

2026 Lucas County Junior Fair
Junior Fair & Open Class Gardening Projects



July 13-19, 2026

Jr. Fair Gardening & Open Class

Junior Fair & Open Class Gardening Projects

General Rules:

- The deadline for entering is May 15th.
- All entries should be delivered to the Junior Fair Gardening Area.
- Entry cards must be completed for each exhibit.
- Check the date, day, and time listed for each project as they vary.
- 4-H, FFA, Scouting America, and Girl Scouts are eligible to participate unless otherwise stated.
- Exhibits will be displayed through 6:30 pm on Sunday, or forfeiture of premiums or ineligibility to show may result.
- All projects must be picked up within five days from the end of the fair.
- Judges' decisions are final. Participants arriving late may be considered for grade only.
- Self-determined gardening projects should be entered in a class that nearly fits the work completed.
- Judging schedule may be adjusted due to large enrollment or other reasons that make it necessary.
- Participants may be disqualified if guidelines are not explicitly followed for the exhibit and are not considered for prizes.
- Divisions unless specified: (all ages based upon age as of January 1)
 - Senior: 14-19 years
 - Junior: 8-13 years
 - Cloverbuds: 5-8 years of age, may participate in any project based upon participation only.
- Contact Kathy Wenz at 419-574-1986 with any questions.

Jr. Fair Gardening & Open Class

Mini-Garden

- Arrival time: Monday between 9:00 & 12:00.
- Judging: Monday at 12:00
- Who can participate: 4-H, FFA, Scouting America, Girl Scouts, or a Community Organization or Club

General Rules:

- Any Community Organization or Club may participate for the grade only. (Interview is optional)
- Cloverbuds will discuss their projects with the judge and receive participation awards.
- Ages are based on age as of January 1.
- All awards are based on exhibits and the youth's knowledge.
- Awards will go to the top 3 in each age division.
- If rules aren't adhered to, the participant will receive a grade only.
- All entries must remain until 6:30 pm on Sunday.
- Premium: \$2 per plant. Maximum one entry per division

Tomato

- Exhibit one tomato plant grown in a three to five-gallon container.
- Plants must show evidence of suckering and be staked.
- No caged plants.

Classes:

- TCB: Cloverbud
- T1: 8 & 9 years old
- T2: 10 & 11 years old
- T3: 12 & 13 years old
- T4: 14-19 years old
- TCO: Community Organization/Club

Marigold

- Exhibit one marigold plant grown in a one-gallon or smaller container.

Classes:

- TCB: Cloverbud
- T1: 8 & 9 years old
- T2: 10 & 11 years old
- T3: 12 & 13 years old
- T4: 14-19 years old
- TCO: Community Organization (Club???)

Jr. Fair Gardening & Open Class

Thank you for supporting our Mini Garden Program

The following greenhouses provide tomato and marigold plants with a coupon

Creque's Greenhouse

9700 W Sylvania Ave
Sylvania, OH 43560
419-829-2971

Black Diamond Garden Center

1964 Tremainsville Rd
Toledo, OH 43613
419-473-1409

Sadowski Produce

12815 Airport Hwy
Swanton, OH 43558
419-826-0863

Knitz Greenhouse

8865 Arquette Rd
Oregon, OH 43616
419-350-4699

May 7, 2026, is the deadline to register for the coupon code to collect free plants. Adults may include up to 20 youth per registration form. Coupons are sent via email. go.osu.edu/minigarden26

May 8-9, 2026: Collect plants by showing a coupon at participating greenhouses.

Jr. Fair Gardening & Open Class

Open Class

Free Standing Scarecrow

- Arrival time: Tuesday between 9:00 & 1:00.
- Judging: Tuesday after 6:00 pm
- Who can participate: 4-H, FFA, Scouting America, or Girl Scouts

Rules

- Only one entry per participant
- Entry must be free-standing.
- Height must not exceed 6' nor be below 3'. Width must not exceed 6'. Entry must consist of a single scarecrow with no multiple characters.
- Scarecrow must have a gardening theme and something to do with gardening.
- Please note: Scarecrows should be lovable, mischievous, and humorous, NOT frightening.

“Create Your Own” Open Class Competition

- Arrival time: Tuesday between 9:00 & 1:00.
- Judging: Tuesday after 6:00 pm
- Who can participate: 4-H, FFA, Scouting America, or Girl Scouts

Classes

- Decorated Hat: with a hanger provided by the participant
- Decorated Wreath: with hanger provided by participant
- Decorated Grapevine Wreath: with hanger provided by participant
- Silk Flower Bud Vase: vase provided by participant
- Silk Flower Arrangement:
- Decorated Shovel: Choose any shovel, from a hand trowel to a scoop shovel. Shovels can be painted or decorated.

