

51st annual

MONMOUTH COUNTY FAIR

Home & Garden Competition



July 22-26, 2026

To Enter Your Item in the Competition

Bring it to East Freehold Showgrounds (the Fairgrounds) on Kozloski Road in Freehold on the dates and times listed in the schedule. Fill out the entry forms at the Home & Garden tent.

Please be sure you have read all the General Rules and Judging Criteria which apply to your specific entry division as there have been major adjustments to divisions and classes.

www.MonmouthCountyFair.com



General Rules

Important information, please read thoroughly. All items entered must be in one of the classes listed. There are no "other" classifications this year with the exception of gardening items as listed. These rules apply to all classes. In addition, some categories have specific rules that are listed with those classes. Competition age groups are as follows: Child 6-12; Teen 13-17; Adult 18 and up.

1. Entries must be brought by the person creating said work to East Freehold Showgrounds at the time specified on the registration schedule.
2. This is an amateur competition open to all, regardless of residence. If you make or grow your product for sale on a regular basis, you are not considered an amateur.
3. Entries must stay in the Home & Garden tent for the duration of the Fair. Owners may remove them on Monday, July 27, between 8 a.m.-6 p.m. After that date, please call Deep Cut Gardens at 732-671-6050, Monday - Friday from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. All non-perishable items will be held at Deep Cut Gardens for a maximum of 14 days from delivery to the park and will become the property of the Monmouth County Park System after that time.
4. Ribbons will be awarded at the judges' discretion based on merit.
5. The Fair Committee reserves the right to refuse to accept inappropriate items or items in poor condition (i.e. not ready to display, not capable of withstanding the elements of the Home & Garden Tent). Work Must Be Current (no older than 2 years) and Original - No Reproductions.
6. Art, photographs, and hanging needlecrafts will be disqualified if not properly mounted with hanging apparatus (eyelet and wire) attached. Entries must be labeled properly.
7. The Fair Committee may remove entries in poor condition.
8. Two Fair passes will be given to each adult, teen, and child entering. You must enter in person to receive complimentary Fair passes. Work entered in the name of an individual not responsible for producing item will be rejected.
9. Children, ages 6-12, may enter any competition. Their ages will be on the entry forms and may be taken into consideration by the judges. Ribbons will be awarded to every child entering a competition.
10. A small card with the name and town of the entrant may be attached to the entry after judging. No advertising of any kind may be displayed.
11. Only one entry per class is allowed; however, you may enter as many classes as you like.
12. Security will be provided; however, the Monmouth County Board of Recreation Commissioners and their agents will not be responsible for damage or loss by fire, wind, water, dust, theft, or other cause to person or property. All reasonable efforts shall be made by the Home & Garden committee to protect and secure items entered.
13. Previous winning items are ineligible for competition.

If you have questions about any category of the Home & Garden Competition, call 732-842-4000, ext. 3343, Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. If you have any questions about other Monmouth County Fair events, activities or competitions, visit www.MonmouthCountyParks.com or call 732-842-4000. The TTY/TDD number for people with hearing impairment is 711.

Judging results are not available by phone. Results are posted in the Home & Garden tent for the duration of the Fair and will be published on the Monmouth County Park System website, www.MonmouthCountyParks.com, by **August 14, 2026**.

Registration/Drop-off Schedule

General Registration

Sunday, July 19, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

Monday, July 20, 8–11 a.m.

Accepting: • Art • Photo • Craft • Needlework • Canning

Senior Center and Adult Day Programs

Monday, July 20, 9 a.m.–12 p.m.

Tuesday, July 21, 8 a.m.–10 a.m.

For information on this competition, please contact Anne at 732-460-1167, ext. 4643.

Gardener's Day

Friday, July 24

8–11 a.m.

Accepting: • Flowers • Vegetables

Baker's Day

Saturday, July 25

8–11 a.m.

Accepting: Baked Goods & Black Jar Honey

On-Site Native Plant Flower Arranging Competition

Hosted By NPSNJ

Friday, July 24, 7 p.m.

Participants Must Pre-Register.

Contestants will have one hour to complete their flower arrangement. Plant materials will be provided; however, contestants are required to bring their own container. Arrangements will be judged on creativity, diversity of plants and best use of container.

For more information and to register to participate, contact Jason Goldman at Jason.Goldman@co.monmouth.nj.us or 732-872-2670, ext. 4374.

NEEDLEWORK

JUDGING CRITERIA

1. All work must be made by the person in whose name it is entered.
2. All work must be cleaned, blocked, and finished appropriately.
3. Entrant must indicate on the entry form whether the work is an original design or from a pattern or kit. Work not so labeled will not be judged. A kit or pattern in which minor changes have been made is still not an original design and must be entered as a kit or pattern.
4. Judges will consider the following: neatness, beauty of design, choice of colors, suitability of item to purpose, and general appearance.

