

VALUE OF EXHIBITIONS SUCH AS AGRO '69

By ANANDATISSA DE ALWIS

Besides the incentive of profit there is the incentive of pride in successful cultivation of fruit, flower, vegetable or grain. It is the satisfaction of this pride which sustains experiment and brings the best minds to agriculture or animal husbandry.

Exhibitions are essential to such minds because by displaying the results of one's efforts and looking at the efforts of others one finds renewal of energy to go on.

I was at a Poultry Show some years ago. I had to drop by every few hours because I was a helper. I saw scores of poultry lovers who had never left the show grounds except for a hurried meal. They walked round the pens all day, argued with one another, related "tall" stories of champions they had bred or they owned but did not bring along because they lacked exhibition condition! There was no money to be earned by breeding show champions. For most of them breeding show birds was a financial strain. The common or garden utility layer bred en-masse was a profitable business. They knew this but persisted in their hobbies because of the incentive of pride in successful breeding. They spent money and time merely to bring their birds at great expense to a show, paying entry fees as well! Regular exhibitions sustain such invaluable amateur keenness.

Exhibitions also preserve certain standards. Breeding up to these standards helps to weed out the deformed, weak, sub-standard specimens.

Let us examine an example such as of Rhode Island Reds. The following is the judging standard:—

Colour (general) 20
Shape, size, carriage and symmetry 30
Quality and texture (general) 15
Head and Comb 10
Eye colour 10
Legs 5
Condition 10
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The colour standard is not a personal matter. It is laid down and calls for a rich brilliant red, with under-colour and quill of the feather red or salmon. In the male there should be no black tickings on the neck nackle feathers.

In the male the main tail feathers should be greenish-black; also the long, curving or sickle feathers should be of the same colour.

Generally feathers should have a good sheen and lustre.

The carriage of the male should be alert, active and well balanced.

Thus and thus the Judges' card will list descriptions and points. Breeding towards perfection becomes possible when such standards are laid down and regular competitions are organized.

A good judge will handle the bird and look for deformities such as in the breastbone, which will disqualify a bird in good colour. A deformed breastbone would be the result of weak parents or roosting too early on unsuitable roosts. White marks on the head or ears would ban a bird from a show because the bird would be sick and an exhibitor would take care to keep his flock healthy.

Every breed has its standards accepted by the British Poultry Club and followed by the Poultry Club of Ceylon.

Breeding utility poultry is another matter, but here again controlled Laying Trials will help to raise standards, increase production and save costs. Good results come from three factors—Breeding, Feeding and Weeding. First the breed must be well chosen. A hen with a wide keel is usually a better layer, but the record of the breed for several generations is a much better guide.

Exhibitions like Agro '69 where people can see and perhaps handle good breeds are an important fillip to the good breeder and an opportunity for beginners like myself to learn from knowledgeable people.

In every sphere of production these factors apply. Producers of anything welcome exhibition of their wares, industrial or agricultural. This is where people in the same line of business meet and exchange ideas. Exhibitions everywhere serve as a powerful impetus to production and the raising of standards.

That is why exhibitors go to great lengths to spend money on their stalls. When they do they want to display their best efforts and if they fail to win prizes they start immediately one exhibition is over to prepare for the next—if there is a next. And that brings me to the point of this exercise: exhibitions must be held regularly at given intervals if they are to serve an economic or aesthetic purpose.

Exhibitions must keep the balance carefully between the carnival fun-fare side and the serious side of its organization.

There is a case for a permanent organization of Government and private sectors to ensure this regularity.

AGRO '69

Rules and Regulations

THIS Exhibition will be held at the Nuwara Eliya Race Course on the 18th, 19th and 21st of April, 1969. The Exhibition will be declared open at 11 a.m. on the 18th April, 1969, by His Excellency the Governor-General. The Exhibition will be declared open on 19th, 20th and 21st of April at 10 a.m. by the Hon. Minister of Land, Irrigation and Power, the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Food and the Hon. Minister of Home Affairs, respectively. The Prizes will be distributed by the Hon. Prime Minister on 21st April, 1969, at 3 p.m. Exhibits can be removed after 5 p.m. on the 21st April. All exhibits must be removed by 9 p.m. on the 22nd April, 1969. Admission to the Exhibition will be free.