Awards are awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners in each division.

Jr. Fair Gardening & Open Class

Open Class

Sunflower Contest

- Arrival time: Wednesday between 9:00 & 1:00.
- Judging: Tuesday after 6:00 pm
- Who can participate: 4-H, FFA, Scouting America or Girl Scouts

Rules:

- Grow any variety, color, or size of sunflower.
- This is a fun contest, so let's see what you can do with a sunflower seed.
- Bring the head only and a glass container for water.
- Let's see which one the judge likes the best.

Tallest Corn Stalk Contest

- Arrival time: Wednesday between 9:00 & 1:00.
- Judging: Wednesday after 6:00 pm
- Who can participate: 4-H, FFA, Scouting America, or Girl Scouts

Rules:

- Stalk must have a root ball. The root ball must be in a 5-gallon container that does not leak, so the stalk can be watered.
- The measurement will be from the top of the root ball to the tallest part of the stalk or tassel.
- You may get a corn stalk from a farmer's field (with permission) or grow your own. Growing your own allows you to nurture and fertilize it however you choose.

Awards are awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners in each division.

Jr. Fair Gardening & Open Class

Flowering & Foliage Potted Plants & Individual Vegetables

General Rules:

- Entry must have been cared for by a 4-H, FFA, Scouting America, or Girl Scouts participant.
- One entry per class per exhibitor.

Guidelines for Flower Judging:

- **Uniformity:** All specimens should be uniform in size, shape, and color. An exhibit with four average specimens and one exceptional specimen will not score as high as an exhibit with five average specimens.
- **Freedom from Defects:** Specimens selected for exhibits should be free from defects such as insect injury, disease, growth cracks, yellowing, and wilting defects
- **Maturity:** All flowers should be at the best stage for immediate display when they are exhibited. Under-mature or over-mature specimens are not desirable unless specified.
- **Size:** Average- sized specimens rank higher than extremely large or extremely small specimens.
- **Cleanliness:** All specimens should be clean. Remove yellow or dead leaves and ensure all soil has been removed from stems and leaves.
- **True to Variety Name:** Each specimen selected should be true to the name and characteristics of the displayed variety.
- **Arrangements of Flowers:** Exhibitors can add to the attractiveness of their exhibit by arranging their flowers neatly in the container being used.

Guidelines for Vegetable Judging

- **Uniformity:** All specimens should be uniform in size, shape, and color. An exhibit with four average specimens and one exceptional specimen will not score as high as an exhibit with five average specimens.
- **Freedom from Defects:** Specimens selected for exhibits should be free from defects such as insect injury, disease, growth cracks, air cracks, greening, mechanical injury, and shriveling.
- **Maturity:** All vegetables should be at the best stage for immediate consumption when they are exhibited. Under-mature or over-mature specimens are not desirable unless specified.
- **Size:** Average- sized specimens rank higher than extremely large or extremely small specimens; the size to exhibit should be determined by the size most acceptable to consumers unless the class is for large specimens.
- **Cleanliness:** All specimens should be clean. Use a soft cloth or a soft brush for this purpose. Vegetables should not be washed unless necessary to remove dirt.
- **True to Variety Name:** Each specimen selected should be true to the name and characteristics of the displayed variety.
- **Arrangements on the Plate:** Exhibitors can add to the attractiveness of their exhibit by arranging the specimens neatly on the plate.

Jr. Fair Gardening & Open Class

Flowering & Foliage Potted Plants

- Arrival time: Wednesday between 9:00 & 1:00.
- Judging: Wednesday after 6:00 pm
- Who can participate: 4-H, FFA, Scouting America, or Girl Scouts

Rules:

- Each pot may have up to three plants of the same specimen, and in bloom.
- Plants should have grown in a container for at least two months and show strong root development.
- Plants and containers should be clean and ready for display
- Common names of plants must be written on the back of the entry tag.

Classes:

1. Petunias
2. Geraniums
3. Coleus (not in bloom)
4. African Violet (crown in bloom)
5. French Marigold (Safari Series, Janie Series, Durango Series, Bonanza Series)
6. Begonia (Fibrous)
7. Vine (may include more than one plant)
8. Cacti or other succulent (one type of plant per pot)
9. Open Class: any potted plant other than the specimens listed above.