DIVISION CROCHETING

- Garment - original design
- Garment - pattern or kit
- Hat - original design
- Hat - pattern or kit
- Gloves or Mittens - original design
- Gloves or Mittens - pattern or kit
- Scarf - original design
- Scarf - pattern or kit
- Socks - original design
- Socks - pattern or kit
- Purses & Bags
- Amigurumi - crocheted doll
- Lap/Baby blanket

DIVISION KNITTING

- Garment - original design
- Garment - pattern or kit
- Hat - original design
- Hat - pattern or kit
- Gloves or Mittens - original design
- Gloves or Mittens - pattern or kit
- Scarf - original design
- Scarf - pattern or kit
- Socks - original design
- Socks - pattern or kit
- Purses & Bags
- Amigurumi - knitted doll
- Lap/Baby blanket

DIVISION EMBROIDERY

Note: Only items in picture format will be accepted. Items must be framed with the exception of stockings.

- Crewel, Embroidery - kit
- Crewel, Embroidery - original design
- Stocking - original
- Stocking - kit
- Cross Stitch - from a stamped pattern or kit
- Counted Cross Stitch - original design
- Counted Cross Stitch - graph

DIVISION NEEDLEPOINT

Note: All items must be framed.

- Picture - original design
- Picture - kit or printed canvas
- Picture - Long Stitch- original design
- Picture - Long Stitch - kit

DIVISION SEWING

- Children's Garment - original
- Children's Garment - kit or pattern
- Doll Clothing
- Fashion Accessory (purse, bag)
- Stuffed Animal or Doll

DIVISION QUILTING

Total 4 sides 200" or less

- Appliqued, hand quilted
- Appliqued, machine quilted
- Pieced, hand quilted
- Pieced, machine quilted

ART

JUDGING CRITERIA

Note: All artwork must be properly framed with eyelet and wire for hanging. Wrapped canvases do not need to be framed but must have eyelet and wire for hanging. Unsuitable items will not be displayed or judged.

No reproductions. Please see Preparing Your Artwork below.

Nothing larger than 36"x36" in any direction including frame

DIVISION DRAWING

Framed items and wrapped canvases must be prepared for hanging with eyelet and wire.

- Pencil (*Black/White/Color*)
- Pen & Ink (*Black/White/Color*)
- Marker
- Crayon
- Charcoal

DIVISION MIXED MEDIA

Framed items and wrapped canvases must be prepared for hanging with eyelet and wire.

- Mixed Media - *Any combination of two-dimensional media in the art category*
- Collage - *Pasted materials and objects*

DIVISION PAINTING

Framed items and wrapped canvases must be prepared for hanging with eyelet and wire.

- Oil Pastels - Chalk Pastels
- Acrylics - Oils
- Watercolors

PHOTOGRAPHY

JUDGING CRITERIA

No slides or transparencies accepted.

All photographs must be properly framed with eyelet and wire hanger or mounted with eyelet and wire for hanging. Unsuitable items will not be displayed or judged.

Please see Preparing Your Artwork below.

DIVISION PHOTOGRAPHY

Framed items must be prepared for hanging with eyelet and wire.

- Black & White (*No Theme*)
- Color (*No Theme*)
- Monmouth 250 Theme - *Images of historical significance to Monmouth County (landmark, reenactment, object, etc.) One Black & White or Color*

Preparing Your Artwork

The Home & Garden tent is HOT, HUMID, and VERY BUSY. Help us display and care for your artwork by following these instructions.

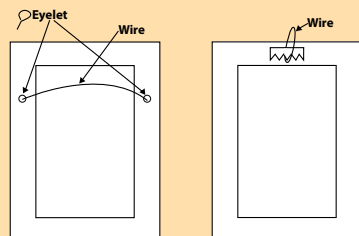
Work Must Be...

- In a real frame - unless using a wrapped canvas
- Ready to hang with wire (before you arrive)

NO Tape

NO Glue

NO Plastic Wrap



CRAFTS

JUDGING CRITERIA

Judging will be based on excellence of workmanship, general appearance, neatness, beauty of design, originality, use and coordination of color, detail, and suitability of item to purpose.

DIVISION CERAMICS, POTTERY

Note: Items must be kiln fired

- Hand-built pottery
- Cast piece
- Wheel-thrown pottery

DIVISION WOOD-WORKING

Note: Items must be handmade, not purchased and decorated.

