

## **MSU Extension Publication Archive**

Archive copy of publication, do not use for current recommendations. Up-to-date information about many topics can be obtained from your local Extension office.

Effective Crop Exhibits  
Michigan State University Extension Service  
Howard C. Rather, Farm Crops  
Issued July 1921  
24 pages

The PDF file was provided courtesy of the Michigan State University Library

**Scroll down to view the publication.**

FILE COPY  
DISTRIBUTION

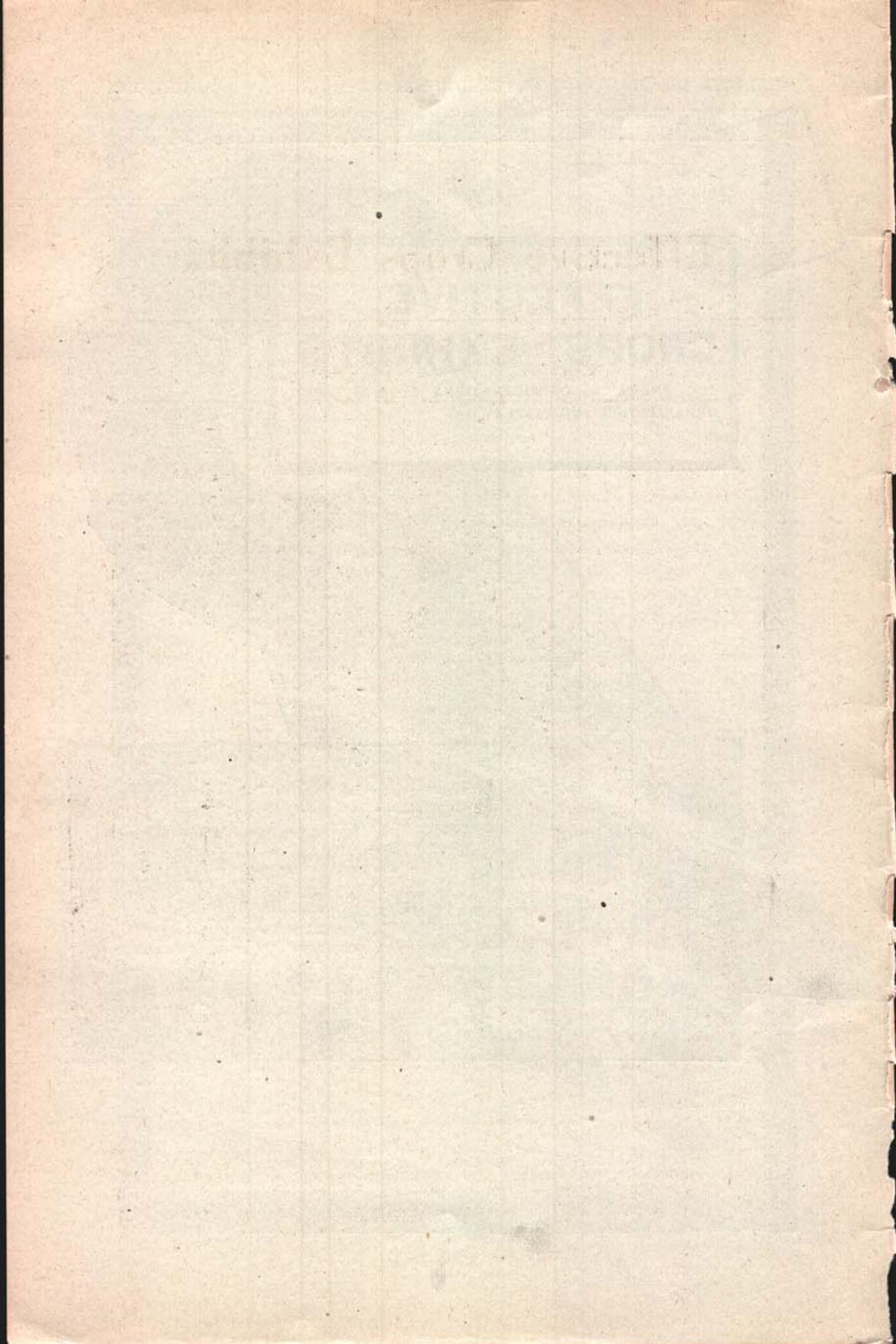
## EFFECTIVE CROPS EXHIBITS

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS GOVERN THEIR  
ORGANIZATION AND DISPLAY.



Michigan Agricultural College, Extension Division  
E. J. Baldwin, Director, East Lansing

Printed and distributed in furtherance of the purposes of the co-operative agricultural extension work provided for in act of congress March 8, 1914, Michigan Agricultural College, and U. S. Department of Agriculture co-operating.



# Effective Crops Exhibits

---

HOWARD C. RATHER  
Extension Specialist in Farm Crops.

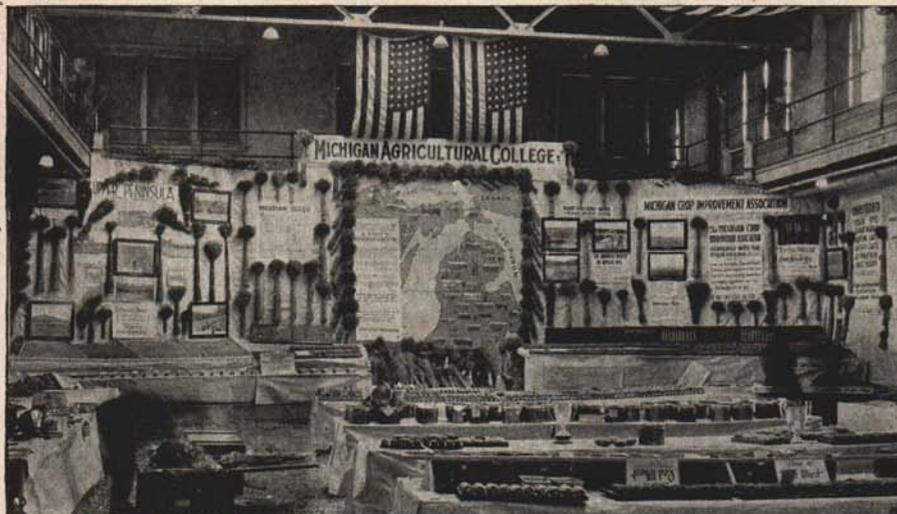
---

With the attention of farmers being drawn more closely than ever before to the use of quality seed, the exhibits of field crops, grains and seeds at our agricultural fairs have assumed a new importance. The rapid growth of co-operative marketing has also caused many farmers to appreciate the importance of producing crops of superior quality, for under the co-operative system they can more directly realize upon better quality when their products are marketed.

