

August 2025

Memorandum

TO: District 7 County Extension Agents

SUBJECT: 2025 District 7 4-H Food Show

EVENT DATE: Thursday, November 13, 2025

LOCATION: Taylor County Expo Center- AEP Texas Big Country Hall
Abilene, Texas

PAPERWORK
DEADLINE: **DUE TO THE DISTRICT OFFICE: October 27th: All paperwork must be submitted on the website by 5:00 p.m.**

4-H ONLINE Deadline: **Opens October 13th and closes October 27th.**

*Any entries made after closing date of 4-H ONLINE will incur a \$50 late fee in addition to the original contest fee.
(Pending late entry is approved based on timeline needed for contest preparation)*

Fee: \$10 per contestant

COMMITTEE: Kim Miles (Chairman)
Carrie Ross, Kelli Maberry

Please find Information for this event on the following pages. Please contact the District 7 Office if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Garry Branham
District Specialist – 4-H & Youth Development

**2025 DISTRICT 7 4-H FOOD SHOW
GUIDELINES, RULES AND REGULATIONS**

AGE DIVISIONS

The following contestant ages are as of **August 31, 2025**:

- JUNIOR – age 8 and in the 3rd grade, grades 3rd, 4th, and 5th
- INTERMEDIATE – grades 6th, 7th, and 8th
- SENIOR – grades 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th (Maximum age- 18 as of August 31, 2025)

REGISTRATION & FEE

All contestants must be entered on 4-H Online.

The registration fee will be \$10 per individual which covers the cost of location, insurance, and contest materials.

PARTICIPANTS MUST COMPETE WITH THE SAME PRESENTATION/ENTRY AT ALL LEVELS OF COMPETITION – COUNTY, DISTRICT, AND STATE.

Participants may FINE-TUNE performances/presentations based on critiques from county and district judging but changing material/content completely is prohibited.

There will be NO REFUNDS for individuals that do not show up to the contest.

ENTRIES

- Judges Form – Submit via Form on District Website
- Exhibit Entries- Submit via Form on District Website
- Contestant Registration- 4-H Online- <https://texas.4honline.com/Login>
- Contestant Recipe Submission – All Age Divisions use state form – Submit Via Form on District Website. (Please follow recipe format- Refer to page 10-11 of State Food Show Guidelines.)

NUMBER OF ENTRIES

- **Food Show Entries:** Entries are limited to 1 entry per age group, per category for each county.
- **Food and Nutrition Exhibit Competition:** There are NO limits on numbers of entries per age group per county.

CATEGORIES

Texas 4-H Food Show categories are: Appetizer, Main Dish, Side Dishes and Healthy Desserts.

- o **Appetizer** – Traditionally an appetizer is a small dish or food that is eaten prior to the main course. When selecting recipes for this category, contestants should consider foods that are lower in fat, sodium, and calories so as not to ruin one's appetite. Examples are hummus, kale chips, zesty guacamole, bruschetta, or spinach stuffed mushrooms.
- o **Main Dish** – The main dish is usually the heaviest, heartiest, and most substantial dish in a meal. In a meal consisting of several courses, the main dish is served during the main course and is the featured dish of the meal. The key ingredient is usually meat or another protein food, but they may contain other foods. Examples are veggie stir fry, zucchini boats, shrimp tacos, Italian spinach meatballs or beef kabobs.
- o **Side Dishes** – Side dishes are foods that are usually served along with a main dish or as accompaniments to the main course. Suggested dishes may include salads, cooked vegetables, cooked fruit, pasta, or rice dishes, and/or combination vegetable dishes.
- o **Healthy Desserts** – Healthy can still mean delicious when it comes to desserts. Dishes in this category should be served at the end of the meal or for special occasions. Contestants should modify traditional recipes with health substitutions and consider MyPlate and Dietary Guidelines when selecting recipes for this category. Examples are grilled strawberries, roasted pineapple with Greek Yogurt, Sauteed bananas, or baked apples with oatmeal and yogurt.

FOOD PREPARATION

No food preparation should be done in the building- Food preparation should be done prior to arriving. **Kitchen will not be available.**

Senior Contestants: *Please note, seniors that compete at Texas 4-H Roundup will have a 60 - minute oven time limit, so you must ensure your recipe will fall within that guideline.*

ABSOLUTELY NO open flames or outdoor type grills will be allowed at the State Food Show.

