

Kentucky Department of Agriculture

Jr Chef Handbook

Jr Chef is a statewide cooking competition for 8th-12th grade students designed to offer the opportunity for students to learn valuable skills in recipe development, food preparation, marketing, organization, teamwork, public speaking and community involvement.

Additional intentions for the Jr Chef program are to stimulate interest in local agriculture, create an additional market for Kentucky producers, increase quality of products available to school cafeterias, and ultimately increase consumption of produce by Kentucky's students and their families.

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture and Kentucky Farmers encourage you to put a team together and come join the fun!



Index:

Jr Chef Timeline:	Page: 3
Building Your Team:	Pages: 4-5
Recipe Requirements:	Pages: 6-12
Meal Pattern Compliance Table	
Reimbursable Meal	
Recipe(s) Analysis	
Recipes Are Food Service Staff “Friendly”	
Ingredients- KY Proud and USDA Foods/Commodities	
Standardized Recipe Template	
Work Plan	
RWP Submission	
How to Enter the Competition:	Page: 13-14
Application	
Permission and Release Forms	
Recipe and Work Plan (RPW)	
Entry Checklist	
Photos	
Entry Fee	
Competition Details	Page: 15-18
Judges Binders	
Tours	
Supplies provided by KDA	
Regional and State	
Supplies provided by Team	
Personal Attire	
Oven Use	
Cooking Criteria	Page 19
List of common and commodity ingredients	Page 20
Judging and Scoring	Page 21
Awards and Prizes	Page 22
FAQ's	Page: 23-28

Time Line

September-December:

Determine Team Leader and Team Coach (if applicable)

Build your Team!

Start discussing recipe ideas.

January:

Recipe Development

February:

Team Supervisor and Team Coaches Workshop

Western, Central, Eastern

March:

Practice recipes to finalize details including making sure that NSLP guidelines are met.

Perform Nutritional Analysis through My Fitness Pal.

April:

Submit the recipe to Chef Rebecca including Nutritional Analysis by April 15th.

May

May 1st: Announce Top 16 Teams

May 8th Entry Packet must be submitted to KDA (See Entry Packet instructions on page 13)

Round One of Competition: Recipes will be judged to determine Top 16 Teams that will continue on to the Final Round of Competition to take place at the State Fair in August.

Board/Finance approvals should be finalized with your local administration by May 1st of each program year.

June-July: Dates TBD

Team Practice Workshops:

- Western
- Eastern

June:

- Bluegrass Fair, Lexington KY

Dates for Western and Eastern Practice workshops will be determined and announced once Team Submissions are finalized.

If for any reason your team will not attend the State competition, you must communicate this to KDA on or before June 30th of the program year to allow KDA time to assign a replacement team to your competition spot.

August:

State Competition

15th-18th: Each Team will cook on stage at the KY State Fair in Louisville KY

24th: Tiebreaker (if required), Top 3 Teams demo Entry/samples to audience at the KY State Fair and finally the **Awards Ceremony!!**

How to Build Your Team

First Steps:

Choose a Team Supervisor:

Team Supervisors must be a school employee, parent of team members or Chef/Adult representatives of related community organizations.

Supervisors are responsible for:

- Team Transportation to and from District, Regional, and State Competition
- The Team during any District or Regional Competitions as well as for the duration of the State Competition
- Team Application
- Parental Permission Slips (must be filled out and signed by the Parent) Please make sure these are legible.
- Completion of Recipe Work Plan (RWP) See: Jr Chef Competition Recipes Requirements
- Entry Fee
- See: How to Enter Competition. Additional information can be found on pages 13-14.

Choose a Team Coach:

NOTE: You are not required to have a Team Coach if your Team Supervisor is willing to take on all responsibilities

The Team Coach can be a school food service professional, Culinary Instructor, Family Consumer Science Teacher, parent, chef, farmer, or anyone who has culinary knowledge or the desire to help.

The Coach will help the team:

- Create a recipe that meets all competition requirements.
- Schedule and supervise practices.
- Judges Binders (see page 15) in the absence of a Coach the Team Supervisor is responsible for the recipe entry as well as student practices, judges' binders, and all other aspects of the competition.