The result of selling crops on a quality basis is illustrated by the experience of two farmers in Southern Michigan. Both had clover seed to sell. They were offered exactly the same price locally, under the usual system, which of necessity bases its prices upon the average quality in the community. However, they both chose to make use of their co-operative agency, the Farm Bureau Seed Department. One had seed of inferior quality which contained in large amounts thirteen different kinds of weed seeds, among which were 1,050 buckhorn seeds per pound. His return was 50 cents a bushel less than he had been offered locally. The other's seed was of high quality and cleaned to better than 99 per cent pure. A seventeen bushel lot brought \$22 more by being sold co-operatively on a quality basis than the best offer this farmer had received on the local market.

Not only is quality the basis for successful co-operative marketing, but where farmers sell through the ordinary channels they and the dealers both recognize a mutual advantage in the production and handling of high-grade products for the general market.

Realizing, more than ever, the importance of quality for both seed and market purposes, farmers have a new interest in crops exhibits—exhibits which bring out the best achievements in crop production for greater profits and the factors that have made such achievements possible.



Grain Shows point out the standard of production for a better market.

### Kinds of Crops Exhibits

Exhibits of farm crops might be classified by the extent of territory from which entries come. They range in size from the community fair, or local seed show, to the International Grain and Hay Show, which draws from the whole of the United States and Canada. The most common crops exhibit is that held at a county, district, or state fair. The community fairs held by Granges, Farmers' Clubs or Farm Bureaus have also become more important, while the International Grain and Hay Show and the annual show of the Michigan Crop Improvement Association are exerting a vital influence for better crop production each year and are attracting an increasing number of Michigan exhibits.

## THE COUNTY FAIR

The crops show at the agricultural fair is most widely known at present. Held when the harvest season is just drawing to a close and in connection with livestock shows and other features which bring in large crowds of farmers, it really affords an excellent opportunity to bring out the best there is in crop production. Too often the crops exhibit has been submerged by an array of cheap entertainment, gambling and near-gambling booths which have not appealed to farmers. These have cheapened an institution designed for educational purposes and capable of rendering a big service in agricultural development.

The Superintendent of the Agricultural Products Division is in charge of the Crops Show, and a great deal of its success is dependent upon the ability and enthusiasm of this man. He must personally solicit

entries, get out his publicity and premium lists early, and make farmers appreciate the fact that real benefits are to be derived from competing at his show.

Realizing that farmers often have difficulty in transporting material to and from the fair, and also the natural inertia to be overcome before they will bring their grain in, it is a good plan to give all possible aid in making this part of the exhibitor's work easier. Several county fairs in Michigan send out trucks to bring in the exhibits. Others help pay the freight or give such assistance, suited to local needs, as will prove an inducement to farmers to come and exhibit.

Publicity for the crops show must go out early. The man who shows sheaf or forage samples has to make his selections from the growing crop, and if information reaches him early, preferably within three weeks before harvest, he can select and properly prepare samples which will make a creditable exhibit.

### **Proper Premiums Important**

Among the main considerations confronting fair organizations are the inducements offered to exhibitors. Most county fairs are giving premiums which fall far short of covering the cost of preparation. While cash premiums should not be the primary consideration, still there is room for a reasonable increase where there are practicable means of getting the money. Nearly all county and district fair secretaries interviewed in Michigan believe that larger premiums would serve as a big stimulus to more entries and that they would be practicable. More premiums in a given class would also be an added inducement to farmers.

### **Emphasize Main Crops**

Too many premium lists cover a great variety of grains and seeds of no particular commercial importance in that locality. This sort of list caters to the professional type of exhibitor who makes a business of growing or gathering a bit of everything in a small way so that he can fill all classes, in many of which he will have no competition. He thus takes away most of the prize money, and the farmer who grows the important crops of the county must leave with only a small prize for his crop of real commercial value.

Crops like black oats, spring rye, or beardless barley are not widely grown in any Michigan county and should be given only a minor place in the premium list. It is hardly desirable to offer different premiums for different varieties really belonging to the same class. For instance, one county offers prizes of \$1.50 and 75 cents for first and second on Leaming, Pride of the North, Duncan and Pickett corn, which would all come under the one class, yellow dent. That \$9 devoted to one class and split four ways would make the prize worth while. Another premium list has separate classes for Wisconsin Pedigree and Oderbrucker barley, the former being a selection from the Oderbrucker. Since a

judge cannot tell the two apart, there is nothing to prevent a grower from exhibiting grain from the same bin in both classes and taking away a double premium. Classes may be provided for the different types, such as 6-rowed and 2-rowed barley, yellow and white dent, and flint corn, red and white winter wheat, and so on. Where they are thus com-



Cups and trophies are desirable for sweepstakes or special awards.

pared year after year in the same class there is opportunity to bring out the best variety for that community. Corn, wheat, oats, barley, rye, beans, the clovers, alfalfa, and soybeans, adapted to Michigan and widely grown by practical farmers—these are the crops deserving emphasis.

### Special Inducements for Pedigreed Varieties

Special premiums for exhibits of standard pedigreed varieties have merit. They serve to stimulate better and more economical crop production thru the use of pure, high-yielding seed. Having each exhibitor in such a class produce his Michigan Crop Improvement Association registration number for the current year will give sufficient evidence that the variety is in its proper class.

Splitting the county into three or four sections often proves desirable, especially in the corn classes. This holds to the main purpose of standardizing on the best varieties and tends to bring a greater number of farmers in as exhibitors. It makes smaller premiums in a given class necessary, but this objection can be overcome by offering particularly attractive prizes for sweepstakes.



