



VIRGINIA  
FFA ASSOCIATION



# Student Garden Competition

## State Fair of Virginia

### Purpose:

The Student Garden competition encourages students work collaboratively to effectively design, plan, and install an attractive garden display that promotes agriculture. The gardens are scored based on design concept, function, and execution.

### Rules and Guidelines:

1. These gardens shall be educational as well as artistic.
2. Design and installation of these gardens shall reflect the work of the students as assisted by the instructor and sponsors as appropriate, through the classroom program.
3. The garden designs will be based on the theme "**Stars, Stripes, and State Fair Nights**".
4. Plant materials selected should be a combination of annuals and perennials. All plant materials should be labeled and should include explanations if needed. This signage should be readable by the public from outside the design space.
5. Each school is responsible for providing a laminated or weather-proof sign for their garden that includes school name, sponsors/donors, explanation of design, participating student names, and a title for the garden. Signs should be built into the display and will be covered during judging for a blind scoring process.
6. Participating schools are responsible for keeping their exhibit gardens attractive during the fair. Lights, pumps, foundations should remain in good working order. Plants will require watering and care. Schools can coordinate in this effort.
7. Awards will be withheld if the garden plot is not cleaned after the fair.
8. Each school will be given 8 tickets to be used for checking on the garden during the fair.
9. If power is required, please request this at time of entry.

### Exhibition Garden Sites :

Plots for the gardens are in the outdoor section of the State Fair Gardens. The spaces are approximately 12 ft. (from front to back) x 10 ft. (from left to right) Any screening between plots must be provided by the competing school(s).

### Judging/Scoring Criteria:

Judges will be selected to combine expertise in design and horticulture education. The evaluation perspective will emphasize demonstration of commercial design quality by high school students based on the following criteria:

Design Concept: The design is a creative and imaginative solution to the theme for this competition. The use of the principles and elements of design (focus, scale, proportion, harmony of color and materials, rhythm and unity) is evident in the design.

### State Fair Address:

Meadow Event Park  
13111 Dawn Blvd  
Doswell, Virginia 23047  
Caroline County

### Contest Registration and Tickets for the Fair:

Participants must have a \$6 Student Competition Ticket to enter the Fairgrounds unless they are already at the Fair for another competition. Agricultural Education instructors are responsible for ordering tickets:

<https://www.vaffa.org/state-fair-of-virginia>

### Event Location:

Outside of the Horticulture Tent and the Blue Ribbon Tent

### Times:

**Installation:** Wednesday or Thursday (September 20-21) 8:00 AM - 7:00 PM

**Judging:** 10:00 AM, Friday

**Take Down:** Monday, October 2 - 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

### 2023 Theme:

"Stars, Stripes, and State Fair Nights"

### Entry Deadline:

First come, first serve (10 spots) by September 15

### Questions? Contact Us!

Virginia FFA Association 115  
Hutcheson Hall Blacksburg, Virginia  
24061 [gseibel@vt.edu](mailto:gseibel@vt.edu)  
[alisonks@vt.edu](mailto:alisonks@vt.edu) 540-231-3823

## *Notes:*

**Design Function:** The design meets the intended purpose in achieving the garden theme and develops the garden plot to its fullest potential for that purpose. Hardscapes, garden ornaments and plants develop and support the garden purpose. Hardscapes (paved and unpaved) are in context with the design, of suitable size and material for their function, and they show a flow or point of destination. Plant materials work together harmoniously and exhibit similar environmental requirements.

**Design Execution:** All elements of the design create the illusion of reality. The plantings appear to be established. Attention given to finished detail of constructed hardscapes, garden ornaments and plants. Plants are labeled and readable from outside the garden.

**The Best in Show:** The winning garden excels in design concept, function and execution demonstrating the highest level of design and visual impact.

### **Awards:**

#### **Cash Awards:**

1st Place - \$300

2nd Place - \$200

3rd Place - \$100

*Ribbons will be awarded 1st-10th place*

#### **State Fair Scholarship Program:**

Scholarship funds will be divided equally between the participating students representing the winning garden. Please see the State Fair website, [www.statefairva.org](http://www.statefairva.org) for more information regarding the scholarship program.

**1st Place - \$1,500**

### **Event Sponsor:**

(include address for Thank You notes)



**JAMES RIVER**  

---

**EQUIPMENT**

### **Supplementary Materials:**

*Event Rubric - Next Page*

**State Fair: Student Garden  
Scoring Rubric**

Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Plot #: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Scoring Category</b>	<b>Scoring Criteria</b>	<b>High Points 10 - 8</b>	<b>Middle Points 7- 4</b>	<b>Low Points 3 - 0</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Design Concept</b>	<i>Relates to the theme</i>	Creative and imaginative solution to the theme.	Clear interpretation of the theme.	Theme is not represented in the design.	
	<i>Elements of Design</i>	Includes many elements of design (focus, scale, proportion, harmony of color and materials, rhythm and unity).	Includes some elements of design (focus, scale, proportion, harmony of color and materials, rhythm and unity).	Very few evident elements of design (focus, scale, proportion, harmony of color and materials, rhythm and unity).	
<b>Design Function</b>	<i>Use of Hardscapes</i>	In context with the design, of suitable size and material for the desired function, and shows a flow or point of destination.	In context with design, but lacks cohesion or desired function.	Out of place or disproportionate to the rest of the design, no clear flow or point of destination.	
	<i>Plant selection</i>	Plant materials work together harmoniously and exhibit similar environmental requirements.	Plant materials chosen are working well in the environment, but lack cohesion.	Plant materials are not compatible and require different environmental needs.	
<b>Design Execution</b>	<i>Creating an illusion of reality</i>	The plantings appear to be established. Attention given to finished detail of constructed hardscapes, garden ornaments and plants.	The plantings appear to be established, but the design lacks the clean finishing touches required for high points.	The plantings do not appear to be established and the design appears unfinished.	
	<i>Educational Element</i>	All plants are labeled and visible from the outside of the garden.	Some plants are labeled, and some are visible from the outside of the garden.	Very few, if any plants are labeled.	

**Total: \_\_\_\_\_/60**