Jr Chef Workshop: Adult Team Supervisor and Team Coach must be available and willing to attend a **mandatory** training hosted by KDA. **Dates** and **locations** will be announced by Jan 15th.

Workshop will detail:

- Junior Chef's role in school foodservice and the meal pattern requirements for lunch reimbursable meals to be included in recipe entry.
- Competition Details

Form a Team:

Students may be an attendee of a public or private high school or homeschooled.

May consist of 2 to 5 Students (Up to 2 alternates if desired)

Students must be in grades 8 through 12.

NOTE: *Seniors may not be able to attend State competition due to event timing.*
Absence of any Senior does not require a team to automatically withdraw from competition, unless the number of members left is less than 2.

One Team per School:

If more than one team is interested in competing from the same school, there must be a “cook-off” in that School prior to the application deadline.

See How to Enter Competition for further details.

Junior Chef Competition Recipe Requirements

A significant aspect of the Junior Chef program is to provide healthy, unique meals to KY districts that incorporate local ingredients, USDA foods/commodities and encourage nutrition education surrounding lunches provided through the [National School Lunch Program \(NSLP\)](#) (per 7 CFR Part 210.10).

Recipe Entries comply with specific [nutrition standards](#) set by the USDA for:

- Age/Grade 9-12
- Recipes are developed with consideration for peer acceptance in the school food service environment.
- Adaptable to School Food Service

Minimum Servings:

- Recipe must make minimum of 6 servings.
- Each serving must meet minimum NSLP requirements for Age/Grade 9-12
- Recipes must be healthy AND delicious.
- Must be submitted in the Standardized Recipe Work Plan (RWP) Excel Form Located in the How to Enter tab on the Jr Chef Website
- See Recipe Requirement Details on pages 7-12

Meal Pattern Compliance Table for Junior Chef:

All recipes must meet the NSLP guidelines for Age/Grade Specific 9-12. These requirements are listed below and can be found at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/nutrition-standards-school-meals>.

FOOD COMPONENT MINIMUM SERVING SIZES			
Fruit or Vegetable <i>*Vegetable subgroups: Dark Green, Red/Orange, Bean/Pea or Legumes, Starchy and Other</i>		½ cup (c)	
Grains <i>Whole or enriched grains only</i>		2 ounce equivalents (oz. eq.)	
Meat/Meat Alternates		2 ounce equivalents (oz. eq.)	
NUTRITION SPECIFICATION RANGES			
Calories (kcal)	Saturated Fat (% of total calories)	Sodium (mg)	Trans Fat (g)
750 – 850	< 10%	≤ 1,280	0

Recipe(s) Are a Reimbursable Meal

Each competition recipe(s) should be a standalone, reimbursable meal according to the NSLP meal pattern. To be considered a reimbursable meal, each competition recipe must:

- ✓ Include 3 full components (Meat/Meat Alternative, grain, fruit and/or vegetable)
- ✓ Be within the established nutrition specification *averages* per week.

Recipe(s) Analysis:

Upon submission, KDA’s Chef Consultant conducts a recipe analysis using a USDA approved platform to measure its compliance with the NSLP meal pattern, crediting and nutrition standards for meals served to students of the 9-12 age/grade group.

If recipe submission does not meet requirements, the recipe will be returned for correction.

Recipes Are Food Service Staff “Friendly”:

To be food service staff “friendly” means that staff can easily replicate and incorporate the competition recipe into their school menus at any K-12 site with minor adjustments. Recipes should be developed with considerations for all age/grade levels as well as ingredient availability, cost, equipment/inventory, staff work plans, portion sizing, serving sizes, recipe yields, etc.

Ingredients- KY Proud and USDA Foods/Commodities:

Recipe must use **at least 5 local ingredients** that are an intricate part of the recipe and considered easily procurable by school food service.

- These items will be provided by KDA Farm to School Junior Chef at the final competition in Louisville.

Additionally, the recipe must use **at least 1 USDA food ingredients/commodities** that are easily procurable by the team district’s school food service program director. For a list of common commodities see page16.

- Note: These items will be provided by KDA Farm to School Junior Chef at the final competition in Louisville in raw form.