- Furniture
- Small Item

DIVISION MISCELLANEOUS CRAFTS

- Basket making
- LEGOS® (*no kits*)
- Needle Felting
- Macrame
- Traditional Hook Rugs
- Unconventional Canvas
(*i.e. shell, rock painting*)
- Non ceramic clay

DIVISION SCULPTURE

- Metal - Wood - Stone
- Mixed Media - Miscellaneous

DIVISION WEAVING

(*cloth materials, fabrics, or yarns*)

- Clothing Item (original design)
- Clothing Item (pattern/kit)
- Clothing Accessory (original design)
- Clothing Accessory (pattern/kit)
- Household Item (original design)
- Household Item (pattern/kit)

CANNING

JUDGING CRITERIA

1. All items must be produced or packaged in New Jersey.
2. Labels on items must contain the division, class name, and the entrant's number.
3. Condiments will be judged on taste; sample jar must be provided.
4. No calico caps, oversized labels, or obstructions will be permitted. Contents must be clearly visible.
5. Appearance criteria are as follows: Jars must contain evenly sized food, attractively packed. Jars must be filled and not appear watery. Food must be packed firm but not tight. The color must be good and no artificial color used. Jellies should be firm.
6. Canned fruit and vegetables will be judged on appearance alone. They will not be opened.

DIVISION FRUIT

Judged on appearance only.

- Applesauce - Pears - Cherries
- Plums - Blackberries - Peaches
- Blueberries - Raspberries - Other

DIVISION VEGETABLES

Judged on appearance only.

- Asparagus - Carrots
- Green Beans - Lima Beans
- Cut Beans - Succotash
- Wax Beans - Peas
- Beets, whole - Tomatoes, whole
- Tomato Juice - Corn
- Cabbage/Sauerkraut

DIVISION CONDIMENTS

Judged on taste. Please provide a sample jar.

- Jams, conserves, marmalades, or fruit
- Butter - any type
- Jellies
- Pickles - sweet or dill
- Relishes - any type
- Other pickled specimens

VEGETABLES

JUDGING CRITERIA

1. The entrant is responsible for entering vegetables in the correct class. The class name of item must be on tag.
2. Uniformity in size, shape, color and maturity is important.
3. Specimens should be free of blemishes and show no sign of insect or disease attack or mechanical injury.
4. Stems and roots should be either all off or all on. Tops should be trimmed evenly.
5. Specimens should be of prime eating quality.
6. Entries must have been grown and harvested by the exhibitor in the current year.
7. Leafy stemmed vegetables should be in water.
8. Variety name must appear on the entry form.
9. It will be the Judges' decision whether or not to divide the class.

DIVISION CUCURBITS

Collection of three (3) specimens, one (1) variety
– Cucumbers – *standard* – *pickling* – *other*
– Gourds – *small ornamental*
– Summer Squash – *zucchini* – *yellow* – *other*

Collection of one (1) specimen, one (1) variety
– Melon – Pumpkin
– Winter Squash – Other

DIVISION EGGPLANT

Collection of two (2) specimens, one (1) variety
– Standard – long – other

DIVISION LEAFY VEGETABLES

Collection of one (1) head, one (1) variety
– Cabbage – *red* – *green* – *other*
– Broccoli – Celery – Lettuce
– Kohlrabi – Other

Collection of three (3) stems in water
– Swiss Chard – Lettuce
– Other

DIVISION PEPPERS

Collection of three (3) specimens, one (1) variety
– Jalapeno – Serrano – Poblano
– Long Hot – Bell – Sweet – Other

DIVISION ROOT VEGETABLES

Collection of three (3) specimens, one (1) variety
– Beets – Carrots – Turnips
– Radishes – Other Root
– Potatoes – *red* – *white* – *gold* – *other*

DIVISION OTHER VEGETABLES

Collection of six (6) pods, one (1) variety
– Okra

Collection of three (3) ears, one (1) variety
– Corn – Other – *not listed*

DIVISION LEGUMES: SHELL BEANS

Collection of six (6) pods, one (1) variety
– Limas – Other

DIVISION LEGUMES: SNAP BEANS

Collection of six (6) pods, one (1) variety
– Yellow Beans – Green Beans
– Broad Italian – Yard Long
– Other

DIVISION ONIONS

Collection of three (3) specimens, one (1) variety
– Onions – *red* – *yellow* – Leeks
– Shallots – Garlic – Other

DIVISION TOMATOES

Collection of three (3) specimens, one (1) variety
– Standard Red or Yellow
– Green (*no cherry tomatoes*)
– Small Tomato (*no green*):
Cherry– *red* – *yellow*,
Pear, Grape, Other
– Plum Tomato
– Tomatilla
– Largest Tomato 6" or more
(1 Specimen)
– Other

