

## Horticulture Competition Handbook

For more information, contact  
Lorie Stinson, CFE  
Exhibits and Special Events Manager  
Phone: (561) 790-5245  
Email: [lorie@southfloridafair.com](mailto:lorie@southfloridafair.com)

### IMPORTANT DATES

**Online or Paper Entry Form deadline**  
Friday, Dec. 26, 2025

**Deliver items to Building 3 at the South Florida Fair (see Page 5)**

**Items exhibited**  
Jan. 16 - Feb. 1, 2026

**Entry pickup**  
Monday, Feb 2, 2026  
9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

### Competition Overview

**Entry Fee:** FREE

**General Rules** – Page 5  
**How to enter online** – Page 6  
**Paper entry form** - Page 8

**Exhibitors are encouraged to read this handbook in its entirety.**

### Eligibility

- The Horticulture Division is open to all Florida residents ages 18+ and youth in the first grade and up.



## Entry Rules

All entries must be from their own private collection and must have been owned and grown for at least three (3) months prior to the show.

### NUMBER OF ENTRIES

#### Individual Plants:

- No more than eight (8) Individual plants per person will be accepted for judging.
- Exhibitors can enter a variety of different species in one genus. No duplication of species allowed.

#### Container and Collections:

- No more than eight (8) Containers and Collections per person may be submitted for judging.

#### Special Competitions:

- Exhibitor can enter all five (5) Special Competitions.

### SIZE AND WEIGHT OF ENTRIES

- The maximum plant size cannot be any larger than 48 inches in diameter, and must weigh less than 40 pounds (plant and container weight total).

### PREPARATION OF ENTRIES

- Plants should be entered in the correct division and class on the entry form. Assistance is available for plant identification when delivering the plants to the Fair. *If you do not know the botanical name of your plant, refer to USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service database: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/natural-resource-concerns/plants>.*
- All plants must be of exhibition quality. The Fair reserves the right to reject any plant that is substandard, either in quality or maturity.
- Plants and flowers must be cleaned, trimmed, and free from insects or disease; they must be submitted in proper clean containers (free of mold, moss, leaves and acorns).
- No double pots, stands or saucers may be used. Clean clay pot and nursery pots are acceptable for display. Absolutely no cans will be accepted. Hanging plants must be hanging from a secure device.
- Water plants well before bringing to the Fairgrounds. Plants will be watered regularly during the Fair. Special watering instructions for individual plants must be provided when plants are submitted.
- The Fair reserves the right to reject additional entered items when all available exhibit display space is filled.
- Every precaution is taken to protect your plants; however, the South Florida Fair is not responsible for any accident, loss or damage.

## Judging and Awards

The Fair ensures the judges are knowledgeable in the division in which they are judging and will be impartial. Judges reserve the right to reassign entries to a more appropriate division or class. Judging will be done using a scorecard to assist in keeping decisions as objective as possible. *The decision of the judge(s) is final.*

If, at the judge's discretion, an entry does not merit a placing, the judge shall give no award under any circumstance. This rule applies whether there is one or more exhibits in the class.

## Judging Criteria

- Form – 25 percent
- Color – 25 percent
- Size – 25 percent
- Condition – 25 percent

## Awards Information - Adult & Youth

**First Place** – South Florida Fair Ribbon

**Second Place** – South Florida Fair Ribbon

**Third Place** – South Florida Fair Ribbon

**Best of Show** – South Florida Fair Ribbon and Premium Payment

*Best of Show awards will be chosen from the first-place winners.*

# Divisions and Classes

# Adult/Youth

## Individual Plants Guidelines

- No more than eight (8) entries per person may be submitted for judging.
- Use entry rules and judging criteria on Page 2.

## Division #1: Individual Plants

### Class Description

1. Bromeliads (*any genera*)
2. Flowering plants (*any genera*)
3. Cacti and Succulents (*any genera*)
4. Foliage Plants (*any genera*)
5. Ferns (*any genera*)
6. Palms and Cycads (*any genera*)
7. Orchids (*any genera*)
8. Bonsai

## Division #2: Containers and Collections

### Class Description

1. Dish garden
2. Terrarium
3. Foliage plant collection
4. Flowering plant collection
5. Hanging container (*any kind of plants*)
6. Ornamental planter
7. Florida native's collection

## Containers and Collections Guidelines

- No more than eight (8) entries per person may be submitted for judging.
- Entered item(s) may not be more than two feet in any direction.
- Dish gardens must be in attractive containers only. No aluminum tins.
- Terrariums must have lids.
- Ornamental Planters are plants in an attractive container or weathered wood.
- All plants must be growing and well established.
- Do not use colored sand or gravel.
- Feature the plants, not accessories.
- Collections must be eight (8) different species, in one container.