A Club exhibit at the Eaton County Fair.

### Utility Prizes Desirable

While, as has been said, larger cash prizes are desirable and in many cases warranted, they should not be made the primary object of the show. Utility prizes are very much worth while. A pound of Hubam clover seed, given by the Michigan Crop Improvement Association at a recent show, not only brought out competition but also served to help introduce, through desirable channels, a very promising forage crop. Books on crop production and subscriptions to good farm papers all lend to the educational value of the show and serve to make it agricultural rather than professional. Cups, trophies, medals, and ribbons appeal to the exhibitor's pride and are worthy prizes for sweepstakes and special awards.

### Make Special Displays Practical

Special displays are valuable parts of Crops Exhibitions and lend much to the general beauty of the show. Too often, however, they have not attained their best possibilities. One premium list offers \$15 to the largest display containing at least twenty different varieties. It is seldom that such an exhibit will have any great merit. Few farmers can afford the time for collecting it, and certainly no farmer should be producing that many varieties. **Too many varieties are already being grown, and fairs will be working in the interests of better agriculture if their inducements tend toward standardizing on the most valuable type rather than growing more types.**

With this in view some organizations make the award simply to the best crops display and leave the details to the ability and ingenuity of the exhibitor. An excellent display of this nature was shown one fall at the Unity Grange Fair in Branch County. It contained only one crop, corn,—corn of very high quality labeled to show its adaptability and productivity in that locality.

### Interesting Community Displays

Much interest and wholesome rivalry each season is being stimulated in properly conducted community, club, and farm bureau exhibits. In view of the great importance of the co-operative movement in agriculture the fair secretary who lines up with and utilizes the existing organizations to the fullest extent is doing the most constructive good in his community. Here again the points of quality and educational value should be emphasized rather than encouraging the display of an elaborate mass of valueless material.

The Caro Fair each year has excellent displays put on by five Community Farmers' Clubs. These have proved to be the greatest feature of this fair and arouse much interest and keen competition. \$300.00 is divided four ways, one club dropping out each year and leaving the field to the other four.

As an inducement to both number and quality of exhibits, special premiums may be offered to the organization or township whose mem-

bers or residents win the greatest number of prizes. Often such a premium has given the secretary a valuable helper in some person who gets his neighbors to make creditable entries that the prize may come to that community.

### Learning from the Winners

It is highly desirable that placards be posted on the prize winning samples setting forth their points of superiority. Too often they are judged while no one is near and merely tagged with no explanation whatever. Visitors not schooled in the art of judging lose the great educational value of the show by not knowing why one sample is better than the other and having no means of finding out. During a few extra minutes each prize winner can be labeled as to variety, adaptability, and the characteristics which make it superior. Some exhibitors themselves prepare small placards showing added points of interest concerning their entries. The practice should be encouraged. It is of value, not only to the public but also to the exhibitor, especially if he wishes to derive additional benefits from the quality of his product by making seed sales.

A feature of some Canadian shows is the sale of prize winning samples. A purchase price is offered with first premium when the judges deem the sample worthy of such sale, and at the end of the show the samples are auctioned to the highest bidder.

### Uniform Containers Attractive

Nothing takes so much from the attractiveness of the shows as a whole as to have each exhibitor display his entry in a make-shift con-

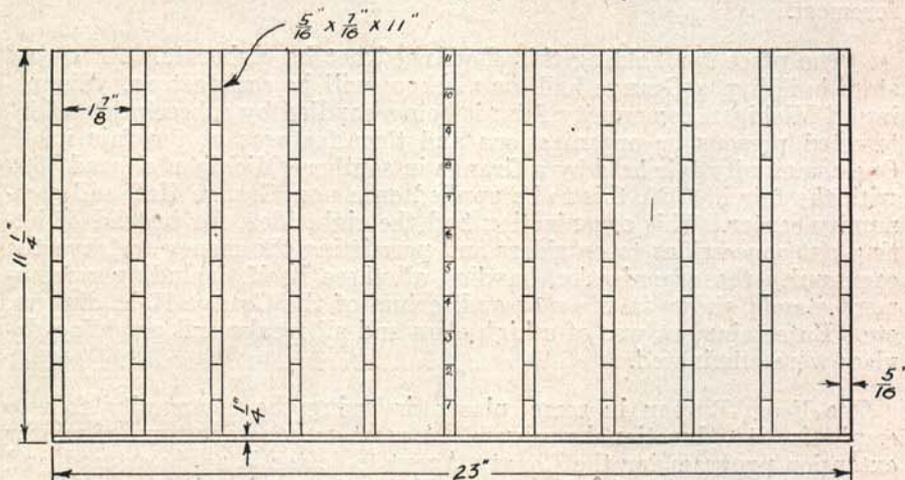


Figure 1. A very good corn tray may be made according to the dimensions given in the diagram. Two cleats, one-half inch thick, should be fastened to the bottom of the tray near either end to raise it slightly off the table so that it may be handled more easily.

tainer. The general appearance is pretty much dependent upon the fair organization. Uniform containers for grains and seeds, uniform trays for corn, and flats for potatoes,—these should be classed as essentials.

Round tin measures, such as are used by the Michigan Crop Improvement Association, are excellent for showing grains. The International Grain and Hay Show uses a standard wooden container for the peck samples. A very good corn tray can be made cheaply from light quarter-inch material, according to plans given in figure 1. Flats for potatoes arranged on a sloping table top will permit spectators to take in, almost at a glance, the comparative quality of the samples. All of these will add much to the appearance of the show and greatly facilitate the work of the judges.

---

## THE COMMUNITY FAIR

The grain show held in connection with the community fair, Grange, or Farm Bureau meeting is becoming of increasing importance. Those held in Michigan have usually avoided the mistakes of the larger fairs and have succeeded in making real farmers' shows.

