

STAFF EXPECTATIONS OF COUNTY FAIR JUDGES

When you are asked to judge a county fair, here is a checklist of what the county Extension office or county fair staff will expect of you:

- Stay up to date on new knowledge and trends in photography. Attend judge's training if offered.
- Take time to understand the capabilities and personal likes of the grade levels that you are judging.
- Respond promptly when asked to judge. If you aren't available, offer names of others that might be qualified to judge.
- Read all material provided in advance. Become thoroughly familiar with the local fair book and current project literature.
- Communicate in advance if you have questions, problems or suggestions.
- Arrive on time for judging. Be mentally and physically ready. Dress comfortably, but professionally.
- Consult with the staff or superintendent to clarify your understanding of local exhibit requirements and standards. Do not assume anything. Ask and be sure.
- Consult with the superintendent and fair helpers if questions or problems arise. Be assertive enough to handle difficult situations if necessary.
- Be friendly, courteous and tactful with all staff, volunteers and exhibitors.
- Use the guidelines on conference judging to involve exhibitors. Identify both the good points of an exhibit and those that need improvement. Offer suggestions for further improvement. Make criticism constructive. Avoid absolute criticisms.
- Consider each youth individually. Encourage exhibitors to evaluate their own work.
- Give reasons for your decisions and placings, not opinions. Give clear explanations and factual statements. Be ready to explain placings. Your decisions are final.
- Don't let your personal likes or dislikes show when you judge. Be neutral and objective.
- Be consistent. Don't give top placings if exhibits are not worthy. Maintain your criteria and standards throughout the day.
- Work with reasonable speed to accommodate the number of exhibits and exhibitors.
- Accommodate parents and leaders who want to join your individual conferences, but let them know that the exhibitor must answer the questions.
- Keep state fair exhibits and county merit awards in mind throughout the judging so selection can be done more easily at the end.
- Stay until judging is over and you have completed merit award selections. Be willing to judge later than you expected. Unavoidable delays may occur.
- Help other judges if necessary and if qualified.
- Check out with staff before you leave. Turn in mileage, bills, hours, etc., promptly.
- After the fair, give staff members any feedback on improvements needed for next year. It's nice to hear when things go well, too!

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