

# Saunders County 4-H



## Favorite Foods Day Contest Procedures and Guidelines



The Favorite Foods Day Contest is open to all 4-H members. Participants need not be enrolled in a specific project to participate in this contest, but we do recommend that you select at least one food project in 4-H Online.

Participants will do the following:

- Select a theme
- Create a menu based on the theme
- Select one of your menu items to prepare and serve on contest day as your “favorite food”
- Display one place setting based on your theme
  - Make sure to include table covering, dinnerware (plates, cups, saucers, and bowls), glassware (glasses of all shapes and sizes), flatware (forks, spoons, and knives), napkins, and centerpiece. You will also include your menu and recipe.
  - Tables are provided by Saunders County, but you may bring your own card table.

Why participate in the Favorite Foods Day Contest?

- It’s Fun! It lets you show off your creativity!
- Shows off your cooking skills.
- Present to the judge and help develop public speaking skills and confidence!
- Express knowledge of food, nutrition, and food safety

The contest is divided into three age divisions:

- Junior (ages 8-11)
- Intermediate(ages 12-14)
- Senior (ages 15-18).

You can compete individually or as a team. The team will enter the division of the oldest member.

This is a county contest only. At this time there is not an option for Clover Kids.

There is also a state Culinary Challenge. Check out <https://food.unl.edu/food-projects> for details of this contest and this year’s challenge ingredient. Saunders County can send two teams to the state contest.

**Pre-register:**

Participants must pre-register by July 1st online at <https://go.unl.edu/saunderspreentry>.



## Steps for a successful Favorite Foods Day Contest Entry

1. **Select a Theme** - What is the occasion...a family dinner, a holiday, or lunch with friends? Select a theme which fits the occasion. Possibilities can run from a fishing party sack lunch to a formal Mother's Day dinner.
2. **Menu** - When planning a menu, first decide on the main dish. Select appropriate vegetables, appetizer, soup or salad. Add a bread, dessert, and beverage, if desired.
  - a. Use MyPlate to plan nutritious meals. Breakfast, party, and picnic menus should contain two or three food groups. Other meals should contain five food groups. Participants are encouraged to develop interesting and creative menus. For example, you might name a food to fit your theme. For more information about MyPlate, go to <https://www.myplate.gov/>
  - b. Write or type your menu on a card of appropriate size. Make sure to use correct menu writing format. See 'Writing the Menu'.
  - c. A well-planned menu should:
    - i. Consider the time required for the main course and total preparation time.
    - ii. Contain a variety of foods to meet the nutritional needs of those for whom it is planned.
    - iii. Contain a variety of colors, textures, shapes, sizes and flavors.
    - iv. Be suitable for the meal.
    - v. Be readily prepared and easily served with equipment on hand.
    - vi. Show wise use of time and money.
    - vii. Incorporate proper food handling practices.



*Note: The use of alcohol in any menu will disqualify entry.*

3. **Favorite Food** – From your menu, choose one item and prepare it as your “Favorite Food.” Your favorite food is to be prepared at home and brought to the contest. It can be anything from a snack to an entrée, depending on your occasion. If needed to be served warm, there will be a microwave available to heat your food prior to being judged. Your favorite food may be displayed as the whole dish or as one serving. You will dish up one serving to the judge in an attractive manner.
  - a. Include the recipe, written or typed on a card of appropriate size, of your favorite food in the table display. See “How to Write a Recipe.”

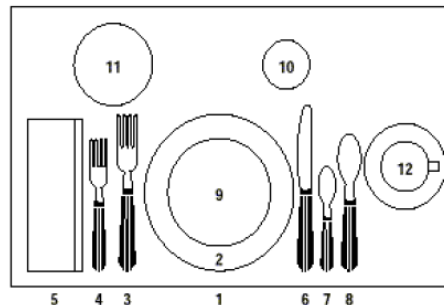


4. **Tablecloth** — This is the background for the food and table appointments placed on it. It protects the table and muffles the noise of clanking glassware and dishes. Placemats and/or tablecloths may be used. Choose a tablecloth which is appropriate for the occasion and the other table appointments. You may match or blend colors and textures in the dishes - or use something quite different for contrast.

