Building Your Competition Teams

- Each team may consist of 2 to 5 (with 1 alternate) students enrolled in any combination between grades 8 through 12.

**NOTE:** Seniors may not be able to attend State competition due to event timing. Absence of a Senior team member does not require a team to automatically withdraw from competition.

- All transportation needs and finance approvals should be discussed with your local administration by May 31st of each program year.
- If for any reason your team will not attend the State competition, you must communicate this to KDA on or before June 1st of the program year to allow KDA time to assign a replacement team to your competition spot.
- Each team must have an Adult Team Supervisor who is present for the duration of the competition. Team Supervisors must be school employees, parents of team members or Chef/Adult representatives of related community organizations.
- Each team may, but is not required to, have a Team Coach. The Team Coach could be a school food service professional, parent, chef, farmer, Family Consumer Science Teacher, or “Foodie” who helps the team create and practice a recipe in preparation for the event.

**IMPORTANT:** Adult Team Supervisor and Team Coach must be available and willing to attend a mandatory training hosted by KDA and KDE detailing Junior Chef’s role in school foodservice and the meal pattern requirements for lunch reimbursable meals that each recipe must adhere to.

- Only one team may represent the 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 to select which team will represent the school at the district level.
  - Please contact your Food Service Director ASAP if you are interested in competing to determine if there needs to be a “cook-off”.
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- Junior Chef district and regional competitions follow the same brackets as the KHSAA high school athletics teams.
  - Teams will compete on an individual basis. The highest scores will move forward in both district and regional competition. The teams moving forward to State competition will be the top 16 scores from the regional competition.
  - Should a district or region not have a team, the individual score of a team outside of that district or region may move forward in that spot to make up the State competition of 16 teams.

- Only students may cook during the competition. The Team Supervisor and/or Coach may only provide hands-off guidance in cooking techniques and safety. Any other adult involvement in the cooking will disqualify the team.
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Approval Requirements for Junior Chef Competition Recipes

A significant component 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). The NSLP provides students with paid, free or reduced-price lunches each school day curated by their district’s school food service staff that must comply with specific nutrition standards (excluding the fluid milk component and 100% fruit/vegetable juice). Since Junior Chef teams develop recipes for reimbursable meals for their peers, they are developed with consideration for peer acceptance in the school food service environment through analyses conducted by KDE’s Division of School and Community Nutrition (SCN).

Once your team has chosen a recipe, submit it to SCN at kyschoolnutrition@education.ky.gov for nutritional analysis. Use this analysis to adjust your recipe’s compliance with the NSLP guidelines for use with the 9-12 age/grade group. The sooner you get started, the more time you will have for perfecting your recipe and obtaining taste-test data to include with your entry packet. Once your entry packet has been submitted, no changes can be made to your recipes unless otherwise approved by KDA.

Serving Sizes

With your team application, submit two photos of the team’s reimbursable meal in the following servings:

1. “Regular Serving” is in a plate/bowl provided for the audience to view at their specific viewing table
2. “School Food Service Serving” is plated on a lunch tray provided by your school food service director
Meal Pattern Compliance Table for Junior Chef

All recipes must be submitted to SCN for meal pattern compliance analysis. After initial review and team application submission, competition recipes may only be revised to meet or maintain compliance with the NSLP meal pattern (with prior revision approval from KDA).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOOD COMPONENT MINIMUM SERVING SIZES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fruit or Vegetable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Vegetable subgroups: Dark Green, Red/Orange, Bean/Pea or Legumes, Starchy and Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole or enriched grains only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat/Meat Alternates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUTRITION SPECIFICATION RANGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calories (kcal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat (% of total calories)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium (mg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans Fat (g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>750 – 850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤ 1,420</td>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 (M/MA, grain, fruit and/or vegetable) on the lunch tray demonstrating one student portion size
✔ Include the daily minimum serving amounts required for each creditable ingredient towards the meal pattern components (Be within the established nutrition specification averages per week

Recipe(s) Analysis

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

Recipes Are Food Service Staff “Friendly”

To be food service staff “friendly” means that staff could easily replicate (with any needed adaptations) and incorporate the competition recipe into their school menus at any K-12 site and were developed with considerations for all meal pattern parameters and limits for
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Ingredients, equipment/inventory, staff work plans, portion sizing, serving sizes, recipe yields, ingredient cost, etc.

**Ingredients- KY Proud and USDA Foods/Commodities**

Recipe must use **at least 5 local ingredients** that are 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 (or has already been procured) by the team district’s school food service program director. These items will be **brought by the team** to the final competition in Louisville.