## Division #3: Special Competitions

### Class Description

1. Wood pallet planter (vertical)
2. Fairy garden
3. Succulents in alternative planters
4. Cracked pot garden
5. Other not listed

### **Special Competitions Guidelines**

- No more than eight (8) entries per person may be submitted for judging.
- Must have at least eight (8) different kinds of plants (excluding succulents in alternative planters).
- All plants must be living (no artificial plants).
- Entered item(s) may not be more than four feet in any direction.
- Entered item(s) must weigh less than 40 pounds (plant and container weight total).

### **Wood Pallet Planters Guidelines**

- Must be able to be displayed vertically and stand freely.
- Pallets can contain any variety of plants.

### **Fairy Garden Guidelines**

- Can use eight (8) plants of any kind of plant.
- Can use colored sand and gravel.
- Must have a nice balance of accessories and plants. Fairy garden components (plants and accessories) can be obtained from any source.

### **Succulents in Alternative Planters Guidelines**

- Can use any amount of plants of any kind.
- Succulents must be displayed in a non-traditional planter or container.

### **Cracked Pot Garden Guidelines**

- Can use any kind of plant.
- Must be made from at least four (4) broken pots.

# General Rules

## Disclaimer

All competitive exhibits are entered at the exhibitor's risk. The South Florida Fair does not insure and is not responsible for any loss, damage, or theft of entries, even if the loss, damage, or theft occurs as the result of the handling of the exhibit by staff, volunteers, contractors and/or visitors. If the exhibitor desires insurance coverage, this coverage should be secured from a personal insurance agent prior to entry and the policy written to cover the period of exhibition and transportation. Reasonable care will be taken to prevent loss or damage to exhibits. Unauthorized persons are not permitted in the building after closing hours.

## Division/Class Cancellation

The South Florida Fair reserves the right to return entries and cancel any division or class in which, in its judgment, the entries are insufficient to secure adequate competition.

## Entry Errors

South Florida Fair is not responsible for finding errors in entries. Exhibitors are responsible for all errors which were submitted online or on entry and summary forms. No exhibitor shall be entitled to an award which has been disallowed as the result of his own error. The South Florida Fair shall withhold the payment of awards for exhibits that are ineligible and may recover awards that have been paid for ineligible entries that are disclosed during post audits of Fair records. However, exhibitors with cause are entitled to question the validity of any disallowance. Such exhibitors should inform the South Florida Fair immediately, in writing, giving their name, address, complete description of the entry and the reason for requesting reconsideration. Requests will not be considered later than 90 days after receiving notice of disallowance.

## Premium Payments

Premium awards will be paid to the Best of Show. Best of Show awards will be chosen from the first-place winners in each Division. Amounts vary depending on Division.

## Substitution

Substitutions may be made in still exhibits only in the same division of the original entry class of the original exhibitor, and may be made only if completed by the entry delivery date. Substitutions must be made at time of delivery check in. The South Florida Fair or the judge may disqualify or transfer to the correct class any entry which is not a true representative of the division or class in which it is entered.

## Previously Entered Entry

Any entry that has been exhibited at a previous South Florida Fair is not eligible for entry in this year's South Florida Fair, excluding Horticulture and Creative Aquarium entries.

## Verification

Exhibitors wishing to verify that the South Florida Fair has received submitted entry forms must include a self-addressed/stamped envelope when submitting entry forms. Online submissions will receive a confirmation email.

## Responsibility

The South Florida Fair shall not be responsible for exhibits remaining on the fairgrounds after designated release times. All still exhibits or display elements remaining on the fairgrounds after the designated release time will be treated as abandoned property and will be disposed of on or before Feb. 28 of the current year.

## Removal of Entries

Exhibitors may not remove their entry from the South Florida Fair once it has been accepted. Entries must be on exhibit at the official opening of the Fair or at any other time specified in the Competition Handbook and shall not be removed from the Fairgrounds prior to the release date printed in the handbook, except (at the discretion of the South Florida Fair) in cases of evidence of sickness, accident and/or death, or other circumstances that are in the best interests of the Fair.

## Design

The South Florida Fair assumes total design control over the presentation of the exhibits. Entries designed for hanging and not so equipped will be hung in a manner deemed appropriate by the Fair. No exhibit changes will be made once the entries have been displayed. Once an entry has been received by the South Florida Fair, no further handling of entry by exhibitor shall be permitted.

Relocation and final placement shall be accomplished by South Florida Fair personnel. Entries requiring assembly/disassembly must include detailed instructions and sketches for assembly/disassembly. Instructions should indicate lifting points, unsecured parts and any other information required for such handling. Where necessary, bank pins will be utilized to attach exhibits for display.

## How to Enter Online

Exhibitors are encouraged to enter online at [www.southfloridafair.com/TheCreationStation](http://www.southfloridafair.com/TheCreationStation).