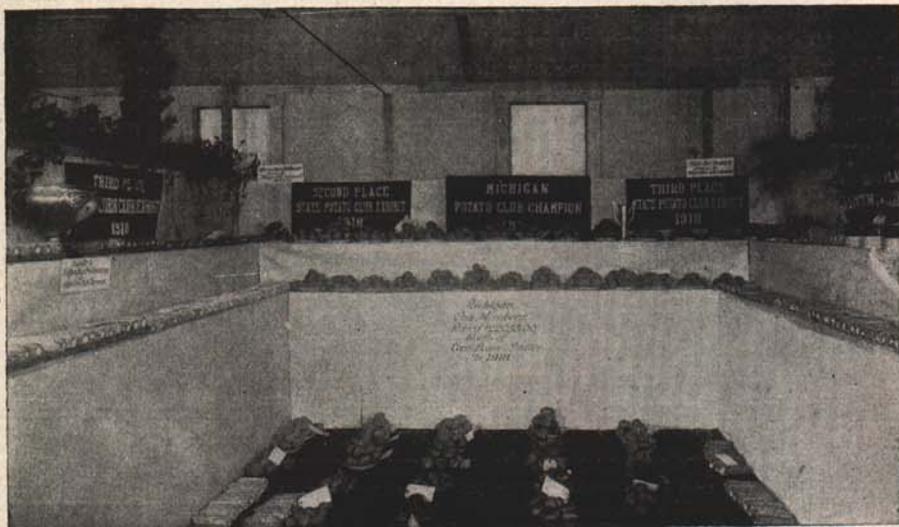
The general principles governing these shows are similar to those ruling the larger fairs. Cash premiums are of less importance. They may be dispensed with altogether if need be, and where they tend to become the chief object of the exhibitor they may even do harm. Quality of produce, a friendly competition, and community spirit should be held foremost.

The place for holding this show need not be elaborate. An empty store building, a Grange hall, or a school will be satisfactory. Financing of Michigan community fairs is being handled by subscription of interested persons or organizations and thru features at the fair itself. One community fair held by a Grange in southern Michigan cleared \$600 with the fair in 1920, this to be applied on a new Grange Hall and community center. This organization had the right idea, for instead of letting out concessions to outsiders and permitting the money to leave the community the organization handled all these itself, including refreshment stands, shows in the new auditorium of the Grange Hall, dinners, etc. Entertainment was of a high class and all freaks and gambling devices were eliminated.

The Farm Bureau in some places is using the community fair to emphasize its educational program. A most satisfactory type of winter extension program for the County Agent to foster is a winter seed and poultry show, combined. These go well together and make a much more effective program, from the standpoint of both interest and educational value, than merely a lecture meeting. A talk is most effective when the speaker has the material at hand for emphasis and illustration.

### A Feature for the Boys and Girls

The Boys' and Girls' club exhibit is of great importance at any fair. Splendid records are being made by Michigan boys and girls in this work. One sample of corn shown by a Genesee County boy not only won sweepstakes at the local show but placed first in its class at the national corn show held in Louisiana,—an achievement worthy of the best



Boys' and Girls' Club Exhibits are important features at the successful grain show.

farmer in Michigan. The most effective work in this field is being done on a project basis where the boy grows and selects his corn and the prize is awarded with profitable returns as the main consideration. It is best to consult with the State Club Leader, East Lansing, Michigan, for co-operation in this phase of the exhibit.

### Standards Set for Organized Production

With organized marketing naturally bringing about organization for production, the grain show can be an important agency in pointing out the best production for the highest market. True co-operative marketing means that the farmer can realize on wheat of superior milling quality, on the plump uniform kernels of Rosen Rye, on his clean pure clover seed, or his high grade corn. And now, more than ever, he wants to know what that standard of quality is. As one exhibitor at a community show in Manistee county said, "I have been well repaid for my trouble in exhibiting by learning the type of corn I can expect to grow here, and I have had a guide for my future selection work established."

The great spread of Rosen Rye throughout Michigan and the whole United States has been materially aided by the splendid showing it al-

ways makes in the grain shows. Its record at Chicago in 1919 and 1920 has given it international distribution, as well as international fame. Its quality, as brought out in grain shows, along with its ability to yield well, has made it standard in Michigan. This same tendency is showing with varieties of other crops, for their good characteristics can be emphatically brought to the attention of the community at the community fair.

The community seed show offers an excellent opportunity to link up agricultural education with good farming. Farmers visiting over exhibit tables bring out points in culture that make for high quality, profitable yields. Talks by specialists on various agricultural topics, if the meeting be indoors, and educational exhibits by the school, the farm bureau, or agricultural club are all being featured at various community shows.

---

## POINTS IN PRACTICAL EXHIBIT MANAGEMENT

**Judging**—Competent, disinterested judges should be secured. The Michigan Agricultural College can usually co-operate in this work. Where outside judges can not be secured, a committee of three farmers not exhibiting may be used with satisfactory results.

**Defining Classes**—Definite specification of what and how much is to be exhibited should be made. "Best exhibit of corn" throws the class open to an entry of any size and leaves the judge in a quandary. Ten ears of yellow dent corn, one peck of red winter wheat, one quart of alsike clover,—these are the sizes most often used, and such specification makes matters clear to both the judge and the exhibitor. Special classes for 100 ears of corn or larger samples of grain lead to a bigger and better show.

**Classifying and Recording the Entries**—This is a problem which varies so greatly with the size and nature of the different fairs or shows that no one system would be likely to suit all conditions. From the exhibitor's name one should readily be able to find all the entries he has made, and from the entry tag find who the exhibitor is without having his name appear on the tag. Some fairs give the exhibitor a number which appears on all of his entry tags. This greatly simplifies matters but has one disadvantage in that judges soon can pick out the number of a large exhibitor and this may cause an undesirable influence.

The International Grain and Hay Show uses a tag bearing the exhibitor's name on an end which is folded over and does not appear until after the judging. His entry number in each class may be different. A double entry system will furnish all needed information, one list giving the names of all exhibitors grouped by the last name initial and showing all entries made in each class, the other being arranged by

classes and showing names and entry numbers of all exhibitors in that class. For most shows the latter list will be sufficient. The entry tag should have a duplicate stub to be given to the exhibitor as a receipt. With these stubs he can readily find his exhibits when he is ready to pack up.