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**.
How to Enter the Competition

Early in each competition year, entry packets are available to teams wishing to compete in that calendar year. These packets can be obtained from the district Food Service Directors or by visiting the KDA Junior Chef Program page. The following supporting documents must be included in the mailing of your entry packet:

- **Team Registration Form:** contains all the information regarding a team sponsor, team coach, team members, team name, school, and district
- **Entry Fee:** there is a non-refundable $150.00 entry fee per school that should be paid by check made payable to the Kentucky State Treasurer
- **Permission and Release Forms:** Each team member must submit a signed "Parental Permission and Release Form"
- **SCN Junior Chef Standardized Recipe(s) Template:** Teams must submit their final competition recipe(s) on the official standardized recipe template with their SCN nutritional analysis for review as part of the official entry packet by April 15th of the program year. Along with, teams should include taste-test results, a detailed work plan, an equipment list, and the two required photographs of the serving portions. submitted, no changes to that recipe will be allowed, with the exception of obvious typographical errors and approved revision by SCN/KDA.
- **Work Plan Template**
- **Entry Check Sheet:** outlines everything that needs to be included with the entry packet

**REMEMBER! Final, approved recipe(s) must be submitted by April 15th of the program year!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Review Date</th>
<th>2nd Review Date</th>
<th>Final Submission Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 15th</td>
<td>March 15th</td>
<td>April 15th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Completed entry packets containing the required documents must be mailed to our office:

KDA Farm to School Junior Chef  
Kentucky Department of Agriculture  
107 Corporate Drive  
Frankfort, KY 40601  
ATTN: Tina Garland
Equipment

» KDA Farm to School Junior Chef will provide the following at the district level and are to be used if further advanced:
  ● Lunch tray, plates/bowls, and taste-test serving utensils for judging and presentation
  ● Table covers

» All teams **must** bring the following equipment labeled with their team name:
  ● Food service gloves and hair/beard nets (**mandatory**)
  ● Cleaning supplies
  ● Dishcloths and paper towels
  ● A large tub to carry all cooking supplies back to your home base

*Note: There may not be dish cleaning facilities at the competition*

● For teams using ovens: Stainless or Aluminum tray or pan to bake dish. **NO GLASS OR CERAMIC DISHES.**

● **Team Binders:** include the written work plan (using the template), a copy of your recipe (using the template), the nutritional analysis from SCN, and two pictures of your meal: on a plate/bowl and on a lunch tray. A total of **3 binders** should be brought- one for each judge.

● Must wear closed-toe shoes, collared shirt or polo, black or khaki pants (no denim). Chef Jackets and Chef Hats are allowed. Hair/beard nets are **mandatory**.

● Thermometer (Instant Read/Digital Thermometers)

» All teams **may** bring the following:
  ● Food service gloves and hair/beard nets (**mandatory**)
  ● Gas-fueled tabletop cook burners with a tank no larger than 1 lb.
  ● Blender and/or food processor

*Note: All teams using electric utensils must bring their own Heavy Duty 3-prong extension cord.*
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- Non-electric hand tools (e.g., whisks, mixing spoons, etc.)
- Cooking pots and pans
- Cutting boards and knives
- Potholders and trivets
- Team sign to put on your 3’x6’ cooking station
- Copies of your recipe for the audience
- Timer

Teams **may not** 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.
- Own plates/bowls, utensils or lunch tray for judging presentation. All recipes will be presented using uniform supplies provided by KDA at the competition.

*If you have questions about competition tools, allowable equipment, or assistance acquiring equipment, please contact Rebecca Shepherd-Smith.*
Use of Ovens During Competition

Appoint an “Oven Captain” on Your Team

- 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 carry 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.
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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.
- 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. On the other hand, you may use canned green beans for your recipe. Canned green beans are a practical item for school food service staff.
- 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 (as determined by SCN). This may mean that the recipe is a single entrée, an entrée with side item(s), an entrée with a grain product, etc.
**Common Local/Kentucky Proud Ingredients**

Remember, all Kentucky Proud ingredients must be highlighted in **red**. **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 are but are not limited to, the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th>Fruit</th>
<th>Meat/Meat Alternate</th>
<th>Dairy</th>
<th>Grains</th>
<th>Special Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Apples, Strawberries, Red and Black Raspberries, Blueberries, Watermelon, Permelon, Peaches Blackberries, PawPaws</td>
<td>Beef, Pork, Poultry, Fish, Goat, Lamb, Eggs</td>
<td>Milk, Cheese, Butter, Sour Cream</td>
<td>Cornmeal, Whole Wheat Flour</td>
<td>Sorghum, Honey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Sullivan University will provide scholarships to the top four 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 held at Sullivan University in Louisville, KY.