DIVISION HERBS

One (1) bunch of five (5) stems, minimum length 5"
– Basil – Thyme – Oregano
– Rosemary – Mint – Parsley
– Salvia (sage)
One (1) bunch of five (5) stems, minimum length 8"
– Fragrant/Culinary – Other

FLOWERS

JUDGING CRITERIA

1. The entrant is responsible for entering flowers or plants in the correct class. The class name of item must be on tag.
2. Specimens should be of uniform size and ideal for cultivar. Oversized flowers are not a sign of superior culture.
3. Where multiple stems are required for an entry in a class, uniformity in size, shape, and color is important. Flowers should be shown at their peak of perfection.
4. Stems should be in balance with the bloom. For instance, a 3" flower should have a stem at least 12".
5. Flowers should be free from blemishes, soil and signs of insects and disease. Unsightly petals may be removed if removal cannot be noticed.
6. Containers will be supplied for flowers, while supplies last.
7. It will be the Judges' decision whether or not to divide the class.

DIVISION CUT FLOWERS, ANNUALS

Collection of three (3) stems, one (1) cultivar

- Marigolds
- Sunflowers
- Zinnias
- Other
- Giant Sunflower
5" Across Center or Greater
(1 bloom)

DIVISION CUT FLOWERS, PERENNIALS

Collection of three (3) stems, one (1) cultivar

- Any perennial
- Phlox
- Echinacea*
- Rudbeckia*

DIVISION BULBS, CORMS

One (1) stem

- Any bulb or corm
- Gladiolus

DIVISION RHIZOMES, TUBERS

One (1) stem

- Any rhizome or tuber
- Dahlia
- Daylily

DIVISION FLOWERING SHRUB

One (1) stem or spray

- Rose (any)
- Hydrangea
- Other

DIVISION HANGING & CONTAINER GROWN PLANTS

- Hanging - foliage
- Hanging - flowering
- Container - foliage
- Container - flowering
- Container - cactus
- Container - succulent
- Container - gesneriads
- Terrariums & dish gardens
- Trough gardens
- Recycled Container Garden

DIVISION NATIVE PLANTS

Native plant lists can be found at npsnj.org/native-plants/plant-lists

Collection of three (3) stems, one (1) species

- Herbaceous Flowers
- Herbaceous Grasses

One (1) stem or spray

- Shrub Flower

On-Site Native Plant Flower Arranging Competition

Hosted By NPSNJ

Friday, July 24, 7 p.m.

Participants Must Pre-Register.

Contestants will have one hour to complete their flower arrangement.

For more information and to register to participate, contact Jason Goldman at Jason.Goldman@co.monmouth.nj.us or 732-872-2670, ext. 4374.

BAKED GOODS

JUDGING CRITERIA

All items will be judged on presentation, shape, taste, texture, color, and crust. This is an amateur competition. If you sell your baking you are not considered an amateur and will be disqualified.

SUPPLEMENTARY RULES:

No cream fillings or cream frostings will be accepted. A complete recipe for all items entered, must be clearly printed and accompany the entry form. Refrigeration is not available on the fairgrounds; therefore, items containing uncooked dairy which may spoil in the heat will not be accepted. Judges reserve the right to refuse to judge any item they feel poses a health risk. Recipes may be released to the press or published by the Monmouth County Park System, including the name of the entrant, with no additional compensation to the entrant. Items should be placed on a disposable plate and covered with clear food wrap.

Baked Goods should be brought to the Fair on "Bakers Day," Saturday, July 25, between 8-11 a.m. Advise the Park Ranger at entrance gate that you are bringing items to the Home & Garden tent. Judging begins at noon. You will be allowed to remove your entry and any attached ribbons from 5-9 p.m., Saturday ONLY. Baked Goods not removed by this time will be discarded. Any ribbons won must be picked up at Deep Cut Gardens during August, Monday-Friday (8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.).

