

TIPS FOR SHOWING PRESERVES

Preserves are marked on a combination of internal and external standards as follows:

1. External standard – container, cover, label, appearance
2. Internal standard – colour, quantity, flavour, consistency, texture of fruit and aroma

The judge will taste the exhibit, with marks given according to flavour / aroma being the biggest percentage of the overall marks.

When there are many entries in a particular class the loss of just one point can make the difference between winning or not. The following will help you to ensure your exhibit has the best possible chance of success.

General information

- Jars must be clear glass with NO commercial markings, clean, well-polished and free of stickiness and finger marks
- All preserves should be labelled stating the contents together with the day, month and year of making.
- Labels should be an appropriate size to the container, straight and placed centrally on the jar.
- A twist top or a wax disc and cellophane cover may be used for jams, jellies and marmalade.
- A wax disc and cellophane cover must be used for lemon curd.
- Twist tops with a plastic lining are best for vinegar preserves.
- New twist lids are recommended as old lids do not always give a good seal and can contaminate the contents.
- Pickles and chutneys are best left to mature for 2 or 3 months before showing.

Jams, Jellies, Curds and Marmalades:

Jams – Typically shown in 375ml. or 1lb. jar

- Colour should be bright, even and characteristic
- No scum or foreign bodies, mould or sugar crystals
- Fruit evenly distributed, not too many stones
- Skins tender
- Consistency 'jellified' not runny or sticky, no loose liquid or syrup
- Flavour full, fresh and characteristic of the fruit

Jellies – Typically shown in 190ml. or 8oz. jar

- Should be brilliantly clear with no pulp, haze or scum
- Colour should be even, bright and characteristic
- Consistency should tremble, but hold its shape
- No air bubbles
- Flavour true of fruit, full and well balanced

Lemon curd – Shown in 375ml. or 1lb. jar

- Must be covered with a wax circle and cellophane top
- Twist tops are not acceptable
- Colour bright, characteristic and even
- Consistency spreadable, but not runny or rough
- No egg spots, peel, scum, sugar crystals and air bubbles
- Flavour fresh and well balanced, with no greasy taste
- Must state exact date when made
- Should be refrigerated and consumed within 4 weeks

Citrus Fruit Marmalade - Shown in 375ml. or 1lb. jar

- If peel is included in the preserve, it should be tender and uniformly cut
- Colour will vary according to type, but bright and characteristic
- Consistency 'jellified', not runny or too firm
- No air bubbles or scum
- Flavour slightly bitter, characteristic and true of fruit used

Pickles & Chutneys

Vinegar preserves are marked on a combination of internal and external standards as follows:-

1. External standard – container, cover, label and appearance
 2. Internal standard – colour, clarity, flavour, consistency, texture of fruit or vegetables and aroma
- There should be no air bubbles or scum within the contents
 - Jars should be filled to within 1 cm of the top
 - Chutneys and pickles should be 2-3 months old before exhibiting to allow the flavour to mature

Pickles

- Jar should have a suitable neck for getting pickles out
- Correctly filled 12mm (1/2") vinegar over pickle, 12mm (1/2 ") headspace between vinegar and lid
- Colour of pickles is better if white vinegar is used rather than malt
- Flavour smooth, mature and well balanced

Chutney

- Label should state hot or mild
- Colour bright and even throughout
- Jars filled 4mm (1/8th) from top of the jar to exclude as much air as possible and allow for shrinkage

- Consistency reasonably firm, and uniform
- No large pieces of onion skin, cores or stones
- No air bubbles or free vinegar
- No repotting
- Mature flavour improved by being potted for 2 or three months
- Flavour blended well, and characteristic of ingredients used