**Mixing of Samples**—It is a regrettable fact, particularly at the larger shows where the cash premium is quite large, that certain individuals will stoop to unscrupulous means of getting the award. Changing entry tags, mixing competitors' samples, and actual theft have been resorted to. Such acts have made necessary certain precautions. There must be no marking of containers by the exhibitor. His name should not appear on the sample until after the awards are made. Entry numbers should be written on the container and absolutely no handling of samples should be permitted.

A very effective means of preventing mixtures and still keeping the grain out where all can see it, is to cover the entry in its container with a pasteboard or tin pan cover, the entry tag being on the inside. A portion of the grain is poured on the cover so that the public may see and compare the entries before the judging. The judging is made from the main samples, which can then be left open and tagged. A close wire mesh or a glass cover might also be used. Any exhibitor caught in an unsportsmanlike or unfair act should be barred from all future competition.

**Clipping and Treating**—Clipping, rubbing, scouring, bleaching, or treating samples in any way to improve their weight or appearance is undesirable, inasmuch as it injures the seed value of the grain. Oats or barley clipped to the extent that the endosperm is disclosed should be disqualified at the discretion of the judges. This gives sufficient leeway to allow the placing of such a sample ahead of an untreated sample very inferior, and at the same time prevents the unfair competition of treated grain with untreated entries of high quality. Naturally the samples would have to show a considerable proportion of clipped or scoured grains before the judges would be justified in disqualifying them.

Handpicking does no harm and really improves the seed value of the sample. With beans, where this practice is the usual thing, there seems to be no great reason why it should not be permitted. Some shows require a sample taken before handpicking, while others permit the practice for all grains. As identifying such entries is difficult, the latter system will really promote harmony.

In order to select the best ears of corn it is necessary to remove two or three kernels. If they are taken from the same place a judge will not discriminate against this practice, for he recognizes its necessity in making a wise selection.

**Withholding Premiums**—Nothing hurts a show so much as to see blue ribbons on inferior samples. Judges and organizations who refuse to award premiums to such samples, even tho there be no competition, are bound to keep up the strength and high class of their show.

**Number of Entries in a Given Class**—Organizations and exhibitors alike are finding it to their advantage to permit each exhibitor to make only one entry in a given class. When this is done the exhibitor can give more attention to the preparation of his sample, and the competition is between different farmers, rather than between samples from the same farm. In no case should an exhibitor be allowed more than one prize in a class.

## PREMIUM LIST

The following suggested premium list for county fairs is well within the reach of the average organization. Several counties spend approximately this amount on premiums, while some of the larger county and district fairs spend much more. It is designed to lay emphasis on those crops of greatest economic importance in Michigan and varies somewhat from many lists that are put out. Wherever more money is available it is suggested that premiums be increased proportionally. Appropriate ribbons are to be given with all prizes.

Class No.	CORN	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
1.	Ten ears of yellow dent.....	\$2.00	\$1.00	\$.50	Ribbon	Ribbon
2.	Ten ears of white dent.....	2.00	1.00	.50	Ribbon	Ribbon
3.	Ten ears of white cap or any other dent .....	1.50	1.00	.50	Ribbon	Ribbon
4.	Ten ears of flint corn..... (Flint corn premiums larger in northern counties.)	1.50	1.00	.50	Ribbon	Ribbon
5.	Ten ears of popcorn.....	1.50	1.00	.50	Ribbon	Ribbon
6.	One hundred ears of any variety....	5.00	3.00	2.00	\$ 1.00	\$ 1.00
7.	Sweepstakes, best ten ears any variety. Open to winners in classes 1, 2, 3 and 4. Cup, ribbon, utility prize, with ribbon.*					
8.	Best single ear any variety. Trophy, ribbon, one year's subscription to farm paper with ribbon.					

Class No.	WHEAT	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
9.	One peck red winter wheat.....	\$2.00	\$1.00	\$.50	Ribbon	Ribbon
10.	One peck white winter wheat.....	2.00	1.00	.50	Ribbon	Ribbon
11.	One peck spring wheat..... (In counties where spring wheat is widely grown.)	2.00	1.00	.50	Ribbon	Ribbon
12.	Sweepstakes, best peck of any variety. Open to winners in classes 9, 10 and 11. Trophy, ribbon and 50 pounds flour.					

Class No.	OATS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
13.	One peck oats, any variety.....	\$2.00	\$1.00	\$.50	Ribbon	Ribbon
14.	One peck pedigreed oats..... (Exhibitor to present registration number from The Michigan Crop Improvement Association.)	2.00	1.00	.50	Ribbon	Ribbon
15.	Sweepstakes, open to winners in classes 13 and 14. Trophy, ribbon.					

\*Suggestions from which only one should be chosen for the prize.

Class No.	BARLEY*	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
16.	One peck white six-row barley.....	\$2.00	\$1.00	\$ .50	Ribbon	Ribbon
17.	One peck Black Barless barley.....	2.00	1.00	.50	Ribbon	Ribbon
18.	Sweepstakes, best peck of barley any variety. Open to winners in classes 16 and 17. Trophy, ribbon.					

Class No.	RYE	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
19.	One peck Rosen rye.....	\$5.00	\$3.00	\$1.50	\$1.00	\$1.00

Class No.	SHEAF EXHIBITS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
20.	Best sheaf of wheat.....	\$1.00	\$ .50	-----	-----	-----
21.	Best sheaf of oats.....	1.00	.50	-----	-----	-----
22.	Best sheaf of barley.....	1.00	.50	-----	-----	-----
23.	Best sheaf of rye.....	1.00	.50	-----	-----	-----
24.	Best bundle of alfalfa.....	1.00	.50	-----	-----	-----
25.	Best bundle of timothy.....	1.00	.50	-----	-----	-----
26.	Best bundle of sweet clover.....	1.00	.50	-----	-----	-----
27.	Best bundle of June or mammoth clover .....	1.00	.50	-----	-----	-----
28.	Best bundle of alsike clover.....	1.00	.50	-----	-----	-----
Grain sheaves to be three inches, forage crop bundles four inches in diameter below heads.						