For example: if your recipe calls for Fajita Grilled Chicken which is a pre-cooked item, you will be supplied raw chicken to prepare. Same goes for any Meat/Meat Alternative.

All recipes submitted must utilize the standardized recipe template with all **local/Kentucky Proud** ingredients highlighted in **red** and **USDA foods/commodities** highlighted in **blue**.

Standardized Recipe Template:

Once your team has chosen a recipe, it will need to be input into the Standardized Recipe Template that is included in the Recipe Work Plan (RWP) located on the Jr Chef website under the How to Enter tab.

Directions are included in the Recipe Work Plan

Please review all directions BEFORE filling out the Standardized Recipe if there are multiple recipes for your entry.


There are 3 SRT's available on the worksheet that should be renamed to your specific recipe:

For example:

Entrée: This should include portions, and plating procedures in the directions.

Must include Final Nutrition Analysis and Crediting for final submission (including Spice Blend and Sauce analysis)

Team and Recipe Information:

Team Name: Wildcat Catering Crew		District: Bath		County: Bath		
RECIPE NAME:	Fritatta	HACCP:		Cook & Serve Same Day		
Grade Group:	9-12	Team Lead	Blaine Wilson	Coach:	Ms. Vickie, Ms. Ramey, Ms. Lane	
Servings Per Recipe/Yield:	8		Portion Size:		2 each; See procedure for amounts	

Ingredients:

As per the included directions state:

List **local/Ky Proud** items in **RED**

List **USDA/Commodity** items in **Blue**.

Ingredients must have a weight or cup measurement.

- Items such as produce (peppers, onions, etc) and fruit must be listed in cup increments.
 - DO NOT list as 1 each, 1 whole etc.
- Meat/Meat Alternative should be listed by weight.
 - Ounce or pounds
- Grains are dependent upon type:
 - Tortillas-each
 - Pasta-weight (oz., pound)
- MUST be in a Measurable amount.
- Process:
 - This should include the process of each ingredient
 - Large Dice, Julienned, Rough Chop

Ingredients:					
Source	Item #	Name	Quantity	Unit	Process
		olive oil	1.00	TBSP	
		fresh spinach	2.00	cup	
		sliced red bell pepper	1.00	cup	
		sliced mushrooms	1.00	cup	
		minced yellow onion	2.00	cup	
		eggs	10.00	each	
		low fat sharp cheddar cheese	0.50	cup	
		Skim milk	1.00	cup	
		pepper	1/2	tsp	
		fresh minced sage	2.00	TBSP	
		low sodium turkey bacon	6.00	oz	
		Tortilla, WW Ole Extreme	16.00	each	
		Salt	1.00	tsp	

Note: When submitting your initial recipe for NA and Crediting, you will need to also submit the following:

Images of:

- Product labels
- Brand
- Nutrition information
- Must include ingredients.
- CN Labels if product is a commodity item.
- FSD or Manager will have this information.

Procedure:

Complete directions for preparation of entry (See example below)

Procedure:	
1. Pre-heat oven to 350.	
2. Heat olive oil in a skillet and add chopped red bell pepper, mushrooms, and onion. Sautee for about 5 minutes then add spinach and sautee until spinach is wilted.	
3. Place vegetables in a bowl. Set Aside	
4. Crack eggs into separate bowl and add sage, salt, pepper, and milk.	
5. Mix well.	
6. Spray Pan and place 1 tortilla into each section	
7. Portion 1/4 c of veggie mix on top of tortilla, and add 1.5 T.c	
8. Divide egg mixture between portions	
9. Bake for 45 minutes. Or until internal temp reaches 165.	

