

Tips for Planning a County/District Qualifying Culinary Event

Counties and districts will need to have some type of qualifying event to select one team from the district to participate in the state contest. How that is done, is up to the district.

At the county level...

- Agents are encouraged to recruit volunteers who have an interest in cooking to lead 4-H SPIN Clubs. Local chefs and caterers may be willing to serve as volunteer leaders or mentors.
- Master Food Volunteers: about 10 counties across the state have initiated and provided training through a Master Food Volunteer program. Extension Specialist Sandra Bastin has also provided training for these volunteers. Some of the MFV's might be interested in leading local cooking clubs.

If counties or districts wish to set up a qualifying event similar to the state event, here are some tips:

- **Secret Ingredients:** With an emphasis on using more Kentucky products and the need for youth to include fruits and vegetables in their diet, be sure these are among the contest's secret ingredients. Place the secret ingredients in a bag on each preparation station so they will remain secret until the contest begins.
- **The Clue:** Be creative in thinking of a clue that will give team members guidance in using the secret ingredients.
- **Common pantry:** Select items that are generally used in recipes that include the ingredients chosen as secret ingredients. Look through recipes containing the secret ingredients to get an idea of what should be included in the pantry. Remember to keep the pantry items healthy and have substitutes that can be used to modify recipes, such as replacing high-fat ingredients with substitutes. Place the common pantry items on tables in the center of the room where they are equally accessible to all. Place refrigerated items in coolers or a nearby refrigerator. Make sure all team members know where these items are located.
- **Equipment:** Keep in mind that teams will not have access to ovens and will be limited to cooking utensils in the equipment tub. Teams need to practice using the equipment in the kit.
- **Food Limitations:** During pre-registration, ask participants to indicate if they have any food allergies or religious practices that should be considered when participating in a 4-H food contest.

Contest Example:

Clue: Veggies make Bagels Smile

Secret Ingredients:

Whole wheat bagels
 Low fat cream cheese
 Radishes
 Broccoli

Common Pantry Items:

Carrots
 Green peppers
 Kidney beans
 Black olives
 Garlic powder
 Onion
 Ranch dressing