5. **Set your Table** — Allow at least 20 inches for each person's dishes. This is called a cover and each cover is set the same. A cover contains the dinnerware and flatware for the meal served.
  - a. Put the plate, china, pottery paper, glass, etc., in the center of the cover about one inch from the edge of the table.
  - b. Place the knives and spoons on the right side, the forks (silver, plastic, etc.) on the left about one inch from the plate and one inch from the edge of the table. Turn the cutting edge of the knife towards the plate. If there is more than one piece in each cover, such as one dinner fork and a salad fork or one teaspoon and a soup spoon, place the one that will be used first outside the other.
  - c. Napkins folded into oblongs are placed next to the forks with the fold to the left so it opens like a book. Decorative and creative folds are encouraged. Placement of the napkin may vary.
  - d. The first beverage glass is placed about one inch above the tip of the knife. If serving more than one beverage, place additional glass(es) to the right of first glass in order served.
  - e. If coffee or tea is served, the cup is placed on the saucer and set to the right of the spoon. Have the handle pointing to the right.
  - f. Salad, bread and/or dessert plate(s) — or bowl(s) — may be placed at the top of the fork(s).

The following rules for setting a table correspond to the numbers seen in the table setting illustration below.

1. The flatware, plate, and napkin should be one inch from the edge of the table.
2. The plate is always in the center of the place setting.
3. The dinner fork is placed at the left of the plate.
4. If a salad fork is used, it is placed to the left of the dinner fork.
5. The napkin is placed to the left of the fork, with the fold on the left (unless a decorative/creative fold is used). The napkin may also go under a fork or on top of the plate.
6. The knife is placed to the right of the plate with the sharp blade facing in towards the plate.
7. The teaspoon is placed to the right of the knife.
8. If a soup spoon is needed, it is placed to the right of the teaspoon.
9. The soup bowl may be placed on the dinner plate.
10. The drinking glass is placed at the tip of the knife.
11. If salad, bread and/or dessert plate(s) — or bowl(s) — is used, place at the top of the fork(s).
12. The cup or mug is placed to the top right of the spoons.



*Note: Only the utensils needed are placed on the table.*

Source: Purdue University Indiana 4-H

6. **Centerpiece** - The centerpiece should coordinate with the table setting and be appropriate for the occasion. It should be colorful and blend with the tablecloth and the dishes. Even though a single place setting is set, the centerpiece should be visible to all as if the entire table were set and should not obstruct anyone's view of each other. If candles are used, they should be of the length so that if they were lit, they would be above eye level. If candles are lit, they should be extinguished as soon as judging is complete.
7. **Attire** - Participant's attire should correspond with the theme/occasion of their table setting. Participants may come dressed or change in one of the restrooms. You are not required to wear your 4-H shirt for this contest.



## The Contest

1. **Pre-Register** – Prior to July 1<sup>st</sup> register for the contest using the online contest registration.
2. **Day of Contest** - On the day of the contest, arrive at the start time and select your judging time. This contest takes place in the Commercial Building on the fairgrounds.
  - a. You will also fill out a static entry tag at this time. Instructions for this can be found at: <https://go.unl.edu/entrytag>
3. **Set up your table.** Tables are provided, but you may bring your own. **Only 4-H members are allowed to enter the judging area.** Please do not enter this area if judging is actively taking place.
4. **Prepare your Serving** - When notified by the superintendent, prepare one serving of your “Favorite Food.” You should either bring an extra dish or keep your dish with you when setting your table. You will not be allowed to enter the judging area while judging is taking place.
5. **Interview with the judge** – participants will give a three-to-five-minute presentation about the preparation of the menu, favorite food, selection and management of the menu, nutritional information about the favorite food and menu and experience preparing the favorite food.