Class No.	BEANS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
29.	One peck white pea or medium.....	\$2.00	\$1.00	\$ .50	Ribbon	Ribbon
30.	One peck kidney beans, any variety	2.00	1.00	.50	Ribbon	Ribbon
31.	One peck any other variety field beans .....	2.00	1.00	.50	Ribbon	Ribbon
32.	One peck any variety soybeans....	2.00	1.00	.50	Ribbon	Ribbon
33.	One peck any variety field peas.....	2.00	1.00	.50	Ribbon	Ribbon

Class No.	MISCELLANEOUS	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
34.	One peck buckwheat, any variety	\$1.50	\$ .75	Ribbon	Ribbon	Ribbon
35.	One quart alfalfa (Michigan grown) .....	2.00	1.00	\$ .50	Ribbon	Ribbon
36.	One quart medium or mammoth clover .....	2.00	1.00	.50	Ribbon	Ribbon
37.	One quart sweet clover.....	2.00	1.00	.50	Ribbon	Ribbon
38.	Four quarts winter vetch.....	2.00	1.00	.50	Ribbon	Ribbon

Class No.	SPECIALS**	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
39.	Best display of pedigreed and certified seed and sheaf grains produced on one farm. There should not be more than one variety of the same grain shown by one exhibitor. Judging should be on basis of quality, neatness of arrangement, suitability of crops to the same farm, and adaptability of varieties.	\$10.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 3.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 1.00

\*In regions where two-row or hulless barley is grown, or at state fairs, classes should be offered for these varieties.

\*\*Counties having a number of farmers interested in pedigreed seed should provide a special class in each grain for the standard pedigreed varieties adapted to local conditions. Before making this class it would be well to confer with the Secretary of The Michigan Crop Improvement Association, East Lansing, Mich., to find out the varieties best for that county. In regions where certain crops are outstanding in importance, prizes for such crops should be increased proportionally.

40. Best community or club display of field crops; judging on basis of quality, adaptability, and practicability of crops shown, educational value, and artistic arrangement.

1st	2nd	3rd	4th
\$50.00	\$30.00	\$20.00	\$10.00

41. **JUNIOR CLUB EXHIBITS.** To be arranged with County or State Club Leader.

## SELECTING AND PREPARING THE EXHIBIT

From the exhibitor's standpoint the main consideration of the crops show should not be the cash prize he takes away. That is acceptable, to be sure, but it is a minor consideration as compared to the real value of knowing what the highest standard of quality is and the satisfaction of being able to come nearest to approaching that standard in production.

The crops show is designed to bring out the points of quality for the seeds and grains regularly produced in the area from which the show draws. It is a service institution for farmers, and farmers must make use of it if it is to be of value. The competitive exhibits of sheaves, seeds, and grains are judged so all may learn the characteristics which make them of greatest worth. An ear of Johnson County White corn, no matter how large or how perfect it may be in form and quality, has no seed value in Michigan, where it will not mature. Exhibits should be selected with a view to adaptability and practical utility as well as quality and appearance.

**Corn**—Ten well matured ears of a size that experience has taught will continue to mature under average conditions characteristic to the place where it is grown should be selected.\*

Practical points such as maturity, plumpness of kernel, quality of germ, etc., are of greatest importance in making a selection. Immaturity is indicated by a soft ear easily twisted with the hands, kernels with discolored tips, blistered kernels due to frost, and kernels badly pinched or chaffy at the top showing a lack of full development.

A good kernel carries its width well to the tip and has a good sized germ, wax-like in texture and free from discoloration.

The best ear has kernels as uniformly deep over the whole cob as is consistent with the greatest yield of mature corn. The color is bright, uniform, characteristic of the variety and free from other colors showing a mixture. Butts and tips are well filled without losing greatly in size or shape of the kernels. The indentation should be medium or smooth. Rough ears with chaffy crowned kernels are usually too late in matur-

\*For a description of Michigan types of corn read Regular Bulletin No. 289, published by the Michigan Agricultural College Experiment Station.

ing. The size of the ear varies with the region where it is grown. It should be as large as can be safely ripened,—but not too large, for this will mean immaturity.

The following score card adopted by The Michigan Crop Improvement Association will serve as a guide to the relative importance of points in selecting corn samples.

### Michigan Crop Improvement Association

#### SCORE CARD—CORN

<b>Breeding—</b>		<b>Condition—</b>	
Uniformity of ears.....	10	Germ .....	10
Uniformity of kernels.....	5	Freedom from excess moisture, molds, diseases, and immaturity	20
Shape of ear.....	10	<b>Recommendations:</b>	
Color .....	10	South District—	
<b>Adaptation—</b>		Length, 8—9½ inches.	
Length of ear.....	10	Central District—	
Circumference of ear.....	5	Length, 7¼—9 inches.	
Shape of kernel.....	10	Northern District—	
Indentation .....	5	Length, 6½—9 inches.	
Proportion of grain.....	5		

Circumference three-fourths of average length of all ears in sample.

**Wheat—**Wheat is judged on the basis of its seed value and milling quality. A good sample is uniformly bright colored, plump, and free from cracked kernels, yellowberry, mixtures, or weed and other crop seed. White wheat is soft and starchy, its flour being used largely for pastry purposes. Red wheat, as a class, is harder than white, and the harder the kernels the better is its milling quality. Red Rock wheat has been a leader at all grain shows where it has been entered, because, for a soft red winter wheat, it is exceptionally hard and possesses a high protein content characteristic of the better milling wheats.

A thorough fanning of the sample will remove dust, chaff, light kernels, and most weed seeds. Common mixtures sure to injure the quality and cause a low placing or disqualification are cockle, vetch, chess, rye or mixtures of different colored wheat.

Anything below the standard weight of 60 pounds per bushel for red wheat and 58 pounds for white is inferior. A real good sample usually weighs several pounds more than standard.

**Oats—**In making selections of oat samples for the exhibit, color, size and plumpness of kernels, and weight are primary considerations. Oats which have fully matured and been brought under cover without getting wet will have the brightest color. Heavy fanning will bring up the weight and remove chaff, pin oats, light kernels, and weed seed. Although 32 lbs. is the legal weight for a bushel of oats, a good sample usually will weigh 36 to 40 lbs. It is difficult to get Michigan oats to weigh more than 40 lbs. without clipping or rubbing, and this is to be avoided as it injures the seed value. Most shows do not permit the practice and even though this is not specified a judge will have good cause to pass the sample by because of the injury.