**Awards: Rosettes or awards are to be given to the individual in each division who accumulates the most points.
1st place- 3 points, 2nd place- 2 points, 3rd place- 1 point**

Jr. Fair Gardening & Open Class

Individual Vegetables

- Arrival time: Wednesday between 9:00 & 1:00.
- Judging: Wednesday after 6:00 pm
- Who can participate: 4-H, FFA, Scouting America, or Girl Scouts

Rules:

- Quantity of vegetables to display varies by class (see classes for quantity)
- Paper plates will be provided for all entries
- Only one entry per class per exhibitor.

Classes:

1. Red Tomatoes: (without calyx)- 3
2. Yellow Tomatoes: (without calyx)- 3
3. Salad Tomatoes: (pear, cherry, or pasta with calyx)- 10
4. Green Bush Beans: (semi-mature)- 10 pods
5. Yellow Wax Beans: (semi-mature)- 10 pods
6. Lima Beans: (semi-mature)- 10 pods
7. Sweet Corn: (husk and silk removed from one side; top to bottom)- 3 ears
8. Yellow Onions: (outer scale and 2" stem remaining)- 3
9. White Onions: (outer scale and 2" stem remaining)- 3
10. Red Onions: (outer scale and 2" stem remaining)- 3
11. Table Beets: (smooth, tap root remaining)- 3
12. Carrots: (cut tops)- 3
13. Cucumbers: (any variety)- 3
14. Sweet Peppers (bell type)- 3
15. Banana Peppers- 3
16. White Potatoes- 3
17. Red Potatoes- 3
18. Cabbage: (2 sets of outer leaves remaining, any variety)- 1
19. Watermelon: (any variety)- 1
20. Muskmelon- 2
21. Pumpkin: (any variety)- 1
22. Squash Summer: (Bush, scallop, white or yellow)- 2
23. Squash Summer: (Zucchini)- 2
24. Squash Summer: (Crook Neck)- 2
25. Squash Summer: (Straight Neck)- 2
26. Squash Winter: (Acorn)- 1
27. Squash Winter: (Butternut)- 1
28. Eggplant: (any variety)- 1

**Awards: Rosettes or awards are to be given to the individual in each division who accumulates the most points.
1st place- 3 points, 2nd place- 2 points, 3rd place- 1 point**

Jr. Fair Gardening & Open Class

Hanging Basket & Potted Planter

- Arrival time: Wednesday between 9:00 & 1:00.
- Judging: Wednesday after 6:00 pm
- Who can participate: 4-H & FFA youth participating in the Junior Fair.

General Rules:

- Entry must have been cared for by 4-H/FFA participant.
- Divisions:
 - Junior: 8-13 years of age as of January 1.
 - Senior: 14-19 years of age as of January 1.
- Plants should have grown in a container for at least two months and show strong root development.
- Plants and containers should be clean and ready for display
- Common names of plants must be written on the back of the entry tag.
- A Best of Class will be awarded along with the Grand & Reserve Champions for each division.
- Junior & Senior Grand Champions and Reserve Grand Champions are to be auctioned during the Livestock Sale. The buyer retains the project. Yardage fee on Champions is 10% (7% to Gardening Division, 3% to Auction)

Hanging Basket

- Baskets must have a suitable hanger for pipe rods or a similar style hanging.

Specimens may include, but are not limited to:

- Flowering Annuals (including Coleus, Impatiens, Petunias, Fibrous Begonias, Geraniums)
- Ferns & Ivies, cascading or vining (including Swedish Ivy & Pothos)
- Other foliage (not included in the above specimens)

Potted Planter

- Planter must include three or more different specimens of plants in one container.

Specimens may include, but are not limited to:

- Petunia, Begonia (fibrous), Geraniums, Coleus (not in bloom), French Marigold
- Vine (may be more than one plant), Cacti & other Succulents, Salvia
- Any plant other than the above specimen

Jr. Fair Gardening & Open Class

On the Spot Flower Arranging

- Check-in: Thursday @ 10:00 am
- Tutorial: 10:30 am
- Contest: 11:00 am
- Who can participate: This is open to any youth or adult.

General Rules:

- Contestants will arrange garden cut annual flowers.
- Gardening Division will furnish flowers and containers.
- Contestants are recommended to bring scissors as they are in limited quantity.
- The arrangement and contestant will be critiqued and scored in the presence of a judge.
- There will be a clinic open to the public on how to arrange fresh flowers.
- Adults may participate if enough materials are available. (Donation of \$5.00 preferred)