

## National 4-H Food Challenge

The National Food Challenge provides a place for youth to compete at the national level. Additionally, the event helps youth develop and exhibit nutrition, healthy food preparation, food safety, communication, and teamwork skills through culinary experience. National Food Challenge participants learn to prepare safe and nutritious foods and make healthy decisions which may decrease their risk of chronic disease now and in the future.

Through National Food Challenge, delegates:

- Have an opportunity to compete nationally in a food and nutrition contest.
- Develop a growth mindset and connection to others through the team based contest.
- Develop personal responsibility based on their role on the Food Challenge team while building prosocial skills and connection with others through communication with teammates and other contest participants.
- Develop an understanding of planning, purchasing, preparing, and serving nutritious recipes for themselves and their families.
- Acquire skills in food preparation and presentation techniques through the contest experience.
- Develop an understanding of nutritional benefits of foods.
- Learn food safety principles related to prevention of foodborne illnesses, cross contamination, food storage, and proper cooking temperatures.
- Showcasing culinary and communication skills.
- Explore potential career and academic advancement opportunities which may result in improved employability and future economic stability.
- Gain valuable life skills related to healthy food preparation which may result in reduced chronic disease risks now and in the future.

Participation in the National 4-H Food Challenge is open to Food Challenge Team members as well as additional 4-H member delegates, volunteer leaders, and Extension professionals approved by their respective state offices. Such participation shall be without regard to sex, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity, or national origin.

### ***Learning Experiences:***

Attendees at the National 4-H Food Challenge will experience unique learning experiences while participating in the program. Learning experiences will focus on, but not be limited to, nutrition, food purchasing, food preparation, food safety, and careers. These experiences will occur through presentations by professionals, self-guided tours, educational resources and displays, and hands-on engagement with food preparation.

Specifically, attendees will engage in the following experiential learning:

- Healthy food preparation to reduce the risk of chronic disease.
- Food safety to prevent cross contamination, safely store foods, and prevention of foodborne illnesses.
- Basic culinary and kitchen skills such as equipment usage, knife skills, and kitchen safety.
- Advancing health through agriculture including production, processing, food safety, and nutrition or our food supply.

- Nutrition knowledge via research on beneficial nutrients of foods, MyPlate messages, and Dietary Guidelines for Americans to make healthy food choices.
- Communication, both written and verbal, through presentation preparation and delivery, as well as team building activities with other youth.
- Career exploration.

***Evaluation Strategy:***

A post-evaluation utilizing 4-H Essential Elements and 4-H Common Measures as a guide will be developed to measure program quality and outcomes. Survey questions will measure the following:

- Customer Satisfaction with Event and Learning Opportunities.
- Personal Development Questions related to communication skills, teamwork, and leadership.
- Knowledge Change related to healthy food preparation, menu planning, purchasing, culinary skills, and nutrition.
- Life skill development related to healthy food preparation, menu planning, purchasing, culinary skills, and nutrition.

The common core outcomes and indicators will be used to evaluate and improve the program design and track impact of the event on participants learning and behavior change now and in the future.

## Rules & Policies

### Contest Eligibility:

1. A state/territory/District of Columbia is permitted to enter up to four teams into the National 4-H Food Challenge contest each year.
2. The eligibility requirements to enter a National 4-H Competitive Event or a Multi-State 4-H Competitive event are:
  - a. Contestant must already have passed his or her 14th birthday and may not have reached his or her 19th birthday as of January 1 current year. The State 4-H Leader may grant a special authorization to compete, for youth with developmental disabilities who exceed the upper age limit.
  - b. All contestants must be members of 4-H in the state they are representing during the year in which the National 4-H Competitive Event is held.
  - c. The contestant(s) or team(s) of contestants must be certified as the official state entry by the State 4-H Leader or by a person designated by the State 4-H Leader. The individual(s) or team (s) may be selected by any procedure the State 4-H Leader believes is appropriate.
  - d. The contestant, his or her county 4-H staff member, and the State 4-H Leader must certify as follows on the entry form: *“This contestant has not participated in post-secondary coursework in the subject area of the national 4-H competition, nor has he or she participated in training for post-secondary competition in the subject area of the national 4-H competition.”*
3. Contestants of teams must be certified as the official state entry by the State 4-H Leader or by a person designated by the State 4-H Leader. The state team entries may be determined through a state developed procedure as directed by the State 4-H Leader.
4. An individual may enter the National Food Challenge only once. Participating members of a team entry are ineligible to enter the same event again as part of another team.

### Contest Rules:

1. The contest will consist of four categories:
  - a. Protein
  - b. Fruit & Vegetable
  - c. Grains
  - d. Dairy
2. Teams will be randomly assigned to a category, which will not be announced until the day of the contest during orientation.
  - a. Please note, based upon the number of entries, it is at the discretion of the contest committee to determine if all teams will compete against each other (in the same category) or be assigned to categories. Whether or not teams are assigned to categories will also determine if a “final round” is held. Once all entries are received, teams will be notified of the committee’s decision.

