

Food Challenge Contest Planning Guide

County: _____ Date of event: _____

| Date due | Task | Person responsible | Date done |
|----------|---|--------------------|-----------|
| | Facilitate the planning committee meeting (4-H members, parents, leaders, etc.); the CEA assigned to food and nutrition project serves as the advisor. | | |
| | Appoint subcommittees/contact persons for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awards • Cleanup • Contest/awards program format • Decorations • Facility • Judges • Program • Publicity and signs • Recipe/ingredient selection for each category and purchasing ingredients and supplies | | |
| | Set the contest date and time, plan additional committee meetings to finalize planning, and implement and evaluate the show. | | |
| | Set the contest entry deadline and entry fee; announce them through various media. Consider setting an entry fee to cover the cost of ingredients. | | |
| | Choose and reserve the location. | | |
| | Secure contest donors. | | |
| | Determine facility needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A kitchen is not necessary. • A large room works with one table per team and ample space to work on all sides of the table. • Ensure that electricity in the facility is adequate. • Include a judging room for team presentations. • Include holding room (or chairs set up in food preparation room) for participants preparing to enter to judging room. • Designate a room for the awards program with chairs, a PA system, and an awards table. | | |
| | Choose the theme and/or decorations. | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact judges by phone and/or email; confirm with a letter, including contest information: • Select 2–3 judges per judging panel (per age division). • The number of participants will determine the number of judges needed. | | |

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| | Determine the recipes/ingredients and clues for each age division and food category. | | |
| | Order/buy all awards and judges' gifts. | | |
| | Prepare advance and follow-up publicity/news releases. | | |
| | Print the contest program (names of participants, contest schedule, committee members, judges, donors, etc.). | | |
| | Find people to give opening address and to present special awards. Ask contest donors to help. | | |
| | Contact the judges, providing them with contest information, scorecards, and nutrition resources. | | |
| | Randomly assign each team to a food category. | | |
| | Prepare the judges' packets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational resources • Food Challenge Manual/Rules • Placing sheet • Scorecard | | |
| | Buy ingredients for each team. Option: To reduce costs, divide the list of ingredients among the teams. | | |
| | Place the following in brown paper bags or boxes so they are not visible to teams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clue • Ingredients (along with the list of ingredients and amounts) • Official contest resources • Receipt (can be typed or a copy of the original) • Team worksheet | | |
| | Before show, ensure that the facility is set up as planned by the committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to water • Chairs • Electricity (extension cords) • Judging rooms • Registration • Tables | | |
| | Prepare the awards script. | | |
| | Secure volunteers to work contest registration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer questions • Check each team's supply box according to the official supply box list • Check in teams • Greet judges, leaders, and teams • Help the teams find their preparation tables | | |

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| | Orient the judges and participants. Examples are provided in the Food Challenge Manual. | | |
| | Rehearse the awards program format (who will speak, who will hand out awards, etc.). | | |
| | Have the participants complete the Food Challenge evaluation. | | |
| | Have the committees and participants evaluate the planning, implementation, and outcome of the show. Record the suggestions for improvement. | | |
| | Send notes of appreciation to all who helped. | | |
| | Send evaluations to the participants to help them prepare for future contests. | | |
| | Send information for entering the district show to the district qualifiers. | | |