



THE NATIONAL VEGETABLE SOCIETY GENERAL RULES

REVISED SEPTEMBER 2023

CHARITY NO. 1088979

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Charity Registration No. 1088979



1. TITLE

The title of the society shall be “The National Vegetable Society”

2. OBJECTS

The objects of the Society shall be:-

- a) to advance the education of the public in the cultivation and improvement of vegetables.
- b) to advance knowledge of and further public interest in vegetables by the publication of information, by exhibition, by stimulating research and experiment and by awarding prizes open to public competition.

3. POWERS

In furtherance of the objects but not otherwise, the Trustees may exercise the following powers:-

- a) to maintain trial grounds, horticultural gardens, and facilities for giving advice on the culture of vegetables.
- b) to organise a Panel of Lecturers on vegetable growing.
- c) to organise a Panel of Judges by holding judging examinations as and when necessary.
- d) to organise visits to places of interest in connection with the study of vegetables, to co-operate with other bodies having similar aims and generally to do all such acts as shall further the active corporate life of the Society and may lawfully be done by a body established only for the purposes recognised by the law as charitable.
- e) to maintain a library and other media record on the cultivation of vegetables and make items therein available to affiliated organisations and individual members at a nominal charge.
- f) to form “ Branches” and “District Associations” as necessary in order that members may localise their activities in addition to those provided by the Society.

4. MEMBERSHIP AND AFFILIATION

- a) An application for membership must be completed by the applicant.
- b) When a person has been accepted and has paid a first annual subscription they shall be a member of the Society and shall be deemed to have agreed to be bound by these Rules.
- c) The membership of the Society shall consist of the following classes:
 - i) Individual members.
 - ii) Junior members to be under 16 years of age and still in full time education.
 - iii) Couples.

- iv) Affiliated organisations.
 - v) Educational establishments.
 - vi) Any other class of membership that Trustees may wish to consider from time to time.
- d)** Members of the Society except existing Honorary Life Members shall pay an annual subscription determined following a recommendation to the Annual General Meeting by the Trustees.
- e)** Membership subscriptions become due 12 months from the anniversary date of payment (a rolling 12 months)
- f)** An Affiliated Organisation shall be entitled to the same privileges as one ordinary member of the Society but will only have a vote at an Annual General Meeting of the Society if their representative is nominated in writing by the Affiliated Organisation to the National Secretary fourteen days prior to an Annual General Meeting.
- g)** The Trustees may call upon any member to resign from the Society and if the member does not so resign within twenty-one days after being so called upon the National Executive Committee may by resolution terminate membership.
- h)** The Trustees may call upon any Affiliated Organisation to resign from the Society and if the Affiliated Organisation does not resign within twenty-one days after being so called upon the Trustees may by resolution terminate any membership.
- i)** The Trustees may at any time without stating any reason refuse to accept a renewal of
- i) the subscription of any member
 - ii) the affiliation of any organisation
- j)** No member, Branch, District Association or Affiliated Organisation shall take any public action or make public announcements in the name of the Society. All announcements or advertisements etc. on behalf of the Society will be made by the Trustees through the National Chairman, the National Secretary or other person/persons authorised by the Trustees.
- k)** The Society shall be affiliated with any such body as the Trustees shall decide from time to time.
- 1) Judges/Lecturers:**
- i) Members becoming judges or lecturers on the Society's panel and lapsing in membership, shall be struck off the panel if membership renewal is not made within one year
 - ii) Such persons shall be informed by the National Secretary in writing, and all members and Affiliated Organisations in national literature.
 - iii) Such persons shall be informed that the Society reserves the right to take such action as they may think necessary if they continue to represent themselves as Society judges or lecturers or wear Society badges etc.
 - iv) Should any such persons re-join the Society after one year they will have to re-sit the judges examination before being returned to the judges' panel and re-apply to join the lecturers' panel.