Nutrition and Crediting:

This will be confirmed by KDA’s Chef Consultant

Meal Component Contribution Based on Portion Size				Nutrient Analysis Based on Portion Size			
Contains NA and Crediting for all items							
		Veg Subgroups	Dark Green:	1/4 cup	Dietary Specifications	Calories:	382
M/MA	2.0 oz. eq.		Beans/Peas			Saturated Fat:	4
Fruits:	1/2 cup		Red/Orange	1/8 cup		Trans Fat:	0
Grains:			Starchy:			Sodium (mg):	1412
			Other:	1/2 cup			

Equipment:

List all needed smallwares:

Equipment Needed
1. Saucepan
2. Knives
3. Plates
4. Spatulas
5. Mini loaf pan
6. Bowls
7. wisk
8. spoon
9. Serving scoops
10. Measuring cups liquid / dry
11. Tongs
12. Cutting board

Taste Testing:

Data from at least 2 Taste-Testing’s to be included here. See below for example.

Taste Test #1:

Served to: 20 Students & Staff
 Half liked stuffed with broccoli.
 Half liked without broccoli.
 Didn't know there was cheese in it
 Bread too dry

Taste Test #2:

Served 50 Students & Staff
 Love it
 Bread is nice and soft.
 LOVE the NAME,
 Convenient to eat.

Work Plan:

The Work Plan (WP) should include the amount of time per task, who is responsible, and the specifics of each task. Make sure to include all details, from beginning sanitation, prep, and clean up.

The Work Plan should be a work in progress as your Team creates the recipe, they will need to make adjustments as they practice.

**Note: the below example is just a part of the complete WP.*

Work Plan			
The work plan should include not only a list of what is being done but also should include which team member is performing each task at			
Time	Team Member	Task (s)	Completed?
1) 5 min	Collin	set up sani buckets and detergent buckets	
	Zoronaen	Turn on ovens to 375 and 400	
2) 10-15	Dylan	Gather Chicken Mise (Ingredients and tools)	
	James	Gather Couscous and quinoa Mise en Place (Ingredients and tools)	
	Tristian	Gather Tomato,onion, mushroom Mise en Place (Ingredients and tools)	
	Collin	Wash all produce,Gather Squash Mise (Ingredients and tools)	
	Zoronaen	gather Demi Mise en Place (Ingredients and tools)	

Recipe Submission:

Once the recipe has been input into the RWP it needs to be submitted via email to KDA’s Chef Consultant Chef Rebecca at: Rebecca.shepherd-smith@ky.gov for confirmation of nutritional and crediting analysis.

When submitting please include:

Images of all ingredient labels front and back to include:

- Brand, Nutrition info and ingredients.

Initial analysis will be used to determine your recipe’s compliance with the NSLP guidelines for use with the 9-12 age/grade group. Once initial NA and Crediting has been determined, KDA’s Chef Consultants will return the Recipe to the Team Leader/Coach to make any needed adjustments. *This process may take more than once to complete you compliance therefore you need to start early on your recipes.*

ALL adjustments must be made, resubmitted, and approved by KDA’s Chef Consultants BEFORE the Recipe can be officially submitted. Once your RWP has been officially submitted by the deadline, no changes can be made unless otherwise approved by KDA.

Entering the Competition

All needed forms can be obtained from the [KDA Junior Chef Program](#) page under Entry Packet

The following supporting documents **must** be included in your entry packet, which should be emailed to Chef Rebecca at Rebecca.shepherd-smith@ky.com: See *timeline for dates*.

- **Team Application Form:** contains all the information regarding a team sponsor, team coach, team members, team name, school, and district.
- **Permission and Release Forms:** Each team member must submit a signed "Parental Permission and Release Form."
- **Recipe Work Plan (RWP):** Teams must submit recipe(s) on the official standardized recipe template provided on the Jr Chef Website
 - **Round One of Competition**
 - Submit Recipe by April 15th
 - Only the recipe needs to be completed. The Workplan will need to be completed and turned in with all other Entry Packet documents by May 8th if Teams move on to the Top 16
 - Make sure ALL information has been filled out except Crediting and Taste-test results (These will have to be completed by final Submission)
 - Recipe Judging: a judging panel consisting of staff members from KDA, KDE and a Food and Nutrition Specialist will determine the top 16 teams to move forward to the final round. *Please see Recipe Judging Criteria on Jr Chef website: What to Know/Judges*
 - Finalists will be announced May 1st.
- **Entry Check Sheet:** outlines everything that needs to be included with the entry packet.
- **Photos:** submit two photos of the team's reimbursable meal in the following servings:
 - **"Presentation Plate"** is in a plate/bowl provided for the audience to view at their specific viewing table.
 - **"School Lunch Tray"** is plated on a lunch tray provided by your school food service director.
 - This should represent a complete reimbursable meal including all 5 components.
- **Entry Fee**
 - ✓ Allowable expense of SAE Funds
 - ✓ \$150.00 entry fee per team
 - ✓ Non-refundable
 - ✓ Paid by check made payable to the **Kentucky State Treasurer**
 - ✓ Mailed to our office:

