UQ SUNFLOWER COMPETITION

COMPETITION RULES

Aim

Now in its 19th year, The University of Queensland’s Sunflower Competition promotes the science behind agronomy and horticulture to students, teachers and parents.

The purpose of the competition is to inspire current science students to become the next generation of plant and agricultural scientists, and to support teachers to deliver their science curriculum in a plant-based context.

The competition provides an interactive learning opportunity with school-based experiments and an optional day of workshops and awards at the UQ Gatton campus.

Teachers and students can participate in a number of ways.

You can
1. Grow sunflowers at your school as part of the curriculum (with optional attendance at Weigh-in Day)
2. Bring the sunflowers you have grown to the UQ Gatton campus to compete for prizes at the official Weigh-in Day.
3. If you cannot attend the Weigh-in Day, enter the ‘Heaviest Yield: Regional’ category of the UQ Sunflower Competition by submitting a video showing the sunflower head being removed and weighed on a set of calibrated digital scales. Video must be in MP4 format, maximum 30 seconds and submitted by 12 noon on the day prior to Weigh-in Day.
4. Enter the ‘Communicating Science’ or ‘Scientific Investigations’ categories in the Queensland Science Contest by submitting your entry to the UQ Sunflower completion before May 22. Submit before May 8 if you would like your entry displayed at the Weigh-in Day.

Weigh-in Day

This optional day of workshops and awards will be held at UQ Gatton on Tuesday 15 May 2018.

Each team or entrant may submit up to 2 individual plants for weighing with only the heaviest being recorded for the team.

Plants need to be transported intact, in their original pot and growing medium to the weigh-in venue. Tall plants may need to be staked.

IMPORTANT DATES

Registrations close: Friday 9 February 2018

Planting date: Tuesday 20 February 2018

Submission date for entries: Tuesday 8 May 2018 (if you would like it displayed at the Weigh-in Day). Alternatively, the final date for submission is Tuesday 22 May 2018.

Weigh-in Day at UQ Gatton campus: Tuesday 15 May 2018

CATEGORIES AND PRIZES

Heaviest Sunflower
Years 7-10
1st - $100  2nd - $75  3rd - $50
Years 11-12
1st - $100  2nd - $75  3rd - $50

Overall Grand Champion - Heaviest Recorded Yield (Head only) $150

Heaviest Yield: Regional
Years 7-8
1st - $100  2nd - $75  3rd - $50
Years 9-10
1st - $100  2nd - $75  3rd - $50

Tallest Sunflower $100
Best Ornamental Sunflower $100
2 x Encouragement Awards $50

Please note: Tallest sunflower, most ornamental sunflower and the encouragement awards will be presented based upon the discretion of the judges.
At the weigh-in, tops will be cut off at the cotyledonary node and placed in a previously tared garbage bag for weighing.

Please note: All plants submitted to the competition will be scrutinised by the judges to ensure they meet the competition rules. The judges reserve the right to disqualify any plant or plants that have, in their opinion, been grown contrary to the rules of the competition.

**Eligible Contestants**

The competition is open to all year 7-12 high school students within Australia.

Teams entering the ‘Communicating Science’ or ‘Scientific Investigations’ categories may only contain a maximum of 3 members.

**Seeds Kits**

UQ will supply you with a small quantity of seeds of a selected variety (a Pacific Seeds hybrid). Only this variety can be planted. Planting is not to occur any earlier than 20 February 2018 and must be supervised by a teacher. You will also receive a booklet of experiments that can be conducted at your school.

You will need to supply the following: 14 litre pot, potting mix, fertiliser, protective mask and watering can.

These seeds have been treated and are not fit for human consumption. Please ensure students wash hands after contact.

**Pots**

Pots of up to 14 litres in volume are permitted. This rule is extremely important and any larger pot sizes will be disqualified.

Please note: A suitable 300mm standard, 14 litre pot (code P300STZ) is available from Garden City Plastics.

Pots must not be placed directly on soil and should be placed on an impervious surface such as concrete.

The sunflower plant roots must not escape the pot. A plastic saucer may be used to avoid this. The plant is to be presented to the judges on the weigh-in day in its original growing pot and soil medium.

The competition judges will harvest the plants for weighing at Weigh-in Day.

**Growing Conditions**

Each team or entrant is free to choose where and how the plant is grown within the limits of:

- pot size
- solid potting media
- competition rules.

Each team or entrant may choose a watering and fertilising regime that they believe maximises growth.

The experiment booklet is simply a guide. Feel free to deviate from the suggested trials and experiment with light, water, fertiliser and potting mix conditions.

Hint: Plants will perform best in full sun but you may wish to grow comparison plants in shade for class interest.

Handy tips and FAQs to assist you through your sunflower growing journey are available on our website [uq.edu.au/agriculture/sunflower-competition](http://uq.edu.au/agriculture/sunflower-competition)