

## Buc Days Horticulture Competition

### 2026 Special Rules



Superintendent – Daisy Castillo  
Assistant Superintendent – Teresa Lopez

Chair- Isla Lara  
Co-Chair- Cecil Childers

Total Prize Money Awarded: **\$3,000**

<b>Participant Registration Deadline:</b>	<b>March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026</b>
Project Submitted for Validation:	Monday, March 16 <sup>th</sup> - Wednesday, March 18 <sup>th</sup>
Project Photo Submission #1:	Monday, April 6 <sup>th</sup> - Friday, April 10 <sup>th</sup>
Project Photo Submission #2:	Monday, April 20 <sup>th</sup> – Friday, April 24 <sup>th</sup>
Project Report Form Submission:	Friday, May 1 <sup>st</sup> – Tuesday, May 5 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Entry Load-In:</b>	<b>Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026</b> 4:00pm-6:30pm
<b>Competition Day:</b>	<b>Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026</b>
Private Judging:	10:00am-4:30pm
Awards Presentation: (On the Community Stage)	*6:00pm
Entry Pick Up:	6:30pm-7:30pm

1. **Participation/ Eligibility:** The Buc Days Horticulture Competition is open to Texas resident students enrolled in, and attending public, private, or secondary school and/ or enrolled in a Texas Youth Development program. Each 4-H, FFA, and FCCLA member must be in good standing with its state and National affiliates. Participants must be between the ages of 8 (in addition to being in the 3rd grade) and 18 on or before August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Participants must be United States citizens and possess a valid social security number to be eligible for participation in the event.
  - a. A participant is not eligible if already graduated from high school.
2. **Registration:** Registration will be open on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and completed through our website at '<https://bucdays.com/buc-days-horticulture/>'. Registration will close on Monday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026, or when the event has reached capacity. Each participant must pay a \$25 registration fee for each entry in this competition.
3. **Entry Categories:** There are eight classes in which participants can enter. Each participant will be permitted to enter plants in each class; however, not two in any one class. Each entry must be registered on or before the deadline to be entered into the competition.
  - a. Class 1      Foliage Plants
  - b. Class 2      Succulents
  - c. Class 3      Herbs (can be single variety or a combination up to 3 varieties)
  - d. Class 4      Flowering plants
  - e. Class 5      Tomato Plant
  - f. Class 6      Pepper Plants
  - g. Class 7      Fruit Class (Strawberries, etc.)
  - h. Class 8      Other Vegetable Class
4. **Pot Regulations:** The pot in which the entry is planted in / transplanted in and submitted for validation must remain the same throughout the entirety of the competition. The participant must choose a pot large enough for the entry to grow in but must not exceed 13.25-in W x 14-in L and the entire entry must not weigh over 28 lbs. Decorative or personalized pots are optional but will not be influential in the judging process.
5. **Entry Timeline:** All entries must follow the (below) timeline of events to be eligible for judging on Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Violation or failure to comply with the timeline or rules could cause an entry or participant to be disqualified. All submissions (including registration, validation, photo submission(s), and the report form) will be done through the Buc Days Horticulture website page at '<https://bucdays.com/buc-days-horticulture/>'.

a. **Participant Registration Deadline:**

Participants must submit their personal information and pay the registration fee before this deadline.

- i. Deadline: **Monday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> by 11:59pm**

b. **Project Photo Submission #1 (Validation / Plant Start Check):**

This step is used to validate the entry. Validation means confirming that your plant has officially been started and that the same plant will be grown for the remainder of the competition. Once submitted for validation, the project may not be altered, replaced, or manipulated. If starting from seed, there must be visible growth at this time. Photos of only seeds in bare soil will not be accepted.

- i. Submission Window: **Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup> - Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>**

- ii. Required Photos (3):

1. Purchased plant / seedling growing.
2. Pot that the entry is planted / has been transplanted in.
3. Participant tending to their entry.

c. **Project Photo Submission #2:**

This submission ensures that the plant is continuing to grow and the participant is caring for the entry.

- i. Submission Window: **Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup> - Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup>**

- ii. Required Photos (3):

1. Seedling / plant growth.
2. Plant with same pot pictured in validation.
3. Participant tending to their entry.

d. **Project Photo Submission #3:**

This submission ensures that the plant is still on course and cared for properly.

- i. Submission Window: **Monday, April 20<sup>th</sup> - Friday, April 24<sup>th</sup>**

- ii. Required Photos (3):

1. Seedling / plant growth.
2. Plant with same pot pictured in validation.
3. Participant tending to their entry.

e. **Report Form Submission:**

Each participant will prepare an entry report form. Report forms are used for documentation of the projects and any information needed by the judge to break a class tie.

- i. Submission Window: **Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup> - Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>**
- ii. Include prior submitted photos (Submissions #1-#3).
- iii. Answer questions about entry.

- f. **Entry Load-In:**  
All entries must be checked in on the Buc Days festival grounds between 4:00pm-6:30pm on Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Entries must be watered in advance and ready for judging. A photo will be taken with the participant and their entry at this time.
- i. Please note that there will not be a 'drive-up' option to drop off the entries. All participants are required to park in the Buc Days designated parking lot(s) and bring their entry through the festival gates to the check-in location,
  - ii. The use of a personal wagon (or similar) to transport entries is acceptable but is subject to security inspection.
- g. **Competition Day:**  
Judging will begin at 10:00am on Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>. Horticulture specialists selected by the Buccaneer Commission will evaluate all entries. Once judging is complete, an awards presentation will take place on the Community Stage.
- i. After the awards ceremony, participants must pick up and take home their entries during the designated pick-up window.
  - ii. ***Any entries not collected at the completion of the event will be removed from the festival grounds by the Event Officials.***
6. **Judging Criteria:** No plant shine or wax may be used to gloss the foliage other than soap and water. Plants should be insect and disease free. Any infested plants are subject to disqualification and removal from the competition. All plants must be living to be turned in for judging. Plants will be judged according to the ideal standards for that species, taking these things into mind in general:
- a. Maturity Stage
  - b. New Growth
  - c. Symmetry, Fullness, and Balance
  - d. Insect Damage
  - e. Disease
  - f. Leaf Color
  - g. General Appearance and Size (for age)
7. **Awards:** A total of \$3,000 in prize money will be awarded throughout the event.
- a. A total of \$2,000 will be awarded to the class winners from either division.
    - i. Class 1 (Foliage Plants)                      \$250 prize money and trophy
    - ii. Class 2 (Succulents)                      \$250 prize money and trophy
    - iii. Class 3 (Herbs)                      \$250 prize money and trophy
    - iv. Class 4 (Flowering Plant)                      \$250 prize money and trophy

- v. Class 5 (Tomato Plant) \$250 prize money and trophy
- vi. Class 6 (Pepper Plants) \$250 prize money and trophy
- vii. Class 7 (Fruit Class) \$250 prize money and trophy
- viii. Class 8 (Other Vegetable Class) \$250 prize money and trophy
- b. A total of \$1,000 will be awarded to the Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion of the entire event.
  - ix. Grand Champion \$500 prize money and trophy
  - x. Reserve Grand Champion \$500 prize money and trophy

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