KDA Farm to School Junior Chef
Kentucky Department of Agriculture
Attn: Rebecca Shepherd-Smith
107 Corporate Drive
Frankfort, KY 40601

Final Competition Requirements

This pertains to the Top 16 Teams that move forward to the State Championship

“One and Done”

Starting in 2024 Teams will only be required to cook once to determine their placement in the competition. This will reduce the amount of travel and expenses required as well as time away from school/work.

Judges Binders:

Total of 3 Binders needed.

Required:

Recipe Work Plan (RWP)

Must include:

- All recipes *Recipe with all presentation and plating instructions*
- NA and Crediting
- Work plan
- Pictures of your entry: Both School Service Lunch Tray and Presentation Plate
- Description of how recipe can be adapted for School Service should be provided.

School Service Lunch Tray:

- This should include your entry PLUS any other of the 5 NSLP components.
- For example, if your entry contains M/MA, Grain, and veg you would just add Milk, and a fruit of your choice to make a complete tray.

Plate Presentation:

- This is a restaurant style presentation.

Optional:

- Information on Team Members
- Ingredient substitutions for school food service. For instance: if your recipe calls for multiple vegetables to be diced you may want to suggest a pre-cut vegetable blend.
- Farm to School items can be requested to be processed.

Housing:

Housing is available through Sullivan University via their dorms. Sullivan housing will be covered by KDA for the team’s stay. Should your team choose to stay elsewhere it will be at your expense.

Tours:

Tours are available Monday-Friday from 9am-4:30pm and Saturday from 9:30am-1pm during the State Fair Junior Chef competition.

- Allow a minimum of 2 hours.
- To schedule a tour of Sullivan University please contact Chef Rebecca:
Rebecca.shepherd-smith@ky.gov.

Supplies:

KDA Farm to School Junior Chef will provide the following:

- Plates/bowls, utensils for judging and presentation
- Table covers
- Food service gloves and hair/beard nets
 - Paper towels
 - Sanitizing Wipes

Large equipment will be supplied:

Gas Stove, Ovens (Convection available on both ovens), Refrigeration and Freezer

Smallwares:

Teams need to bring their smallwares they are accustomed to using during competition. However, we do have several smallwares available should you forget an item.

Teams Responsibilities:

- ✓ Thermometer (Instant Read/Digital Thermometers)
- ✓ Knives: Chef, Serrated, Paring
- ✓ Timer
- ✓ All Sanitation items needed not supplied by KDA
- ✓ Cleaning and sanitizing buckets
- ✓ Towels

All teams **may** bring the following:

- Blender and/or food processor
***Note:** All teams using electric utensils must bring their own Heavy Duty 3-prong extension cord.*
- Potholders
- Team sign (No larger than 3x6)
- Copies of your recipe for the audience

Teams **CANNOT** bring or use the following; if used, the team will be disqualified from the competition:

- Electric heating tools or equipment (e.g., toaster ovens, hot plates, crockpots, electric griddles, microwaves, etc. due to the competition not being able to support the electric demands of **any** of these devices.)
- Presentation plates/bowls/etc. All recipes will be presented using uniform supplies provided by KDA at the competition.

NO GLASS OR CERAMIC DISHES, BOWLS, ETC

Personal Attire:

Shirts: Collared shirt/Polo, Tee shirt (school or team logo only on shirt), Chef Coat

Pants: Chef Pants (Black or Houndstooth), Black Pants, Khakis

Shoes: Non-Slip, No open toed shoes (this includes any student or staff member)

Hat: Chef Hat, Baseball Cap with School Logo

If you have questions about competition tools, allowable equipment, or assistance acquiring equipment, please contact [Rebecca Shepherd-Smith](#).