5. BRANCHES

- a)** For administrative purposes the Society is organised in Branches. Branches shall act in conformity with any directions published by the Trustees from time to time. Branch meetings will not be arranged when the Trustees are due to meet.
- b)** The Secretary and Treasurer of each Branch shall keep such minutes of accounts and records as may be directed by the Trustees and must send copies of such records and other documents to the Trustees as soon as is practicable after a meeting. All Meeting financial reports to be sent by the Branch Treasurer to the National Treasurer and all other minutes and relevant documents sent by the Branch Secretary to the National Secretary. Any property acquired by a Branch shall be held by the Branch for the general objects of the Society. If any Branch is disbanded or dissolved it shall hand over its moneys, property, books and papers to the Trustees to be used for the general purposes of the Society. No Branch as such shall have power to secede from the Society except by a two thirds majority of the members present and voting at a general meeting of the Branch.
- c)** No Branch may enter into any financial matters on behalf of the Society without prior permission of the Trustees. Branches are expressly forbidden to initiate legal proceedings or court action without prior consent or approval of the Trustees. Any Branch or member breaking this rule will be held personally responsible for any costs incurred.
- d)** A Branch Chairman shall have a vote at their Branch meetings as an individual member in addition to his/her casting vote.
- e)** At a Branch Annual General Meeting, when two members are nominated for a post, there shall be a secret ballot. When three or more members are nominated for a post, there shall be a secret ballot unless one candidate has an overall majority. The member with the least number of votes will be eliminated before another ballot is taken until a result is obtained. In the event of a tie, the Chairman or acting Chairman at the time will use his/her casting vote.
- f)** Officers and committee members of Branches of the Society shall hold office for one year but shall be eligible for re-election.
- g)** Before a Branch creates any new honorary position or award prior approval must be obtained from the Trustees
- h)** A quorum at a Branch meeting to be a minimum of five members of the committee one of whom must be an Officer of that Branch.

6. DISTRICT ASSOCIATIONS

- a) District Associations shall act in conformity with any directions published by the Trustees
- b) The Secretary and Treasurer of every District Association shall keep such minutes and accounts and records as may be directed by the Trustees and must send copies of such records and other documents of the District Association to their Branch Secretary as requested. Meetings are expected to be at least quarterly with annual statements to be forwarded on to the National Treasurer via the Branch Treasurer. District Association A.G.M's. must be held as soon as practicable after the National Societies year end. Any property acquired by a District Association shall be held by the District Association for the general objects of the Society save and except that any property held by a District Association and designated by the Association as belonging to its special fund shall remain the exclusive property of that District Association and shall be used by that District Association solely for such local purposes or other purposes connected with the Society that the committee of that District Association shall in its absolute discretion deem proper. If any District Association is disbanded or dissolved it shall hand over its moneys, property, books and papers to the Trustees to be used for the general purposes of the Society. No District Association as such shall have power to secede from the Society except by a two thirds majority of those present and voting at a general meeting of the District Association.
- c) On the forming of a District Association and at the first meeting of members, the Chair should be taken by an officer appointed by the Branch Committee. A District Association shall bear in its title the name of the District Association and the title of "The National Vegetable Society."
- d) District Associations are to be accountable through their Branch to the trustees. In the event of a dispute between a District Association and a Branch, the Trustees ruling on such will be final.
- e) District Associations may send representatives to the Branch committee as observers at the discretion of the Branch Chairman, but may not vote unless invited to do so.
- f) District Associations may not charge a membership fee or exclude National Vegetable Society members without permission of the Trustees, but may ask for donations to the District Association's running costs and charge admission to District Association shows or events organised by them. All money so raised must be used for the District Association's benefit.
- g) District Associations may not enter into any financial matters on behalf of The National Vegetable Society.
- h) District Associations must not participate or engage in activities that are against the constitution or interests of The National Vegetable Society or make utterances or statements on behalf of The National Vegetable Society.
- i) Members of the District Associations must be individual members of The National Vegetable Society. Only such members can hold office in the District Association.

- j) In shows organised by the District Associations as Open Shows of their own or in conjunction with other societies, there is no objection to non-members showing though District Associations may reserve the right for special classes for District Association members only.
- k) The Society wishes the District Associations to carry on their good work with as little interference as possible from the Trustees, however they must work within the Society rules, and the foregoing is for their guidance. The Trustees reserve the right to rule on any matters not covered above.

7. AWARDS

The Trustees may endorse awards of Honorary Membership, Gold Medal, Silver Medal, or Fellowship for merit or outstanding service to the Society or any other awards recommended by the Awards Committee which shall be appointed by the Trustees. The Awards committee will consist of the five Branch Chairmen, the National Chairman and the National Vice Chairman serviced by the National Secretary in a non-voting capacity. Branch substitutes will be allowed but must be notified to the National Chairman and National Secretary prior to the meeting.

If a Branch fails to send a representative, no honours for that Branch will be awarded in that year.

8. FINANCE

8.1 The financial year shall end on 31st December of each year.

8.2 All Officers of the Society are responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Society, preventing fraud or financial mistakes. To minimise the likelihood at either Trustee, Branch or District Association level, all cheques must be signed by two signatories. When using electronic banking systems, authorisation should be confirmed by two authorised individuals. Where electronic banking systems only require one signature, approval of payment must be confirmed by a second authority. Emails are accepted as proof of agreement.

