



Illinois
Extension

ILLINOIS 4-H FLORAL DESIGN LIVE ACTIVITY

SF 50114

Tips and Tricks for 4-H Staff

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Tips and Tricks for 4-H Staff

Use this tip sheet as a guide for your local shows. This is not meant to dictate how you run your local competition, but rather offer suggestions. Do what is best for your show/area. Towards the end of this document is a list of details for the 2026 State 4-H Fair.

Class Description- Centerpiece Display: Live Activity (SF 50114)

Exhibitor must make two arrangements suitable for use as a centerpiece(s) within one hour in front of the judge. Arrangements can be made from fresh and/or dried materials. No silks are permitted. The centerpiece should follow a cohesive theme. Final arrangements must fit on a tabletop and not exceed 2.5 ft x 2.5 ft. Exhibitors are not allowed to interact with anyone other than the judge and superintendent during the judging process. The judge may choose to ask the exhibitor about their process and other questions during the design time. The exhibitor is responsible for furnishing their own flowers, containers, and other supplies. Exhibitor is responsible for cleaning up their workspace at the end of judging. A table will be provided at the Illinois State Fair.

Local Level:

- Set up the competition time to overlap with the rest of your floriculture judging. Most likely, your judge will be comfortable judging more than one area in the department and can keep their eye on the competitors while judging other youth in floriculture.
- Location should be near the rest of your floriculture judging and possibly have access to water/drain.
- If the contest is inside and on carpet, cover/protect the floor from potential water or dirt spills.
- Provide a table for the youth to work on. Each youth should have at least ½ of an eight-foot table. Alternatively, you can ask the youth exhibitor to provide their own card table (4'x4').
- Youth should each bring their own flowers, vases, water, and other supplies. (Sheers, Towels, Hand Broom, etc.)
- Youth should be responsible for cleaning up their space before they leave the competition area.





Local Level Cont.

- Superintendent and/or judge should make sure that youth exhibitors do not talk/interact with anyone during the competition.
- Have a large garbage can nearby for easy cleanup.

Finding Judges:

Qualifications to look for in a judge

- Knows basics of color theory
- Knows the basis of design elements
- Comfortable talking with youth about their work
- Able to provide constructive feedback

Places to Look for a Judge:

- Local Flower Shops
- Small business florists that specialize in special events/weddings
- Retired florists
- Community College Horticulture Staff/Professors (they may also know of an experienced college student who would be willing)
- Master Gardeners
- Illinois State Florists' Association: **ISFA-Find a Member**
- Write to Mark Becker, 4-H Specialist, for support: **mbbecker@illinois.edu**

State Level:

- ·Max 4 youth will design at the same time for 1 hour. They will have 15 minutes before start time to set up and 10 minutes after time is called to have their space cleared for the next group.
- ·Youth will be given ½ an 8' table to work on, and fresh water will be available.
- ·Youth will need to bring their own flowers, containers, accessories, supplies, etc.
- ·The judge will ask questions to the youth during judging and may ask a few follow-up questions after designing in completed.
- ·Youth are not allowed to interact with anyone other than the judge and superintendent during the judging process.
- ·Youth are welcome to store flowers in the cool building before their scheduled design time.



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