



2025 DISTRICT 5 4-H FOOD CHALLENGE CONTEST INFORMATION

This contest challenges teams of 4-H members to create a dish using only a key ingredient and access to a “grocery store” of other ingredients. From these ingredients, team members create a healthy dish while practicing proper food safety, food preparation, and communication skills.

Contest Date

- Friday, February 21, 2024

Location

Windham Civic Center
 146 Express Blvd.
 Center, Texas 75935

How to Register

- All registrations for the 2024-2025 District contests will be conducted on the Texas 4HOnline system. It is the responsibility of the 4-H member and their parents to ensure they are registered for Food Challenge on time, correctly, and the payment has been accepted.
- Enter individually on 4HOnline at <https://texas.4honline.com>
- Payments declined will need to be cleared and accepted BEFORE the contest date in order for the contestant to be considered registered and eligible to participate.
- Contest Fee - \$20 per contestant
- Late Entry Fee - \$40 per contestant
- The general refund policy for 4HOnline is that no refunds are provided to a 4-H member or family once the registration is approved. In extreme circumstances, such as a death in the immediate family, severe illness/accident, or cancellation of an event, refunds will be provided, less any expenses already incurred by the event.

**2025 District 5
 4-H Food Challenge
 Contest**

WHERE
 Windham Civic Center
 146 Express Blvd, Center, Texas
 Open to all enrolled 4-H members
 3rd - 12th grades

TO PARTICIPATE
 Registration open on
 4-H Online
 November 1, 2024 -
 February 3, 2025
<https://texas.4honline.com>

WHEN
Friday, February 21, 2025

Late registration
February 4-6, 2025
 (Late Fees Apply)

WHAT
Food Challenge Contest
 Note: Must qualify at the county level

Entry Fee
\$20 per person
Late Entry Fee
\$40 per person

QUESTIONS
 District contest rules at
d54-h.tamu.edu

**Contact your local County
 Extension Office**

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

District Deadlines

- Regular registration is open from **November 8, 2024 – February 3, 2025**.
- Incomplete registrations (payment declined or registration not finished) will be deleted on February 3, 2025. Those still desiring to register will need to do so during the late registration period.
- Late registration – **February 4-6, 2025** (late fees apply).

Entry Divisions (grade by September 1, 2024)

- Junior Grades 3, 4, and 5
- Intermediate Grades 6, 7, and 8
- Senior Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12

Entry

- Enter as a team of 3 to 4 members.
- Teams are made up of individuals in the same age division (Junior, Intermediate or Senior).

County Entries

- Each county may submit FIVE teams per age division.
- A total of 15 team entries per county may be submitted for the district contest.
- Teams may not include members in different age divisions.

Special Accommodations

- Any competitor who requires auxiliary aids or special accommodations must contact the District office at least 2 weeks before the competition or note such needs when registering on 4HOnline.



Volunteer Assistance

- Adults desiring to assist with this contest as room, grocery store or pantry monitors and/or timekeepers are greatly appreciated as this contest continues to grow. Please use this Google link to sign-up to help during this event:
<https://forms.gle/E4wKckWCyuJYdxg38>

Attire

- Each team will have the option of wearing coordinated clothing and/or aprons.
- ALL team members must wear closed-toed shoes and hair restraints (cap, hair net, chef hat bandana, etc.).

Electronic Devices

- No electronic devices or jewelry (except for medically required) is allowed in contest areas. This includes cell phones, smart watches, or other communication devices.

Participant Check-in

- All youth participants will need to check-in AS A TEAM at the Help Desk located in the foyer at least 20 minutes before contest start time as listed in the schedule of events.

Schedule of Events

- A detailed schedule with time/room locations for each age division will be released in early February. Check-in, preparation, and judging times for each age division will be staggered throughout the day with an awards ceremony conducted at the end of each age division heat.

Contest Viewing

- The Food Challenge contest will be OPEN to viewing via a livestream in the waiting area. The contest will be streamed on screens located in rooms A and B. Parents/project leaders may assist their youth members to the contest area with supplies.
 - ONLY THE TEAM is allowed in the contest area. All others must remain in the designated waiting areas or outside the building.
 - Teams must check-in and check-out of the contest area as a group.
 - Teams with fewer than three members will be disqualified.