3. Teams may be made up of 2-4 individuals.
4. Each team must supply their own equipment for the Food Challenge contest. Teams may only bring the supplies listed in the contest supply box list. Supply boxes will be randomly checked by contest officials during the contest. Any unapproved equipment will be removed from supply boxes and placed at a storage location outside of the contest area. It is up to each team what type of box is used to store their supplies.
5. Teams should be prepared to plug in only one heat source at a time during the preparation phase of the contest to avoid electricity issues. Teams will be notified if this is the case during orientation. Teams that experience any equipment malfunction(s) may not replace the equipment with supplies from another team, leaders, volunteers, county Extension agents or contest officials. Instead, team members must work together and be creative in completing preparation.
6. Each team should dress appropriately for the preparation of food (i.e. no full or draping sleeves; closed-toe shoes only; hair appropriately restrained, etc.). Each team has the option of coordinating clothing, aprons or hair coverings.
7. No electronic devices or jewelry (except for medically required) is allowed in contest. This includes cell phones, smart watches, or other communication devices. Team members caught with and/or using electronic devices (except for medically required) will automatically disqualify the entire team and be asked to leave.
8. The members of Texas A&M AgriLife, Texas 4-H, National Food Challenge Committee, and the State Fair of Texas will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary service, special dietary needs, food allergies, or accommodation to participate, will need to contact contest coordinator, Julie Gardner via email at [julie.gardner@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:julie.gardner@ag.tamu.edu) at least 30 days prior to event.

### **Contest Procedures:**

1. An orientation will be provided for all participants.
2. Each team will be directed to a cooking/preparation station (one table). There will be a “key” ingredient at each station. No ingredient amounts, recipe, or instructions will be provided at the station. The “key” ingredient will be representative of the category to which the team has been assigned.
3. With the “key” ingredient provided, along with access to a “grocery store” of additional ingredients, each team will have 40 minutes to plan and prepare a dish, plan a presentation, and clean up their assigned preparation area. No cost analysis will be required.
4. Teams must select and use at least two items from the “grocery store.” Teams will have a maximum number of items they may select from the “grocery store” and will be notified of this amount during orientation. The items provided in the will be typical of what one can find in a store such as produce, canned goods, dry goods, fresh meats, etc. Teams should not create side, multiple dishes, and/or drinks with their ingredients or “grocery store” items. No cost analysis will be required for the contest.

5. Teams should prepare and present one entire dish/ recipe, as well as one individual serving for the judges. Plate and utensils for the individual serving will be provided by contest officials. Teams will be responsible for determining the total number of servings their dish provides and convey this to judges.
6. Educational resources will be provided to teams during the preparation phase of the contest. No other educational resources are allowed at the contest. The resources provided include:
  - a. MyPlate Mini Poster
  - b. Fight Bac – Fight Foodborne Bacteria Brochure
  - c. Know Your Nutrients
  - d. Food & Kitchen Safety Fact Sheet
7. Teams will be evaluated by judges during the preparation phase of the contest on teamwork, safety concerns and practices, preparation, and management. Descriptions of each element can be found on the National 4-H Food Challenge Preparation Scorecard.
8. Only participants and contest officials will be allowed in the food preparation area; however, spectators may watch from assigned areas.
9. Contest officials are not responsible for any equipment malfunctions the team may experience during the preparation period.
10. Teams should plan to not have access to a kitchen facility; therefore, dirty dishes should be placed in a plastic container, bag, or box to be cleaned following the contest. Should a Final Challenge round be held, teams will be provided directions for cleaning dishes prior to the round.
11. After the preparation phase of the contest, each team will give a presentation to a panel of judges. All team members must participate in the presentation.

Judging time will include:

- 5 minutes for presentation
- 3 minutes for judges' questions
- 3 minutes between team presentations for judges to score and write comments.

12. Each team is allowed up to five (5) minutes for their presentation, during which they should highlight: knowledge of MyPlate, nutrition knowledge, chronic disease prevention, food preparation, safety concerns and practices, and serving size information of the dish prepared. Judges will also take into consideration the appearance and quality of the food, the team's creativity, effective communication, and teamwork when scoring the team presentation. Teams should refer to the National 4-H Food Challenge Presentation Scorecard for more details about the scoring of the team presentation.
13. Judges may taste the teams' dish at their personal discretion.
14. Following the team presentation, the judges may ask questions of the team, which will be considered by the judges when scoring the overall presentation.
15. The top team in each category will compete in a Final Challenge to determine a national champion. All contest rules and procedures apply in the Final Challenge. Note: See 2a in "Contest Rules" for additional details.

16. Teams advancing to the Final Challenge will be provided with access to a facility to wash their supplies prior to the start of the Final Challenge. Note: See 2a in “Contest Rules” for additional details.
17. In the Final Challenge, teams may be presented with an additional item (equipment/appliance) to use when preparing their recipe dish. Note: See 2a in “Contest Rules” for additional details.