9. THE PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY

- a) The Society may appoint a National President whose duties shall be:
 - i) to take the Chair at an Extraordinary General Meeting
 - ii) to take the Chair at an Annual General Meeting when the National Chairman is elected
 - iii) to present awards at the Annual General Meeting
- b) The National President may attend Trustees Meetings as an observer

10. VICE PRESIDENTS OF THE SOCIETY

Nominations for Vice-Presidents must be referred to the Awards Committee for consideration then presented to the Trustees for endorsement.

11. TRUSTEES

a) The following officers of the Society shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting:-

- i) National Chairman
- ii) National Vice Chairman
- iii) National Secretary
- iv) National Assistant Secretary
- v) National Treasurer
- vi) National Registrar
- vii) National Editor
- viii) National Webmaster
- ix) Sponsorship Manager
- x) Social Media Officer

Not more than two Examiners shall be appointed.

- b)** The business of the Society shall be conducted by the Trustees which shall comprise the above mentioned officers, together with a maximum of two elected members from each Branch.
- c)** Prior to a National Annual General Meeting, when two members or more are nominated for a post, there shall be a postal vote. This will be organised by the National Secretary, conveyed in the Societies quarterly magazine and scrutinised independently.
- d)** The Trustees may appoint from paid up members of the Society such additional officers as it may deem desirable. Such officers may, at the complete discretion of the Trustees, be members of, or observers at, the Trustees meeting. Persons appointed to such offices shall retire from office at the close of the Trustees meeting immediately preceding the following A.G.M. but shall be eligible for re-appointment by the Trustees at the first meeting thereafter. If such offices are deemed necessary for more than three consecutive years the Trustees must propose an appropriate amendment to the National Vegetable Society General Rules at the third A.G.M. following the first appointment to the office concerned.
- e)** Any vacancy occurring in an elective office may be filled by the Trustees from amongst members of the Society. Any officer so appointed shall retire from office at the following A.G.M. but shall be eligible for election by that A.G.M.
- f)** The National Chairman, National Vice Chairman, National Secretary, National Treasurer, National Registrar, National Assistant Secretary, National Editor and National Webmaster will normally be elected for a period of three years but shall be eligible for re-election.
- g)** Nominations for national officers shall be sent to the National Secretary in writing, not later than the second week of May preceding the election and must be accompanied by a statement signed by the nominee confirming that he/she is willing to serve if elected.
- h)** Nominees for election to national offices, for election or appointment to the Board of Trustees, and for election as Branch officers or committee members, must be paid up members of the Society.

- i) Unless made by the Trustees, all nominations to National offices, to the Board of Trustees and to Branch offices or committees must be signed by a Proposer and Seconder both of whom must be paid up members of the Society.
- j) All persons voting at an A.G.M. on motions or in any postal ballot for elected office shall be paid up members of the Society or representatives of an affiliated organisation authorised in writing to vote on behalf of that organisation. Members, affiliated organisations and educational establishments shall be entitled to one vote only and couples one vote each person in any election
- k) The Trustees shall have the right to reject the nomination of any person whose election would, in the opinion of the Trustees, be prejudicial to the interests of the Society.
- l) Nine Trustees, of whom at least one shall be an officer, shall form a quorum. The Trustees shall meet from time to time as may be necessary for the conduct of the Society's business. Five members of the committee may, by signed written notice to the National Secretary, request him/her to call a meeting of the Trustees and if such meeting be not called within thirty days of despatch of such notice the said five members may themselves call a meeting of the Trustees by seven days notice in writing to all members thereof.

12. SUB-COMMITTEES

- a) The Trustees may appoint sub-committees to consider and report on any matter. Members of such sub-committees need not necessarily be members of the Board of Trustees although at least one member of each sub-committee shall be a member of the Board. Unless otherwise decided by the Trustees, sub-committees shall elect their own Chairman and have power to co-opt additional non-voting members. The Trustees may alter the membership of any sub-committee at any time, and no sub-committee shall have the power to act on behalf of the Society unless expressly authorised to do so by a minute of the Trustees. No sub-committee may spend money on behalf of the Society or enter into any obligation on behalf of the Society, unless expressly authorised to do so by a minute in writing of the Trustees.
- b) At the time of setting up any sub-committee under this rule, its terms of reference will be set down by the Trustees and these terms of reference to include the set quorum.

13. ALTERATION OF RULES

No alteration to the Rules of the Society shall be made except at an Annual General Meeting. In order to effect an alteration of the rules, at least two-thirds of the members actually present and voting at the meeting shall vote in favour of the proposed change. No amendment to any proposed alteration shall be allowed.