- Review this Competition Handbook to see which division and class your entry is eligible to compete in. Follow the easy steps listed below to enter.
- To enter online, go to [www.southfloridafair.com/TheCreationStation](http://www.southfloridafair.com/TheCreationStation) and complete the form. Click the submit button and make sure you are brought to the thank you for registering page.
- Everyone must register as a new exhibitor each year.
- When registering, please verify all information is correct. Please pay special attention to capitalization, full names of cities/counties and use proper spelling (no abbreviations).

## Mailing Paper Entry Forms

Entry Forms must be postmarked by Friday, Dec. 26, 2025.

*Failure to complete any portion of entry form may result in disqualification.*

### Mail Entry Form to:

The Creation Station, Crafts & Specialty Arts – Horticulture (Adult/Youth)  
South Florida Fair  
P.O. Box 210367  
West Palm Beach, FL 33421-0367

## Delivery Entries

All entries must be delivered to the South Florida Fair on either:

Friday, Jan. 2 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Saturday, Jan. 3 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Sunday, Jan. 4 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Monday, Jan. 5 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
-----------------------------------	-------------------------------------	-----------------------------------	-----------------------------------

### Deliver entries to:

South Florida Fair  
Building 3  
Attn: Lorie Stinson

*Enter Gate 10 off Fairgrounds Road.*

**Entries arriving at the Fairgrounds after delivery deadline may be disqualified.**

## Retrieving Entries

- See the calendar for pick up dates, times and locations (Page 1).
- Entries not picked up on designated dates can be arranged for special pick up appointment by emailing [lorie@southfloridafair.com](mailto:lorie@southfloridafair.com).
- All entries not claimed by Feb. 28 of the same year will be recycled, disposed or donated.

## Index

**Alternative Planters:** *containers, other than traditional pots, used for growing plants, encompassing a wide range of materials and designs, including biodegradable, recycled, and up-cycled options.*

**Bonsai:** *an ornamental tree or shrub grown in a pot and artificially prevented from reaching its normal size.*

**Bromeliad:** *native to tropical and subtropical America, typically having short stems with rosettes of stiff, usually spiny, leaves. Some kinds are epiphytic, and many are cultivated as houseplants.*

**Cacti:** *any of a family of plants that have succulent stems and branches with scales or spines instead of leaves and are found especially in dry areas (such as deserts).*

**Cracked Pot Garden:** *the practice of planting and displaying plants in pots that have been intentionally or accidentally cracked, often used to create unique, multi-layered, or fairy garden-style plantings.*

**Cycads:** *tropical palmlike evergreen plant.*

**Fairy Garden:** *a small, miniature garden, often created in a container or a small area, designed to evoke a magical, whimsical atmosphere suitable for fairies, featuring miniature plants, accessories, and structures.*

**Ferns:** *a flowerless plant which has feathery or leafy fronds and reproduces by spores released from the undersides of the fronds. Ferns have a vascular system for the transport of water and nutrients.*

**Flowering Plants:** *plants that bear flowers and fruits.*

**Foliage:** *the leaves of a plant or plants, collectively, including their size, shape, color, texture, and arrangement.*

**Orchids:** *any plant or flower of a large family of plants that have usually showy flowers with three petals of which the middle petal is enlarged and differs from the others in shape and color.*

**Succulents:** *plant that has adapted to store water in its thick, fleshy tissues, like leaves, stems, or roots, to survive in arid or semi-arid environments.*

**Wood Pallet Planter:** *vertical wall planters or raised garden beds deep enough to grow vegetables, herbs, trailing plants, flowers, and more.*

# Horticulture Competition Entry Form

Adult (ages 18+)  Youth

Entry Forms must be postmarked by Friday, Dec. 26, 2025.

Failure to complete any portion of entry form may result in disqualification.

Please print legibly

Exhibitor's Name (First, Last)	If Youth wins prize money, who should the check be made payable to?
Mailing Address	County
City	State
	Zip Code
Phone	Email

Exhibitors may enter up to eight (8) entries per division for judging.

	DIVISION#	CLASS#	NAME OF PLANT (BOTANICAL AND COMMON NAME)
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			

*I hereby certify that I have read the South Florida Fair General Rules for The Creation Station, Crafts & Specialty Arts Program (Page 5) and the above item(s) is/are entered for exhibition strictly in accordance with these rules, by which I agree to be governed. I also agree that the South Florida Fair may use my name, likeness, or photograph (including, but not limited to photographs of my entry), in any manner relating to my participation in The Creation Station, Crafts & Specialty Arts Program, free of charge and without further notice or consultation.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of exhibitor Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of parent/guardian (Youth ONLY) Print name of parent/guardian Date

**Mail Entry Form to:**

The Creation Station, Crafts & Specialty Arts – Horticulture (Adult/Youth)  
 South Florida Fair  
 P.O. Box 210367  
 West Palm Beach, FL 33421-0367