1. Objects for exhibition must be brought in by some responsible person to the Exhibition Grounds between 3.30 p.m. on the 17th April, 1969 and 8 a.m. on the 18th April, 1969.
2. Notice of intention to exhibit and of the space required should be intimated to a Honorary Joint Secretary by the 1st of April, 1969 unless otherwise stated elsewhere in this catalogue, in order that space may be reserved.
3. Judges of a section cannot compete in that section. This rule does not debar any judge exhibiting any item. Such exhibits will carry a label "not for competition".
4. Every exhibit will have attached to it a closed Official Envelope containing the name and the address of the exhibitor, legibly written therein in English, Sinhalese or Tamil, as well as a card unenclosed indicating the class under which the article is to be exhibited. All envelopes will be opened after the judges have arrived at a decision.
5. Every exhibitor will be given a receipt for the exhibit handed over. The original to be kept by the exhibitor to be produced when the exhibit is removed.
6. All exhibits must have been grown or produced by the exhibitor in his/her own garden or made by the exhibitor.
7. Samples must be packed so as to admit ready examination by the Judges and for exhibition. Cut flowers must be staged in exhibition boxes, solid vases or containers which are not easily blown over the wind.
8. A responsible person appointed by the Committee will control each Section and all exhibits must be arranged in such places as are selected by him.
9. The Committee reserves the right of declining exhibits which they do not consider worthy of Exhibition.
10. All exhibits competing for prizes must remain in the positions accorded to them by the Committee until the Exhibition is over.
11. No Exhibits may be removed under any consideration before 5 p.m. on the 21st of April, 1969.
12. All reasonable care will be taken of exhibits and Police protection afforded; but the Committee cannot hold themselves responsible for any loss or damage.
13. Only exhibitors, members of the Committee and Stewards will be admitted to the Exhibition Enclosure before 11 a.m. on the 18th of April, 1969.
14. No award will be made in any class if in the opinion of the Judges the exhibits do not merit it. The Committee reserves the right not to make any award if in the opinion of the Committee there are insufficient entries under any class.
15. The same article cannot be entered for competition in more than one class, e.g., flowers exhibited in pots cannot be afterwards cut and entered in the class for cut flowers.
16. Botanical Gardens, Public Parks and Experimental Stations of the Department of Agriculture will not be allowed to compete for prizes, but they may enter exhibits.
17. The Committee may at its discretion remove forthwith any person and/or exhibits or any other article from the exhibition enclosure.
18. The decision of the Judges shall in all cases be final.
19. All prize winners should be present at the place allotted for prize winners 10 minutes before the distribution of prizes on the 21st of April, 1969 at 3 p.m.

Rules and Regulations (contd.)

20. Please see separate rules for the Livestock and Poultry Section.
21. Entries must be made on the prescribed forms annexed. Entries should be forwarded to the following officers:—
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| (i) Agriculture | ...D.A.E.O. Agriculture Office, Nuwara Eliya. |
| (ii) Horticulture | ...Curator, Botanical Gardens, Hakgala. |
| (iii) Small Industries | ...Assistant Director, Rural Development & Small Industries, Kachcheri, Nuwara Eliya. |
| (iv) Livestock & Poultry | ...Govt. Veterinary Surgeon, Veterinary Office, Mahagastota, Nuwara Eliya. |

22. Entries for Field Competitions close on 25th of March, 1969. Entries for Stall Competitions close on 30th of March, 1969.

Notes for Exhibition of Plants and Flowers

Plants and flowers correctly named add to the value of the exhibit and the Judges will take this into consideration in making their awards.

Pots should be carefully cleaned, the surface soil lightly pricked over, all dead leaves and stale blooms removed from the plants and stems, and stalks rendered as inconspicuous as possible so as to add to the effect of the Exhibit.

Single blooms are in most cases, shown in boxes, the following dimensions are recommended:—

For 24 blooms 3' 6" x 8' 6" x 4" deep.

For 18 blooms 2' 9" x 1' 6" x 4" deep.

For 12 blooms 2' 0" x 1' 6" x 4" deep

In cylinders about 1" diameter, being let in through holes bored in the top with collars to prevent them falling through so that the flowers may have their stalks in water. A background of green is generally the most effective; but white paper collars may also be used to advantage.

Exhibition glasses not being available in the Island, nondescript utensils that are used, e.g., bottles, jam tins, &c., should be wrapped round with moss or fern.

Artistic arrangements and effects as well as the quality of the blooms will be considered. A wealth of good material is often spoiled for want of tasteful arrangements.

Carnations, Dahlias, Antirrhinums and such flowers with long stalks may be arranged (with buds left on with their own foliage, in small wide-mouthed bottles). This will thus show the character of the flowers as grown in the pots or borders. Roses and flowers may be shown to advantage with their own foliage.

Flowers in bunches should not be jumbled together in a stiff mass.

If the stalks of flowers are cut under water and not exposed to the air before they are finally placed in the receptacles, their keeping powers are lengthened considerably.

Points upon which Exhibits are Judged

1. Should the total number of points in any case be equal, and it be impossible as (e.g., in the case of a cup) to return an award, effective arrangement and correct naming must determine the issue.
2. Judges should encourage good exhibits below the prize-winners by awarding a "Commendation" card in such cases.
3. Quality, coupled with a size suitable for table use, are points of paramount importance in vegetables. Size much beyond that cannot be regarded as meritorious, as it indicates coarseness, and must therefore be reckoned as a defect.
4. In cases of doubt as to whether (other things being equal) size or quality should prevail; it is suggested that better quality should prevail over greater size.
5. The samples composing "a dish" should be all of one variety only.