Use of Ovens During Competition

- Each team will have access to an oven that will not be set for more than 425°.
- All teams must indicate during their recipe submission process that the use of an oven is required.
- Each individual team should designate an "Oven Captain" who will transport the dish(es) to/from the oven and be the only team member allowed in the oven area.

Sharing Ovens at Competition:

- Keep in mind that these ovens are “community ovens”, so allow for extra time to cook your dish since the door may be opened and closed by the other team while your dish is cooking.
- If there is only one oven available and the cooking temperatures are the same, then each team will be assigned a rack.
- If the oven is shared but cooking temperatures differ, then the team with the lower temperature will use the oven first, followed by the next team. The second team’s time will be adjusted accordingly and will **not** be counted off for any excess time.

The judging will happen over time, so ensure correct methods are taken to maintain the time and temperature of your dish prior to it being judged.

Cooking Criteria for Competition Recipes and Meals

KDA Farm to School Junior Chef challenges teams to create a healthy, delicious, school-food-friendly dish using seasonal, local foods. All entries will be judged by the following criteria:

- Taste (kid-friendly, flavorful)
- Appearance (presentation on plate and lunch tray)
- Creativity (ingenuity of ingredients used)
- Best and Most Use of Local and USDA ingredients (highlighting local, seasonal and accessible foods)
- School Food Service Appropriate (time/cost affordability, equipment, nutrition levels)

Below are tips to consider while preparing for the KDA Farm to School Junior Chef Competition:

- Teams are encouraged to use original recipes! If you are using a recipe from a known source, you must give credit to that source.
- **Think About Substitutes:** recipes that use summer produce can often be made with winter vegetables instead. Also, if a certain commodity is no longer available due to the season, think about what other commodities can be interchangeable.
- **Consult The Experts:** talk to your School Food Service staff, local chefs and farmers, and your friends to get recipe ideas. Just make sure they know the nutritional requirements for NSLP.
- All preparation and cooking must happen on-site, during the Competition portion of the event. Teams are allowed to practice making their dish prior to the event but may not bring any pre-prepared components of the dish to the competition.
- Dishes should fit into school food service time demands. For example, it is not practical to make tortillas from scratch in a school kitchen. Therefore, you may use store-bought tortillas.
- The competition **does not** allow for dessert items or ingredients/products that use peanuts/tree nuts.
- All dishes should be considered a fully reimbursable meal due to their ingredients and portions being creditable to the NSLP meal pattern for the 9-12 age/grade group. This may mean that the recipe must include a M/MA, Grain, and Fruit/Veg
- Only students may cook during the competition. The Team Supervisor and/or Coach may only provide hands-off guidance such as answering a specific question concerning cooking techniques and food safety.
 - Should the team need to talk with a coach they will need to ask permission from a KDA Junior Chef staff prior to connecting with their coach.
 - Any other adult involvement in the cooking will disqualify the team.

Common Local/Kentucky Proud and Commodity Ingredients

Remember, all Kentucky Proud ingredients must be highlighted in **red** and Commodity ingredients must be highlighted in **blue**. **Garnishes** will not count towards one of the local ingredients. For a full list of accessible local foods, contact your school food service director or the Kentucky Farm to School Hub. Examples of local/KY Proud ingredients include, but are not limited to, the following:

Vegetables	Fruit	Meat/ Meat Alternate	Dairy	Grains	Special Items
Beets, Carrots, Onions, Potatoes, Zucchini, Summer Yellow Squash, Butternut Squash, Turnips, Sweet Potatoes, Kale, Lettuce, Tomatoes, Cucumbers, Green Peppers, Yellow Peppers, Orange Peppers, Red Peppers, Hot Peppers of all varieties, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Corn, Green beans, Cabbage, Egg Plant, Okra, Brussel Sprouts	Apples, Strawberries, Red and Black Raspberries, Blueberries, Watermelon, Permelson, Peaches, Blackberries, PawPaws	Beef, Pork, Poultry, Fish, Goat, Lamb, Eggs, Cheese	Milk, Cheese, Butter, Sour Cream	Cornmeal, Whole Wheat Flour	Sorghum, Honey

*An ingredient is considered “local” if it can be grown within KY or the surrounding region.