### **Awards:**

1. Team awards will be determined by the committee and are based on sponsorships.
2. First through third place teams in each category will be recognized. Note: See 2a in “Contest Rules” for additional details regarding number of teams and categories.

### **General Information:**

1. When registering, each team must designate a coach. All correspondence will be sent to the designated coach’s email address on the submitted form.
2. The members of Texas A&M AgriLife, Texas 4-H, National Food Challenge Committee, and the State Fair of Texas will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary service, special dietary needs, or accommodation to participate, will need to request their needs by 30 days prior to event by contacting Julie Gardner [julie.gardner@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:julie.gardner@ag.tamu.edu)
3. All youth and adults participating in any activities affiliated with the National 4-H Food Challenge must register through their state 4-H program.
4. All participants (contest and educational activities) are required to have adequate adult chaperones, in accordance with their respective state 4-H program’s chaperoning guidelines.
5. Travel and lodging arrangements are the responsibility of each state delegation.
6. Additional information and resources for the National 4-H Food Challenge are available on the National Food Challenge Website: <http://nationalfoodchallenge.org/>
7. Questions may be directed to Julie Gardner, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service – 4-H & Youth Development Program, [julie.gardner@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:julie.gardner@ag.tamu.edu) , 979-321-5332

## National 4-H Food Challenge Team Supply Box

Teams competing in the National 4-H Food Challenge are allowed to have the following supplies for the contest. Teams may organize their supplies in any type of box, including but not limited to, a plastic storage box or a set of plastic storage drawers.

**Please note:** Only one of each item is allowed, unless otherwise noted.

Bowls (up to 4 – any size)	Non-stick cooking spray
Can opener	Note cards (no larger than 5 x 7)
Colander	Pancake turner (2)
Cookie Cutters (up to 2 – team choice)	Paper towels (1 roll)
Cutting boards (up to 4)	Pencils (no limit)
Disposable tasting spoons (no limit)	Plastic box and/or trash bag for dirty supplies
Dry measuring cups (1 set)	Pot with lid
Electric skillet	Potato masher
Extension cord (multiple outlet or strip style)	Potato peeler
First aid kit	Sanitizing wipes
Food Thermometer	Serving dishes/utensils
Fork	1 plate/platter
Gloves	1 bowl
Grater	1 utensil
Hand sanitizer	Serving utensil
Hot pads (up to 5)	Skewers (1 package – wood or metal)
Hot plate (ELECTRIC only - single or double burner)	Skillet with lid
Kitchen shears (1 pair)	Spatula (up to 2)
Kitchen timer	Stirring spoon
Knives (up to 6)	Storage bags (no limit)
Liquid measuring cup	Tongs (2 sets)
Measuring spoons (1 set)	Toothpicks (no limit)
	Whisk

### SUPPLY BOX PANTRY ITEMS

*Each team may include the following items in their supply box to be used during the contest.*

Salt (any size)	1 jar/can chicken bouillon or broth (up to 14.5 oz)
Pepper (any size)	Rice or Pasta (up to 16 oz. Must be uncooked/dried)
1 onion, unpeeled	2 spices of team's choice (any size)
Oil (up to 17 oz)	2 cans (up to 16 oz) vegetables and/or fruit
Cornstarch or Flour (up to 1 lb)	

## 2024 National 4-H Food Challenge Event Schedule

<b>Event Date:</b>	Pre-Contest Tours: Monday, September 30 Contest: Tuesday, October 1
<b>Check-In Location:</b>	State Fair of Texas – Briscoe Carpenter Livestock Center (BCLC)
<b>Contest Location:</b>	State Fair of Texas - Creative Arts Building (CA) See <a href="http://bigtex.com">bigtex.com</a> for more information and a fairground map

### Pre-Contest Tours: September 1, 2024

Noon – 5:00 PM	Self-guided and/or scheduled tours are available throughout the Dallas/Ft Worth Area locations. A complete list of confirmed tour sites will be sent 30 days prior to event to coaches and Extension agents. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dallas Farmers Market</li><li>• The Mozzarella Company</li><li>• American Heart Association</li><li>• HEB Grocery Company</li><li>• Dairy Max</li><li>• Texas Beef Council</li><li>• Rio Star Foods</li></ul>	Various Locations
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### Contest Schedule: October 1, 2024

8:00 AM	Team Check-in	BCLC – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Foyer
8:30 AM	Brunch, Team Orientation, and Learning Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Texas Beef Council</li><li>• Texas Pork Producers</li><li>• Texas 4-H Youth Development</li></ul>	BCLC – Banquet C
10:30 PM	Preliminary Round Begins	BCLC – Banquet A&B
Noon	Self-Guided Tours	State Fair of Texas Educational Exhibits
1:45 PM	Preliminary Round Awards	BCLC – Banquet A&B
2:30 PM	Final Challenge Round Begins	CA-Competition Kitchen
5:00 pm	Awards	CA- Competition Kitchen