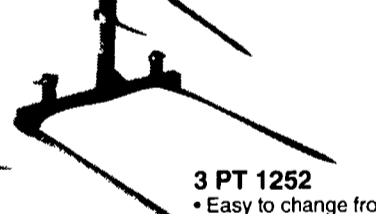


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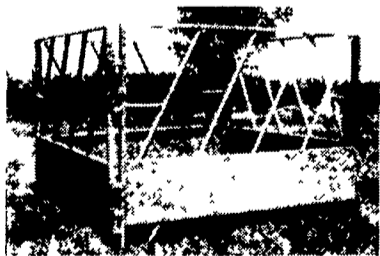
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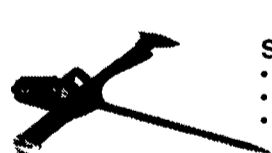
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