NO alcohol or ingredients containing alcohol may be used. Extract flavorings are acceptable.

FOODS AND NUTRITION EXHIBIT COMPETITION

4-H members of all ages can compete in the Foods and Nutrition Exhibit Competition which will be held in conjunction with the Food Show. Food and Nutrition Exhibits should relate to one of the following topics: Basic Nutrition; Food Preparation Skills and Storage; Nutrition and Health; Consumer Information; or Kitchen and Food Safety. The exhibit may be freestanding or may be made from poster board, cardboard, or plywood and should fit on a card table.

Exhibits may be entered by an individual or a group. **These entries will be submitted on an online form through the District Website (No Fee).** Individual and Group entries will be judged against each other in each age division. Exhibits must be at the Food Show no later than 9am to be judged. Exhibits will be judged from 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM. This will allow participants to set up their exhibit during the staggered judging times during the morning. They will remain in place until after the awards program. 1st through 6th place ribbons will be given in Junior, Intermediate and Senior divisions. All others will receive participant ribbons.

JUDGES

Contestants will be judged by a panel of adult judges provided by each county. **Please submit judges utilizing the online form on District website.**

It is the Agent's responsibility to identify capable, qualified judges, preferably Home Economists. The district office will make judging assignments and send contest information to the judges by e-mail. In the event a judge from your county cancels, you are responsible for securing a qualified replacement.

JUDGING

Judging will be timed.

- Juniors and Intermediates will have five (5) minutes for the presentation and (3) minutes for the interview. Skill time limit determined by committee.
- Seniors will have Five (5) minutes for their presentation, three (3) minutes for their interview, at the conclusion of the question-and-answer period you will have one (1) minute to serve the judges a portion of your dish. Skill time limit determined by committee.

Theme:

- Theme is part of the judging criteria for **ALL** age divisions, so it should be incorporated into your recipe.
- This year's 4-H Food Show theme is **"Food Truck Favorites"**. From gourmet tacos to sizzling stir-fries and mouthwatering health inspired desserts, food trucks bring bold flavors and innovative dishes to the streets – now it's your turn to bring that energy to the kitchen. Whether it's a globally inspired street food dish, a classic American favorite with a twist, or a fusion creation all your own, this competition challenges 4-H members to explore diverse flavors, unique ingredients and creative presentations.

JUDGING FORMAT FOR SENIOR CONTESTANTS:

- Senior 4-H members will be required to complete the Texas 4-H Food Show Recipe Submission Paperwork from the State Packet. **No photos or copies of recipes will be accepted. No copyrighted recipes should be used.** Two copies of the Senior Food Show Paperwork are due in the District Office (See page one for deadline) (physically in the office, not postmarked by that date).
- Recipes should be written according to the "Recipe Submission Checklist" (also see example of recipe written in correct form along with check sheet).
- The presentation, and interview for senior contestants will be evaluated by a panel of judges the day of the District 7 4-H Food Show.
- Dish should be presented in a serving dish, or if appropriate the dish in which the food was cooked or baked. In some instances, it is not necessary to present to the judge the entire recipe. For example, if a recipe makes two loaves of bread, only one loaf needs to be presented for judging. **Dishes presented should utilize only ONE recipe and not multiple to create versions or options of the recipe. (Example: an appetizer recipe should only feature one version and not multiple).**
- Each contestant will start with a maximum five-minute presentation to introduce themselves and their dish. To earn maximum points, participants must use the 5-minute presentation to describe their inspiration in choosing your recipe, how recipe relates to the current food show theme, and the following areas of the scorecard: Knowledge of MyPlate, Nutrition Knowledge, Food Preparation, and Food Safety Concerns.
- After the question-and-answer period, the contestants will have one minute to serve the judges portion to their dish so the judges can visually evaluate the dish.
- **No sample interview questions will be provided.**

In addition to the food presentation/interview process, senior contestants will also participate in the following:

SKILL SHOWCASE: Food show contestants will showcase a skill learned in the food and nutrition project area when they bring their dish to be judged. Youth will demonstrate their knowledge of a skill assigned by judges. All materials to demonstrate this skill will be provided and judges will score the skill based on correct procedures, safety, and other pertinent information related to the skill assigned. The skill will be assigned during designated judging time for each contestant and not prior. The skill demonstration will include a time limit which will be announced during participant orientation.

