

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**

Participant Registration Deadline:

March 2nd, 2026

Project Submitted for Validation:

Monday, March 16th - Wednesday, March 18th

Project Photo Submission #1:

Monday, April 6th - Friday, April 10th

Project Photo Submission #2:

Monday, April 20th – Friday, April 24th

Project Report Form Submission:

Friday, May 1st – Tuesday, May 5th

Entry Load-In:

Friday, May 8th, 2026
4:00pm-6:30pm

Competition Day:

Saturday, May 9th, 2026

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 15th, 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 15th, 2025, and completed through our website at '<https://bucdays.com/buc-days-horticulture/>'. Registration will close on Monday, March 2nd, 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 9th, 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 2nd 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 16th - Wednesday, March 18th**

- 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 6th - Friday, April 10th**

- 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 20th - Friday, April 24th**

- 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 1st - Tuesday, May 5th**

- 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 8th, 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 9th. 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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