*Scholarship amounts will be decided by Sullivan University.
## General Competition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where and when is the event taking place?</th>
<th>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.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who can participate?</td>
<td>• Any Kentucky student in grades 8-12 is eligible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 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.</td>
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</table>

**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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do I get involved with KDA’s Farm to School Junior Chef Program?</th>
<th>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.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Other adults and supporters can also join the fun by volunteering/sponsoring a team.</td>
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<td>• A complete list of rules and regulations is found on the <a href="#">Junior Chef</a> webpage.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Registration**

| How do I register my team?                  |  ▪ 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.  
|                                             |  ▪ The final application deadline is **April 15th** of the program year, but teams are encouraged to sign up as soon as possible!  |
| What are the registration fees?            |  ▪ 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 SCN SCN’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?               |  ▪ 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? |  ▪ There will be a cook-off within that school to determine who will advance to the next competition.  
|                                             |  ▪ 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. | 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:  
  - **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. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I want to ask a local business to sponsor my team. How do I do that?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
  - **Including a professional chef on your team can help in a lot of ways.**  
    - Your chef probably has some great ideas for recipes using local ingredients, plus s/he can help you make sure your dishes come out just like you hope.  
    - Getting to know a chef can be a fun way to connect with a local restaurant.  
  
  So, where can you find a chef to join your team?  
  - Think about what your favorite restaurants are; do they have a chef who could help?  
  - Contact the KDA and SCN 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 that are sure to win the competition. |
| How can my team find a chef to work with? |  
  - Including a professional chef on your team can help in a lot of ways.  
    - Your chef probably has some great ideas for recipes using local ingredients, plus s/he can help you make sure your dishes come out just like you hope.  
    - Getting to know a chef can be a fun way to connect with a local restaurant.  
  
  So, where can you find a chef to join your team?  
  - Think about what your favorite restaurants are; do they have a chef who could help?  
  - Contact the KDA and SCN 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 that are sure to win the competition. |
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. 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.

**Can Team Supervisors/Coaches/Chaperones help the students cook?**

No, Team Coaches or Supervisors may not help cook at the competition. These adults may only provide hands-off guidance and advice.

**At the Competition**

**What do we need to bring with us to the competition?**

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.

- **County, Regional Competitions:** Teams will be responsible for bringing all ingredients with them for competitions. KDA will not be providing any ingredients at these levels.
- **KY State Fair Competition:** KDA will provide all KY Proud/local ingredients highlighted in red in your recipe. Teams will provide all other recipe ingredients, including any USDA food ingredients highlighted in blue in your recipe, to this competition.

**How much time does each team have to cook their recipe?**

Teams have 1.5 hours to cook and .5 hours (or 30 minutes) to clean up.

- You may not bring any prepared foods to the competition.
- All food preparation must occur at the event.
### Rules of Competition

**Kentucky Department of Agriculture’s Farm to School Junior Chef Program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recipes and Ingredients</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Can we use less than 5 KY Proud products or 1 USDA food ingredient?</strong></td>
<td>No, all competing recipes must include at least 5 KY Proud/local ingredients and at least 1 USDA food ingredient.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Only the KY Proud/local ingredients in your recipe will be provided by KDA Farm to School Junior Chef at the State Fair competition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Teams will need to bring their own USDA food items to the State Fair competition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What other ingredients are we allowed to use?</strong></td>
<td>Your team may bring and use any ingredients that can easily be integrated into school food service programs, such as basic pantry items like bread, tortillas, rice, pasta, vegetable broth, commodity products, etc. These ingredients must come to the competition in their raw state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How are our recipes reviewed?</strong></td>
<td>Teams must submit the final recipe(s) for the reimbursable meal on the standardized recipe template.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Teams must include the SCN nutritional analysis for review as part of the official entry packet by April 15th of the program year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Along with their recipe and SCN nutritional analysis, taste-test results, a detailed work plan, equipment list, and photographs of the completed product (as a lunch serving and a regular serving).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once a recipe is submitted on or before April 15th, no changes to that recipe will be allowed, with the exception of obvious typographical errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Remember that all recipes must be replicable and adaptable by School Food Service staff, adhere to all...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competition Servings</th>
<th>KDA Farm to School Junior Chef Competition rules and be meal pattern compliant (determined by SCN).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| How many servings do we need to cook at the competition? | KDA Farm to School Junior Chef will provide all plates/bowls and tasting utensils.  
Your recipe must yield **at least 6 appropriate reimbursable meal servings** for competition display, judges and audience taste testing. |