KNOWLEDGE SHOWCASE: Food show contestants will need to employ their decision making and knowledge related to food purchasing, preparation, nutrition, and food safety to answer questions on a quiz. There will be a designated time for contestants to take this quiz. No study materials will be provided; however, contestants should refer to the resources provided in the official Texas 4-H Food Show Guide.

JUDGING FORMAT FOR JUNIOR/INTERMEDIATE CONTESTANTS:

- Junior and Intermediate contestants will **ONLY** bring one serving of their dish to the District 7 4-H Food Show only on a disposable dish ware. **No glass or metal serving Dish will be Allowed!!!** Once the contestant presents their dish (one serving) to the judges, they will not get back the container. Remember to use edible garnishes only for your dish. **Dishes presented should utilize only ONE recipe and not multiple to create versions or options of the recipe.** (Example: an appetizer recipe should only feature one version and not multiple). **No photos or copies of recipes will be accepted. No copyrighted recipes should be used.**
- Each contestant will start with a maximum five-minute presentation to introduce themselves and their dish. To earn maximum points, participants must use the 5-minute presentation to describe their inspiration in choosing your recipe, how recipe relates to the current food show theme, and the following areas of the scorecard: Knowledge of MyPlate, Nutrition Knowledge, Food Preparation, and Food Safety Concerns.
- After the presentation, the judges will have the opportunity to ask questions of the contestants.
- Sample interview questions will be provided.

In addition to the food presentation/interview process, junior/intermediate contestants will also participate in the following:

SKILL SHOWCASE: Food show contestants will showcase a skill learned in the food and nutrition project area when they bring their dish to be judged. Youth will demonstrate their knowledge of a skill assigned by judges. All materials to demonstrate this skill will be provided and judges will score the skill based on correct procedures, safety, and other pertinent information related to the skill assigned. The skill will be assigned during designated judging time for each contestant and not prior. The skill demonstration will include a time limit which will be announced during participant orientation.

KNOWLEDGE SHOWCASE: Food show contestants will need to employ their decision making and knowledge related to food purchasing, preparation, nutrition, and food safety to answer questions on a quiz. There will be a designated time for contestants to take this quiz. No study materials will be provided; however, contestants should refer to the resources provided in the official Texas 4-H Food Show Guide.

REMEMBER:

- ✓ No decorations are allowed
- ✓ Do not bring serving dishes that you want to take home! Food items will be kept and any non-disposable serving item WILL NOT be returned.
- ✓ No heating tray, chafing dish, electrical appliances, or open flame of any kind are allowed
- ✓ No alcohol or alcohol-containing ingredients can be used.

Policy for accommodation requests for events:

- Requests for accommodations must be submitted to the District Office from the County Office at least 2 weeks prior to the event.
- This request must be accompanied by official documentation in one of the following options for why the request is being submitted :
 - A) Official doctor's note from a licensed medical professional
 - B) School documentation and/or evaluation from a public institution
 - C) Official evaluation from a licensed professional therapist and/or diagnostician
- Note: The documentation and request are required within the appropriate timeline outlined for the event in order for the accommodation to be considered but does not guarantee that the requested accommodation can be made.
- The request will be reviewed by the district office (and when necessary, in consultation with the state office).
- Request and documentation will be kept confidential within the appropriate county/district staff and event administrators.

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

8:30	Food Show Committee Meeting
8:45	Agents check in – Orientation for Superintendents
9:00	Contestants Arrive/Orientation for Judges
9:15	Knowledge Showcase
9:30	Contest judging begins
9:30	Exhibit judging begins
Approx. 12:00	Awards Presentation – following completion of tabulation

THERE IS NO LUNCH BREAK THIS YEAR

AWARDS

- To be determined by contest officials.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Agents will be responsible for taking their own county photographs.

A map to the Taylor Expo Center/Big Country Hall Building where the show will be held is provided.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Agent assignments will be sent prior to the contest.