**Barley**—The standard weight for barley is 48 lbs. The same precautions and care in cleaning and selection are essential as with other grains. Uniformity is desired, as is freedom of weeds, diseases, cracked kernels, weevil injury, or any other thing which detracts from its value for seed. Two-rowed barley will have a more plump kernel than the six-rowed types.

**Rye**—Rosen Rye, in addition to its yielding ability, has clearly demonstrated its claim as king of all rye at the grain show. At the 1920 International Rosen won the first 29 out of thirty awards on rye. Its uniformly plump berry and its no less uniform clear, green color, along with a high weight per bushel, make it unsurpassed for quality and appearance. The sample shown by Louis Hutzler of South Manitou Island, which placed first at the International, weighed 59½ lbs. per bushel with hardly an off-shaped or off-colored kernel in it.

Cracked grains; lack of uniformity in size, shape, and color; and the presence of black rye, ergot, vetch, wheat, and weevil injury are the most common faults to be avoided in showing rye.

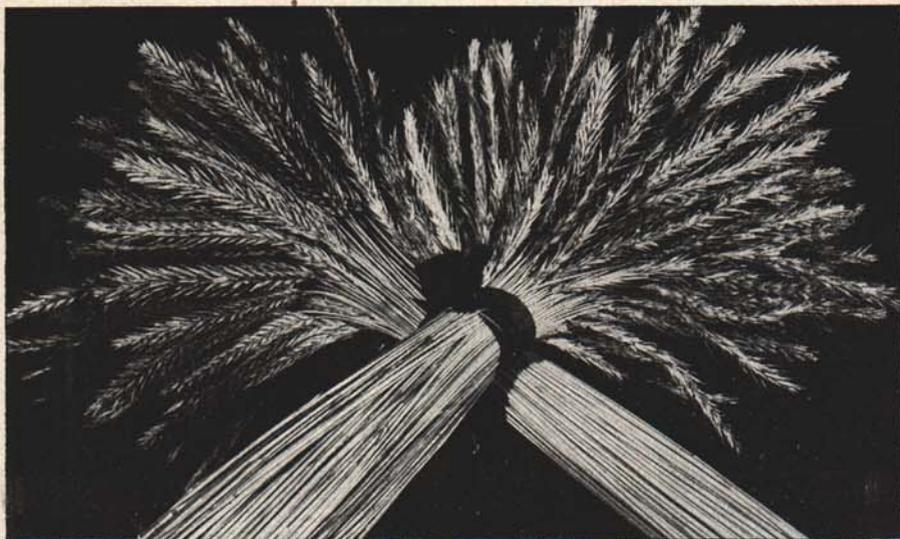
**Beans, Soy Beans, Peas**—Beans, soy beans, and similar seeds, where hand selection is allowed, should be picked with the usual standards of color, freedom from disease or injury, trueness to varietal type, and weight in mind. Where rules forbid handpicking a fanning mill will screen out much of the dirt and small seeds. Brightness, cleanliness and an adapted variety are important considerations.

**Alfalfa, Clover, and the Small Seeds**—Good cleaning machinery will remove weed seeds, light or shriveled seed, and foreign material. Alfalfa or sweet clover, when run over the scarifier, will show some empty seed coats. These should not be confused with weevil injury. Many weed seeds are hard to detect and careful examination and preparation of the sample is necessary. Weed seed mixtures are the most common faults of the small seeds exhibits.

Fairs require, whenever possible, that all crops entries be of the current season's growth. Grain, stored for a long time, will show evidence of weevil injury on the germ end and accumulated dust and dirt unless special precautions are taken. The exhibitor who saves good samples from year to year is committing an act of unfairness that is detrimental to the welfare of the exhibit and discourages entries from farmers who should be competing.

**Sheaf Samples**—Sheaf samples will be best if selected early with the exhibit in mind. If samples are taken slightly before the grain is fully mature, much shattering will be avoided. They can be cured hanging by the butts in a dark, airy room to retain the brightest color and prevent bleaching.

Sheaf samples used in the exhibits put on by the Michigan Agricultural College are carefully selected to secure clean straw free from rust, discoloration, or any disease, and having long well-filled heads. They are tied in bundles three inches in diameter and bound at both ends



Well dressed sheaves lend attractiveness to the crops exhibit.

and the middle with dark blue ribbon bands. All leaves are stripped off the outer straws, showing only the clean straight stem.

Sheaf samples for competition should come up to the size requirements asked for by Fair rules and should show the full length of the straw.

**Forage Crop Bundles**—Bundles of forage plants are shown to represent the best stage in the growth of the plant for forage or hay purposes. Sweet clover that has begun to get woody, and alfalfa or clover that has passed the good hay stage and has dried out or started to set seed does not represent its own best feeding qualities. Selections are made with this in view. Here also curing and drying in a dark, airy room will preserve color and retain the greatest number of leaves. Proper curing is perhaps more important with forage bundles than with grain sheaves. A well packed bundle or bale of hay that feels soft when handled probably has the most leaves, and as this is where most of the food value lies it is a chief indication of quality. Briars or stems of any kind foreign to the material itself are very objectionable.

## ARRANGING FARM CROPS DISPLAYS

The general Farm Crops displays are usually put on by farmers' clubs or similar organizations. They afford an excellent opportunity to stir up community enthusiasm and advertise the agricultural products of the members.

These displays are also well worth while for the individual, particularly the farmer who is making a specialty in the production of some seed and wants to give it the excellent advertising that such an exhibit will bring. These displays can also be made to indicate productivity of the land where the crops are grown, and, if practically managed, they have an advertising value in that sense.

The common mistake of all these displays is that they try to show too much. It is not the great multitude of different crops grown but the highest quality of the few standard crops that gives a community its agricultural strength. Not that a number of crops should not be on display, for any crop grown in the community has a place in the exhibit, but only a place equivalent to its agricultural importance. This means that the large milk-fed pumpkin is not going to out-rank the best peck of wheat, or some freak beet be given prominence over ten ears of fine yellow dent corn.