Awards and Prizes

- An individual awards ceremony will be conducted at the end of the contest period by age division. Youth participating in the Food Challenge are encouraged to stay for the awards ceremony. Youth placing, but unable to participate in the ceremony, will receive their award and prize from their county agent.
- Placings and awards will be announced with prizes awarded based upon registration and sponsorships. 1st – 3rd places will be presented a rosette.
- Placings for the Food Challenge will also be published via email and the District 5 4-H website one week after this event.
- Entry via 4HOnline gives permission to the District office to use the participant's name and/or photograph as needed for marketing and promotion purposes.



Scorecards

- Rankings, judges' comments, and other correspondence will be forwarded to the contestant's county Extension office. Please allow up to three weeks for processing.
- See attached contest scorecards.

Questions Before Contest

- Contact your local county Extension agent for eligibility, participation, and county-level contest questions.
- Contact Carolyn Walton at the District 5 office at 903-834-6191 for registration questions.




Questions at Contest

- Please see a help desk attendant located in the foyer.

- Please provide feedback on the Food Challenge by completing a short QR code survey located at the Help Desk.

Supply Box

- Each team must supply their own equipment for the challenge.
- Teams may bring only the supplies listed in the supply box list below.
- Supply boxes may be checked by contest officials as team members check in for the contest. Size is limited to 40in x 24in x 40in. Boxes must have a lid and remain closed until the start of the contest.
- An EMPTY tub for dirty dishes may be placed on top of the equipment box.
- Any extra equipment will be removed from the team's supply box.
- Each team will bring an equipment box containing only ONE of each of the following items, unless a different quantity is noted:

Bench scraper 	Manual pencil sharpener
Beverage glass	Measuring spoons (1 set)
Bowls (up to 4 – any size)	Meat tenderizer 
Calculator	Non-stick cooking spray
Can opener	Note cards (1 package – no larger 5x7)
Colander	Paper towels (1 roll)
Cookie cutters (up to 2)	Pancake turner (up to 2)
Cutting boards (4)	Pencils (no limit)
Disposable tasting spoons (no limit)	Plastic box & trash bag for dirty equipment
Dry measuring cups (1 set)	Pot with lid
Electric skillet	Potato masher
First aid kit	Potato peeler
Food thermometer	Rolling pin 
Extension cord (Multiple outlet or strip style) <i>Teams should be certain the extension cord is compatible (2-prong/3-prong) with the plugs on their electrical supplies.</i>	Sanitizing wipes (1 container) or bleach solution spray
Empty tub for dirty dishes	Serving dishes/utensils: 1 plate/platter, 1 bowl and 1 utensil
Fork	Skewers (1 set)
Gloves	Skillet with lid
Grater	Spatulas (2)
Hand sanitizer	Stirring spoon
Hot pads (up to 5)	Storage bags (1 box)
Kitchen shears (1 pair)	Tongs (2)
Kitchen timer	Toothpicks (no limit)
Knives (up to 6)	Two single-burner or one double-burner hot plate (electric only)
Liquid measuring cup (2 cup size)	Whisk

Pantry

- Each team may include in their supply box the following “pantry” ingredients which they may use when preparing their dish.
- There is no requirement to use these items, nor is it mandatory that teams include these in their supply box.

Salt	1 medium onion
Pepper	2 (up to 16 oz) cans vegetables and/or fruit
Oil (up to 17 oz)	Rice (white or brown) or pasta (up to 16 oz)
1 jar chicken bouillon	1 pound of cornstarch or flour

Resource Materials Provided

- Each team will be provided the following resources at contest:
 - ✓ MyPlate Mini-Poster
 - ✓ Fight Bac: Fight Food Borne Bacteria brochure
 - ✓ Know Your Nutrients
 - ✓ Food Safety Fact Sheet
 - ✓ Food Challenge worksheet
- No other resource materials will be permitted.
- Teams may not use their personal copies of resources during the contest.
- See state guidelines for additional information https://texas4-h.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/food_challenge_guidelines_24_25.pdf



