

FREEDOM FROM BLEMISHES AND CONDITION.

It is essential in exhibiting fruit that it should be as near perfect as possible and free from all blemishes, whether they cause actual waste or merely disfigurements. Much fruit is shown with most apparent defects. To disqualify all infected fruit would discourage earnest exhibitors, and would sometimes result in awards going to fruit much inferior in other essential points. Our judges are therefore instructed to use their best judgment on this point, but to be as firm as possible, and to discourage the display of diseased or blemished specimens, under the four main heads as follows:—

(1.) Insect injuries. Most of these, especially the presence of scale-insects, should disqualify at once.

(2.) Fungous diseases, especially apple and pear scab, brown-rot of the stone-fruits, etc.

(3.) Physiological troubles, such as fruit-pit (or Baldwin spot) and water-core, for both of which fruit should always be disqualified.

(4.) Mechanical injuries, such as nail-marks, bruises, punctures of the skin, etc. The absence of stems is evidence of carelessness and should disqualify exhibits of apples, pears, and plums, as it leads to early decay of the fruit. (With prunes, however, it is hard to keep the stems on, and it is unnecessary, as breaking-off of the stem does not cause decay.)

POLISHING.

Unless local regulations and sentiment are distinctly against wiping and polishing, apples and pears may be so prepared. This practice is forbidden in the prize-lists of many fairs, but the large shows all allow polishing, and it really does not affect keeping quality.

CONDITION.

This refers to the stage of ripeness. Specimens of varieties past season should be in reasonably firm condition. Winter fruits are not expected to be of mature eating quality at the fall fairs, but they should be firm and in a normal stage of growth for the time of year.

QUALITY.

On the score-cards "quality" means the combination of flavour, sweetness, texture, etc., that constitutes edibility. The term includes the quality of the fruit for preserving or cooking, as well as for dessert purposes.

Where varieties compete against each other, the question of quality must be considered as of primary importance, and its place on the score-card in consequence. It is also considered in determining the merits of collections and in giving awards for the "any other variety" class, as well as that for seedlings or new varieties.

In commercial exhibits, "quality" also includes shipping qualities and the standing of the variety in the estimation of the market.

COMMERCIAL VALUE.

This is scored in collections only, as in box classes each variety is supposed to have a class for itself. Where a district is not yet at the marketing stage, the judge will make as correct an estimate as possible of the relative commercial values of the varieties in competition.

NAMING OF SPECIMENS.

Fruits must be correctly named. In plate fruits, where it is assumed that all the plates are named, the judge may disqualify for omission or misnaming. The names of varieties should be insisted on in all exhibits, and especially in collections and commercial displays, because their absence greatly detracts from the educational value of the judge's decision. Labels should be neat, legible, and convenient to see, but should not be pasted or pinned to the fruit.