Vegetables and field crops can be combined in a very artistic display, and many attractive and beautiful devices worked out. Oats are very good for decorative material, as their color and loose panicles give a soft appearance to the exhibit which is very pleasing. One exhibitor at a recent Detroit fair had a border made of oat heads bound together into a long rope-like arrangement which went around the whole exhibit.

An Ingham County exhibitor makes some very attractive letters for his exhibit titles by winding the heads of oats or June grass around letter forms made from long timothy stems shaped in proper proportions.

Set pieces are designs, letters, or pictures made by glueing grain to some set background, and they give the crops tinge to what might otherwise be a lifeless design of no particular beauty.

It must be born in mind that all these features are decorative only and are of secondary importance. The real worth of the exhibit lies in having a large amount of high quality grain, seed, and sheaves labeled properly so that people can learn what they are; then, just enough decorative material and explanatory placards to give the exhibit the beauty and force to make it effective.

A very attractive farm display shown at one fair was made up entirely of corn. Cross sections of yellow dent ears on a white background made a very neat border. In the center there was a picture of the farm buildings and on each side a shock of corn with the yellow ears showing thru the green leaves. The force of the display was given by two one hundred-ear samples of excellent corn, with two placards telling about factors in its breeding and production.

A community which had standardized its wheat on Red Rock, its rye on Rosen, or its corn on a single variety could win considerable prestige and valuable advertising by showing only the one crop in its display, and pointing out the desirable features of that standardization.

Another good display could be worked out by emphasizing the pedigreed varieties produced in the community and indicating their points of superiority.

---

## EDUCATIONAL EXHIBITS

Educational exhibits are put on by schools and colleges to carry to the public ideas which will prove beneficial to agriculture.

Their weakest point, as a general rule, has been their effort to tell too much. Visitors at exhibits have no time for detailed study. The principles back of good advertising display should govern the educational exhibit. Detailed charts are out of place. They have neither force nor beauty and by far the greatest majority of visitors will pass on with only a glance. Doubtless many ideas and valuable facts are embodied in the great number of charts usually found in educational displays, but it is a practical consideration that people at fairs and expositions are in no mood to stop and read them. One idea, emphatically brought to attention in a neatly arranged exhibit, is worth more than twenty equally good ones lost in the mass of white rectangles and black figures characteristic of the average chart exhibit.

The first rule of the educational exhibit is to have an idea, and preferably only one. This idea should be told in as few forceful words as possible and then backed with the material, sheaves, grains, bundles and enlarged photographs. Photographs show certain features which cannot be carried along but which are important in the story.

### An Exhibit With a Story

The exhibit put on by the Farm Crops Department of the Michigan Agricultural College at the 1920 International Grain & Hay Show in Chicago attracted wide attention. It illustrated a method of telling a story with every single item in the exhibit serving its purpose in emphasizing the one idea in that story and making it clear.

The walls of the exhibit halls were covered with dark green burlap, which makes a rich background for any crops display. To get the full benefit of this background and avoid the confusion of a number of white rectangles on the green, all necessary signs were made on green curtain shade material which matched the burlap exactly.

The theme of the exhibit was the method which the Agricultural College fosters in Michigan for developing, increasing, distributing, and keeping pure the best of seed so that it will be available to every farmer.

This was expressed in white-bordered yellow letters by the words "Michigan Mobilized to Maintain Quality Seed." Three organizations are co-operating in Michigan with this in view.

The work of the Michigan Agricultural College Experiment Station in the development of improved varieties was illustrated by four enlarged photographs illustrating the selection of superior plants, and increasing the best varieties for general distribution. Bundles and sheaf samples of the varieties developed in this way were shown in order of their release from the station.



An educational exhibit should emphasize one idea told in as few forceful words as possible, and then backed by high quality material, sheaves, grains and enlarged photographs.

The work of the Michigan Crop Improvement Association, which produces these varieties, guarantees their purity by inspection, and follows them up thru registration, was illustrated by pictures of inspection on a Michigan farm, and inspection of the threshed samples. A large colored painting of the Association trademark added attractiveness and emphasis.

The work of distribution as carried on by the Farm Bureau Seed Department was illustrated by pictures showing the warehouse, seed being received from Michigan farmers, the cleaning of it, and sending it out to the general market in quantity lots. A miniature train was loaded with samples of several kinds of seed and labeled with an estimated amount then ready for distribution.

On the table in front of the exhibit were bins three feet square filled with seed of the high quality which this system promotes. Envelopes with a brief description of the adaptability of the variety were placed in each bin for the convenience of visitors who wanted samples. A border of pedigreed grain sheaves alternating with alfalfa bundles completed the display.

This is but one of the ways in which crops displays are adding to the influence of the main competitive exhibits at grain and seed shows. Each year more organizations are pointing their show features to a practical turn so that the influence will be toward a better and more economical crop production, resulting in greater profits to the producer.

## To Make Crops Exhibits More Effective

### Organization—

- 1—Get out publicity and premium lists early.
- 2—Give ribbons to all winners, substantial prizes or trophies for sweepstakes, larger premiums in general, and more premiums in one class.
- 3—Provide classes for crops of commercial importance with premiums in proportion to that importance.
- 4—Offer special inducements for pedigreed varieties and aid in every way possible standardization in production for a better market.
- 5—Feature practical Farmers' Club, Community, and Boys' and Girls' Club Displays.
- 6—Label winners with reasons for their superiority.
- 7—Provide uniform containers and trays.
- 8—Give close attention to the details of management.

### Display—

- 1—Make all selections for the exhibit early.
- 2—In selection for quality lay emphasis on adaptability, maturity, freedom from injury and disease, and other points which have a great influence upon the yielding ability and market value of the seed.
- 3—Clean thoroughly with a good fanning mill.
- 4—Cure sheaves and forage bundles by hanging them heads down in a dark airy room.
- 5—Large displays and educational exhibits have merit in proportion to the quality of the material shown, the attractiveness of arrangement, and the lesson they teach. This latter is of greatest importance.
- 6—Exhibits will be most effective if one idea is chosen for a theme and backed by a few appropriate signs, enlarged photographs, and quality samples of the crops about which the exhibit is concerned.