DIVISION CAKES

- Layer Cake
- Cupcakes, five (5)
- Loaf or Ring Cake

DIVISION PIES

- Double crust
- Single crust
- Tarts, five (5)

DIVISION COFFEE CAKE

- Pan
- Loaf
- Ring

DIVISION BREAD, ROLLS

- Yeast Bread (1) or Rolls five (5)
- Sweet Yeast Bread (1) or Rolls five (5)
- Quick Bread (sweet)
- Quick Bread (savory)
- Sweet Buns, five (5)
- Sourdough Bread (1 loaf)

DIVISION BISCUITS, MUFFINS, SCONES

- Biscuits (sweet), five (5)
- Biscuits (savory), five (5)
- Scones, five (5)
- Muffins, five (5)

DIVISION COOKIES, BROWNIES

- Brownies, five (5)
- Donuts, five (5)
- Cookies, five (5)
- Bar Cookies, five (5)

DIVISION VEGAN

- Cake
- Cookies, five (5)
- Muffins, five (5)
- Cupcakes, five (5)

DIVISION GLUTEN FREE

- Cake
- Cupcakes, five (5)
- Cookies, five (5)
- Muffins, five(5)

Black Jar Honey Competition

sponsored by Central Jersey Beekeepers Association

Contestants may bring one honey jar to be submitted. *All entries must be in a one-pound glass Classic or Queenline honey jar with a plain metal or plastic lid. Entry must be filled to reach at least the lower part of the lowest rim (fill ring) of the jar and will be judged on taste, moisture content, and absence of perceptible crystals. Jar must be labeled.*

Bring your entry to the fairgrounds on Saturday, July 25, between 8-11 a.m. Come watch the judging at 2 p.m.

Also, be sure to enjoy these events...

Wednesday, July 22 • 4-11 p.m.

- Main Stage Entertainment:
Red Dirt Revolution

Thursday, July 23 • 4-11 p.m.

- Main Stage Entertainment:
THE FUMOS

Friday, July 24 • 4-11 p.m.

- Main Stage Entertainment:
Mushmouth

Saturday, July 25 • 11 a.m.-11 p.m.

- Main Stage Entertainment:
Dark City Strings
The Ultimate Queen Celebration

Sunday, July 26 • 11 a.m.-6 p.m.

- Main Stage Entertainment:
Rockit Academy
Ocean Avenue Stompers

All Five Days

- Wonderzone Dinosaur Zoo
- DAWG Pro Wrestling presents
DAWG Days of Summer
- Andrew's Big Show
- Robinson's Racing Pigs
- Bwana Jim Wildlife & Reptile Show
- Rides by Reithoffer Shows
- Tommie Turvey's Stunt Horses & Dogs
- Balloon Twisters
- John Higby the Yo-Yo Guy
- Monmouth County Park System
Exhibit
- 4-H Shows & Exhibits

Directions to East Freehold Showgrounds

GARDEN STATE PARKWAY

to Exit 100, 33 West. Take approximately 9 miles to Route 33 Bypass West. Take 33 Bypass to Halls Mill Rd. North exit. Left at stop sign to right onto Halls Mill Rd. Halls Mill Rd. becomes Kozloski Rd., follow to park entrance on left.

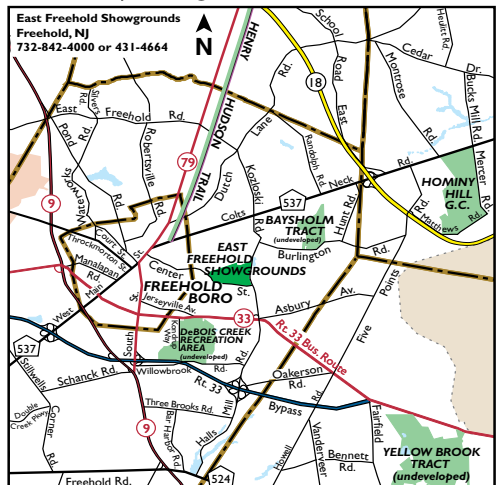
STATE HIGHWAY RT. 9

to Hwy. 33 East (not Business Route 33). Follow Hwy. 33, right onto Halls Mill Rd.

North exit. Halls Mill Rd. becomes Kozloski Rd., follow to park entrance on left. Rt. 18 to Exit 22, Rt. 537 west. Take Rt. 537 west for 1 mile to Kozloski Rd. exit. Follow signs to "Kozloski South" and continue 1 mile to park entrance on right.

NJ TURNPIKE

to Exit 8 (Hightstown). After toll, Hwy. 33 East and stay left for Hwy. 33 Bypass/Asbury Park. Take 33 Bypass to Halls Mill Rd. North exit. Halls Mill Rd. becomes Kozloski Rd., follow to park entrance on left.





Daily Demonstrators Include:

- Central Jersey Beekeepers Association
Beekeeping Demonstration
- Park System Deep Cut Gardens Displays
- Park System Creative Arts Center, Wheel Thrown Pottery
- Master Gardeners of Monmouth
- Native Plant Society of NJ

Check the daily schedule for additional demonstrators.

From gardening to craft demonstrations, you can find it all at the Home & Garden tent.

