

ANATOMY OF A DECORATED CAKE

As fairgoers walk into the North doors of the 4-H Building, they see cases and cases of beautifully decorated cakes. In 2005 they specifically counted and had over 200 cakes on display. The number continues to increase each year. If you look at the State Fair Guidelines you will notice specific requirements for these cakes. Here are the guidelines and the reasoning behind them:

- Use forms or pans, no real cakes. Because of the heat and humidity, cakes can literally collapse after a few days-not to mention the green and black mold that can appear.
- Cakes should not exceed 13" in height or at the base. This requirement helps with the space issue. In fact, some of the most striking cakes have been those that are miniatures of large cakes or a portion of a larger cake. Proper planning can show all of the skills learned in the project on a small scale.
- Cake boards should not exceed a 1" margin on each side of the cake. Again, this helps with spacing and in many cases the large boards detract from the cake. There have been excellent examples of cake boards that have been cut to conform to the shape of the cake.
- You must use only Royal icing, rolled Fondant, or commercial products that harden. Heat and humidity cause butter cream icings and colored gels to soften and run. In the past, other exhibits have been damaged because of colored icings that have run. Also, real cakes and soft icings invite ants and mice.

If you have a cake selected for the State Fair this year and you don't want it returned to you, please place a large note on the bottom of the cake board and we will throw it out with the display areas are dismantled.