Competition Judging and Scoring Competition

Judging: There will be 3 judges at the State Competition representing the following:

- Sullivan University
- Kentucky Department of Education
- Sanitation Judge (This will be a Professional Chef, Restaurateur, or other professional proficient in Food Safety and Sanitation)

Scoring: 200 Total Points

Teams will be judged on the following:

- Team Entry Binder
- Personal Sanitation
- Creativity, Innovation, and Taste
- General Nutrition Knowledge and Interaction
- NSLP Guidelines
- Sanitation
- Culinary Skills

Tie Scores:

- If there happens to be a tie for 1st, 2nd or 3rd place an additional “Cook-Off” will be held on Awards Day at the State Fair to determine the placement of the winning teams.

PLEASE NOTE: New starting 2024

The Jr Chef Competition will be going to a “one and done” competition instead of multiple rounds. This means that teams will only compete once. The top 3 teams will be determined by the judges scores from this final round.

For a complete list of Judging Criteria see the Jr Chef Judging Sheet on the Jr Chef Website under the Judges tab.

Awards and Prizes

Sullivan University will provide individual monetary scholarships to the top three winning teams of the State competition at the Kentucky State Fair in Louisville, KY. Sullivan University will also provide scholarships to the top three winning teams for the USDA FNS South East Region Junior Chef competition.

*Scholarship amounts will be decided by Sullivan University and will be posted at the State Championship

FAQ's

General Competition	
<p>Where and when is the event taking place?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The annual KDA Farm to School Junior Chef competition will be held at the Kentucky State Fair in Louisville, KY in August of the program year. ▪ The event is open to the public (gate fee applicable) and will feature fun activities for the whole family including chef demonstrations, food vendors, and entertainment throughout the day.
<p>Who can participate?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any Kentucky student in grades 8-12 is eligible. ▪ Each team must have two to five members. Teams may have an alternate student, but the total number of team members on the day of the competition may not exceed five. <p>NOTE: Alternate team members must also submit their contact information and permission slip. The alternate is also eligible for the scholarship if their team places in the top three as long as the student practiced and participated with the team in other events.</p>
<p>How do I get involved with KDA's Farm to School Junior Chef Program?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If you are a student in grades 8-12, you can show off your cooking skills by putting together a team to compete in the competition. ▪ Other adults and supporters can also join the fun by volunteering/sponsoring a team. ▪ A complete list of rules and regulations is found on the Junior Chef webpage.
<p>How does it work?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Round One: Recipe contest-all recipes must be submitted by April 15th and include all pertinent information including Nutritional Analysis. ▪ May 1st: Top 16 Teams will be announced ▪ May 8th: All Entry Documents/Fee due to KDA ▪ Round Two (Final Round): This takes place at the State Fair. The top 16 Teams will cook on stage at the State Fair in a "one and done" style of competition. Dates TBD ▪ Awards Ceremony: Top 3 Teams-Date TBD

Registration	
How do I register my team and when is the registration deadline?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Team applications and all other forms are available on the Junior Chef webpage. ▪ A parental permission and release form is needed for each student participant. ▪ First Deadline: Recipe entries must be turned in by April 15th and must include all pertinent information including Nutritional analysis ▪ The final application deadline is May 8th of the program year, but teams are encouraged to sign up as soon as possible!
What are the registration fees?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The registration fee is \$150 to help KDA cover the hosting costs of the competition. ▪ Teams are encouraged to see local sponsorships to support all expenses associated with participation, including the registration fee, ingredients, etc. ▪ Fees may be paid from the nonprofit school foodservice accounts per FSD's approval. ▪ Maintain an internal copy of your team's application to serve as a receipt for payment. All fees once paid are nonrefundable.
We are registered! Now what?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice, practice, and practice for your district or regional competitions! ▪ Schedule taste tests as needed.
What happens if more than one application comes from our school district?	<p>There will be a cook-off within that school to determine who will advance to the next competition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Food Service Director and their staff will be in charge of that event. ▪ Entry fee only applies to the winner of this cook-off representing the county.