Possible questions: (Note: Judges may ask you different questions)

  - a. How did you decide upon the theme of your table?
  - b. Where did you find the recipe you used today?
  - c. Did you use MyPlate in planning your menu?
  - d. How often have you prepared this food item and/or this menu?
  - e. In what order would the food in your menu be prepared?
  - f. What nutrients do the foods in your menu provide?
  - g. Does your menu have a variety in color, texture and flavor?
  - h. What is the total cost of your favorite food and/or menu.
  - i. What steps are needed to prepare your favorite food and/or entire menu?
  - j. How did you ensure that you were following food safety protocols?
6. **Before you leave** – After your entry has been judged, please remove the dish used to serve the judge and clean it. Return it to the table for public display. Please do not enter the judging area while judging is taking place.
7. **During the Fair** – During the fair, your entry will be available for public display. \*Saunders County Extension is not responsible for lost or damaged items.
8. **Results** – Judging results will be placed on each entry following the conclusion of static judging on Tuesday of the Fair. Premiums will be handed out during project pickup on Sunday.



**Additional Questions? Call us in the office at (402) 624-8030.**

## Writing the Menu

The menu should be displayed on a 4x6 or larger on your choice of medium (index card, ceramic tile, chalkboard, etc.) printed or typed by the participant. You may decorate and/or prop up the menu.

- 1) List the foods in the order in which they are served. (Every menu will not include all the foods listed.)

Appetizer  
Main Dish  
Starchy Vegetable  
Other Vegetables  
Salad  
Bread  
Dessert  
Beverage

- 2) Group foods served in one course. Use single line spacing between food items and a double line spacing between courses.

- 3) Use CAPITALS at the beginning of all words except articles, conjunctions, and prepositions. Correct spelling is important.

- 4) When an item on the menu has an accompaniment:

- a. Place the main item to the left and the accompaniment to the right

**Braised Pork Chops      Applesauce**

- b. or you may center the main item and write the accompanying item underneath,

**Braised Pork Chops  
Applesauce**

- c. if more than one accompaniment appears, place one at each side on the same line,

**Sesame Seed Wafers      Tomato Bouillon      Saltines**

- d. or place both on the same line below.

**Tomato Bouillon  
Sesame Seed Wafers      Saltines**

- 5) When a food is commonly prepared in more than one way, avoid confusion by describing the method of cooking, such as: Roast Turkey or French Fried Potatoes.

- 6) List each food except for butter, cream, sugar, or salad dressing, unless it is something special, such as Honey Butter or Poppyseed Dressing.

- 7) List beverages last.

- 8) Plan the spacing and arrangement of the items on the menu so that the written menu is symmetrical.

### Examples of a Menu

Boiled Ham  
  
Grilled Pineapple Slices  
  
Cole Slaw  
  
Hot Gingerbread with Applesauce  
  
Coffee    Milk

Cream of Broccoli Soup  
Curried Toast Fingers  
  
Fresh Fruit Salad Plate  
with Lime Sherbet  
Crescent Rolls  
  
Glazed Chocolate Roll  
Coffee    Milk

## Common Errors in Planning Meals

### PREPARATION & TYPE OF FOOD

- No main dish
  - More than one main dish
  - Too many foods prepared the same way
  - Too many starchy foods
  - Same fruit or vegetable more than once
  - Too many high protein foods
- ### COLOR
- Too many foods of the same color
  - No contrast or variation of color
  - Clashing or unpleasant colors

### NUTRITION

- Too many foods from one food group
- Missing food groups
- Foods not meeting the nutritional needs of planned audience

### SIZE

- Too many mixtures
- Too many small pieces of the same size and shape
- Too many similar shapes
- Lack of variety of shape