Contest Rules of Play (Be sure to read – there will NOT be a contestant orientation at contest)

- Each team will be directed to a cooking/preparation station. Contest categories will be revealed at the preparation station.
- Each team will receive an information sheet with their contest category and “key” ingredient for that category. The “key” ingredient will be representative of one of the following categories: Appetizer, Main Dish, Side Dish, Healthy Dessert.
- Teams will have access to a “grocery store” of additional ingredients which can be “purchased” and combined with the team’s “key” ingredient to create an original recipe/dish during the contest. The “grocery store” will include items commonly found in grocery stores such as produce, canned goods, crackers, dairy products, etc.
- Teams must “purchase” at least two additional items from the “grocery store”. Teams will also receive pricing information for “grocery store” items at their station. “Grocery store” items will be “purchased” using a pricing system and “contest currency.” The currency system will be explained prior to the contest. Teams may not exceed the provided “contest currency” or trade “currency” or share grocery store items with other teams. Teams will be provided a set dollar amount to “spend” at the store. Each item in the store will be priced.
- Each team will have 40 minutes to prepare the dish, plan a presentation, and clean up the preparation area.



- Teams should be prepared to only plug in one piece of equipment at a time to reduce the risk of electrical malfunction.

Preparation



- Teams will be randomly selected as to access to electricity and/or a heat source.
- Each team will create an entire dish/recipe (not a full meal) using the key ingredients provided and grocery store items.
- Teams must select and use at least two items and will be provided the maximum number of items they can select.
- Dishes/recipes created should include two or more servings.
- Teams should present the entire dish/recipe to the judges and communicate during their presentation what an individual serving size should be. Teams will be responsible for determining the number of servings their dish provides.
- Teams should not create side or multiple dishes with their ingredients/grocery store items.
- Teams are challenged to be creative and develop an original recipe with the ingredients provided.
- Teams will determine the exact amount of each ingredient used based on the original recipe.
- The key ingredient and/or grocery store ingredients selected should be used to garnish the dish.
- Note cards may be used to write down the recipe the team creates, along with notes related to nutrition and food safety. Teams should be exact on ingredients, preparation steps, cooking time, temperature, etc.
- A safe and sanitary working environment must be maintained during the contest. Each station will have food and kitchen safety resources. Teams should follow steps listed to ensure proper food and equipment safety is followed. Judges will be scoring teams on food and equipment safety during the preparation phase of the contest. Teams should also discuss safety steps used during the presentation phase of the contest.
- Gloves do not have to be worn throughout the contest; however, there should always be a barrier between your hands and any food touched. A barrier includes gloves and/or cooking utensils. When wearing gloves, they must be changed between handling raw meats/seafood; handling cooked items; and ready to eat items or raw vegetables to prevent cross contamination.
- Each team member must wear a hat, hair net and/or other type of hair restraint during the food preparation part of the competition. Examples of acceptable hair restraints include hairnets, bandana with hair completely pulled back, Chef hat with hair restrained inside, or cap with hair completely tucked inside.
- Each station will have a variety of nutrition resources/references. Each team should highlight key nutrients in their dish and their functions during their presentation.
- Teams will not be required to analyze the cost of the recipe, nor will this be included in the presentation or scoring of the contest.
- Teams must clean up their preparation areas. Clean-up time is included in the 40-minute preparation allotment.

Presentation and Questions

- Following the preparation phase of the contest, each team will give a 5-minute presentation to a panel of judges. ALL team members should participate in the presentation.
- To earn maximum points, teams must use the 5-minute presentation to address the following areas of presentation according to scorecard: Knowledge of MyPlate, Nutrition Knowledge, Food Preparation, Safety Concerns, and Serving Size.
- At the end of 5 minutes, time will be called – additional time will not be allowed. Judges will be allowed 3 minutes to ask questions. Judges will not ask questions related to what teams should have covered during the presentation. Judges' questions will be related to general nutrition, health, chronic disease prevention or others relevant to food and nutrition. Following questions, judges will have 3 minutes to score/write comments.
- Finished dishes MAY NOT leave the judging area. Dishes must be discarded after teams complete the judging process to ensure teams in the following heats do not see what ingredients are available to gain an advantage.