Team Supervisors, Coaches, etc.	
<p>I want to ask a local business to sponsor my team. How do I do that?</p>	<p>Teams are welcome to find local businesses and organizations to sponsor their participation costs (\$150 entry fee goes for the cost of ingredients, hosting cost, etc.) When searching for a team sponsor, keep the following in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Think of some of your favorite businesses, such as restaurants where you like to eat, movie theaters, or stores where you like to shop. ▪ Write a letter to these businesses explaining what KDA Farm to School Junior Chef is, why you want to participate, and how the business could help sponsor your team. Make sure you include your contact information and how much money you are asking from the business. ▪ Follow up the letter with a phone call or a visit. ▪ Don't forget to send your sponsoring business a Thank You note. They would love to see pictures of you and your team at the competition and hear about the dishes you prepared.
<p>How can my team find a chef to work with?</p>	<p>Including a professional chef on your team can help in a lot of ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Great ideas for recipes using local ingredients. ▪ Professional input on knife skills, plating, and presentation ▪ Commercial Kitchen experience including culinary terms and definitions.

	<p>So, where can you find a chef to join your team?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Think about what your favorite restaurants are; do they have a chef who could help? ▪ Contact the KDA Chefs. ▪ Consider asking one of the cooks from your school cafeteria if they could help you. They know a lot about cooking food that kids love and might have some secret recipes. <p>Once you have found chefs that you are interested in, you should write them a letter or call them on the phone to explain what KDA Farm to School Junior Chef is and why you want their help.</p> <p>If you are calling, avoid calling right at lunch or dinner time when the chefs are super busy. 2 PM-4 PM is typically the best time.</p>
<p>Can Team Supervisors/Coaches/Chaperones help the students cook?</p>	<p>No, Team Coaches or Supervisors may not help cook at the competition. These adults may only provide <i>hands-off</i> guidance and advice. Should the team need to talk with a coach they will need to ask permission from a KDA Junior Chef staff prior to connecting with their coach.</p>
<p>At the Competition</p>	
<p>What do we need to bring with us to the competition?</p>	<p>Read the KDA Farm to School Junior Chef rules for a complete list of equipment and ingredients that you will need to bring or are prevented from bringing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>County, Regional Competitions:</i> Teams will be responsible for bringing all ingredients with them for competitions. KDA will not be providing any ingredients at these levels. ▪ <i>KY State Fair Competition:</i> KDA will provide all KY Proud/local ingredients highlighted in red as well as the commodity item highlighted in blue in your recipe. Teams will provide all other recipe ingredients.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Note: Please see Ingredients section on page 8 for details regarding commodity products for competition
How much time does each team have to cook their recipe?	<p>Teams have 1.5 hours to cook and .5 hours (or 30 minutes) to clean up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You may not bring any prepared food to the competition. ▪ All food preparation must occur at the event. ▪ Remember: Cleaning and Sanitation are part of your overall score
Recipes and Ingredients	
Can we use less than 5 KY Proud products or 1 USDA food ingredient?	<p>No, all competing recipes must include at least 5 KY Proud/local ingredients and at least 1 USDA food ingredient.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Only the KY Proud/local ingredients in your recipe will be provided by KDA Farm to School Junior Chef at the State Fair competition. ▪ Beyond those required, teams are encouraged to consider using more local ingredients or USDA food items if they are also replicable and accessible within the food service environment.
What other ingredients are we allowed to use?	<p>Your team may bring and use any ingredients listed in your approved Standardized recipe that is not being provided by KDA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Basic pantry items like bread, tortillas, rice, pasta, vegetable broth, etc. These ingredients must come to the competition in their raw state.
Competition Servings	
How many servings do we need to cook at the competition?	<p>Recipes must yield at least 6 appropriate reimbursable meal servings for competition display, judges and audience taste testing.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Two full portions for Competition Presentation (1 for judges table and 1 for audience table)● 3 Judges portions: no more than ½ regular portion● Remainder to be samples for audience
Presentation Plates/Bowls	KDA Farm to School Junior Chef will provide all plates/bowls and tasting utensils.