### TEMPERATURE

- Too many foods of the same temperature
- Not enough time allotted for preparation
- Need to keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold
- Food not stored at safe temperature (special consideration needed for picnics)

### FLAVOR

- All bland flavor
- Too many strong flavors
- Repetition of food or flavor
- No tart or acid flavor
- Too many sweet foods
- Too many sour foods

### TEXTURE

- Too many soft foods
- Too many chewy foods
- Too many crispy or crunch foods
- Lack of variety of texture

## How to Write a Recipe

### Characteristics of a Good Recipe

- 1) It should be accurate.
- 2) It should be complete.
- 3) It should be simple and clear.
- 4) It should list all ingredients in the order used.
- 5) It should give exact measurements in the easiest unit of measure (i.e.,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup, not 4 Tablespoons).
- 6) If possible, in space allowed, do not abbreviate.
- 7) Use weights for meat, when possible.
- 8) Use weight or fluid measure of canned foods (don't say "one can pineapple," say "one 12 ounce can of pineapple").
- 9) Use short sentences and clear, simple descriptions of methods.
- 10) Give word pictures, if possible (foamy, syrupy, lemon-colored).
- 11) Specify pan sizes.
- 12) Give 2 tests of doneness, if possible. For example, a thermometer reading and a cold-water test for candy. Include baking temperature and baking time.
- 13) Give total yield of number of servings, and state serving size.

## Recipe Construction

### Standard Form

- 1) The most widely used and easily read form. Excellent for recipes containing many ingredients.
- 2) List all ingredients first, including any modifications of the ingredient. For instance, if your recipe requires 1 cup chopped nuts – the nuts should be measured after chopping. However, if the ingredients listed is 1 cup nuts chopped –the nuts are measured first, then chopped.
- 3) The method of combining the ingredients follows the listing. It may be stated in paragraph or numbered steps.

### Action Form

- 1) Takes more space than the standard form but is easy to follow.
- 2) The narrative description of the "action" of combining ingredients is included with the list of ingredients.
- 3) Ingredients are described the same way as the Standard Form.

### Narrative Form

- 1) The most difficult to follow. Requires very little space. Suited to simple recipes with few ingredients.
- 2) Include the ingredients and amounts with the method in paragraph form.

#### *Example of Narrative Form Recipe:*

##### **Waffles**

Preheat waffle iron. Measure out 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups of sifted enriched flour. Add 3 teaspoons of baking powder and  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt and sift again. Separate the yolks from the whites of 2 eggs. Beat the yolks slightly. Add to the yolks 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  cups milk and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of melted shortening. Stir the liquid ingredients into the dry ingredients. Beat the two egg whites until stiff but not dry. Fold the egg whites into the batter. Bake in a hot waffle iron. Makes 8 waffles.

#### *Example of Standard Form Recipe:*

##### **Waffles**

1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups sifted enriched flour	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups milk
3 teaspoons baking powder	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup melted shortening
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt	2 stiff-beaten egg whites
2 beaten egg yolks	

Preheat waffle iron. Sift dry ingredients; stir in combined egg yolk, milk and shortening. Fold in egg whites. Bake in hot waffle iron. Makes 8.

##### **OR**

- 1)Preheat waffle iron.
  - 2)Sift dry ingredients into bowl.
  - 3)Combine egg yolks, milk and shortening.
  - 4)Stir into dry ingredients.
  - 5)Fold in beaten egg whites.
  - 6)Bake in hot waffle iron.
- Makes 8 waffles.

#### *Example of Action Form Recipe:*

##### **Waffles**

Preheat waffle iron

Measure and sift together into mixing bowl:

1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups sifted enriched flour  
3 teaspoons baking powder  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt

Mix together:

2 beaten egg yolks  
1  $\frac{1}{4}$  cups milk  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup melted shortening

Stir liquid ingredients into dry ingredients.

Fold in 2 beaten egg whites.

Bake in hot waffle iron.

Makes 8 waffles.