

Larimer County Creative Cooks Contest

Registration Deadline: [Register Here in Jotforms](#) by May 21st, 2024. Recipes must be included with entries. Recipes not received by May 21st will not be included in the Larimer County Creative Cooks Cookbook.

Participant's Entry Fee: None!

Eligibility: Contestants must be regularly enrolled 4-H members.

Divisions

Cloverbuds: 5-7 years of age

Class 200 Individual

Class 201 Team

Juniors: 8-10 years of age

Class 300 Individual

Class 301 Team

Class 302 Colorado Specialty Individual

Class 303 Colorado Specialty Team

Intermediates: 11-13 years of age

Class 304 Individual

Class 305 Team

Class 306 Colorado Specialty Individual

Class 307 Colorado Specialty Team

Seniors: 14-18 years of age

Class 308 Individual

Class 309 Team

Class 310 Colorado Specialty Individual

Class 311 Colorado Specialty Team

Age divisions are determined by age as of December 31 of the previous year. A team shall consist of two 4-H members. They may be from different age divisions, but they must compete in the age division of the oldest team member. Contestants may enter as an individual or as a member of a team, but not both.

Criteria

Contestant/Team will:

1. Plan a menu for a meal (for example, but not limited to, breakfast, brunch, lunch, dinner, barbecue, picnic, high tea, campout, sports game, holiday, or birthday party).
2. Create a table or serving display around a theme, occasion, or activity and your meal. The display must include and involve the following:
 - Fit into the allowed a 48" square for a display area. All props must fit within the designated space.
 - Contestant(s) provides a card table if needed; must fit within 48" square.
 - One place setting appropriate for the meal planned.
 - A menu displayed on any stiff medium (foam board, tile, chalk board, framed, etc.) detailing the entire menu (no larger than 8-1/2"x11"). It is helpful if the menu can stand alone.
 - Centerpiece. No food, real or artificial, will be used as a centerpiece or part of a centerpiece.
 - Appropriate serving dishes and utensils.
3. Prepare, bring, and display one serving of a food item from the menu. This display will show how you would serve this dish, including garnishes, etc.
4. Present your display and food item to a judge. Judge(s) briefly interview participants regarding exhibits and what they have learned in preparing the exhibit. The participant should not begin or end with a prepared speech or demonstration without being asked to by the judge(s).
5. Serve your prepared food item to the judge(s).

Judging will be based on:

- A. Exhibitor — well groomed; understands meal planning
- B. Menu — balanced for flavor, color, texture, shape, and nutrition
- C. Prepared dish — appearance, flavor, and quality
- D. Table Setting — attractive; suitable for meal
- E. Knowledge of nutrition
- F. Specialty food knowledge
- G. Food safety
- H. Creativity

Colorado Specialty Foods Criteria:

Contestants entered in this category or classes must use the 2024 designated food or ingredient in their Creative Cooks exhibit. The product must be a major ingredient in the recipe to qualify for this division. Ingredients such as oil used to brown meat, as a garnish, or a spice or herb in the recipe do not qualify as a major ingredient. Members entered in this category must also have some general knowledge beyond nutrition and food safety about this year's contest ingredient or food. See the Colorado Specialty Foods Category Supplement for rules, guidelines, and 2024 designated ingredient.

Additional Guidelines

- No commercially prepared food is accepted.
- Juniors and Intermediates should not prepare deep fat fried foods due to safety concerns.
- Display the food prepared on the proper plate or bowl on your table setting.
- Adults or other youth (not part of the registered team) cannot help contestant(s) do prep work or set up the display. To do so may disqualify the member from the contest or forfeit all awards. They may help transport heavy or breakable items, boxes, etc. as needed.
- Use of garnish is encouraged.
- Cook, bake, prep food at home as much as possible.
- Use a separate sample for your food kept at your display table. Do not use your displayed serving for the judge's sample.
- Serve the judges sample using disposable dishes and utensils. Do not use any food, dishes, or utensils from your display.
- Use disposable plastic gloves if hands are going to touch the food while serving the judge. 14
- Do not use plastic gloves throughout your set up and judging process. They do not remain sanitary very long.

Colorado Specialty Foods Category

Members entered in this category or classes must use the 2024 designated food or ingredient in their Creative Cooks exhibit. The product must be a major ingredient in the recipe to qualify for this division. Ingredients such as oil used to brown meat, as a garnish, or in a small amount in the recipe do not qualify as a major ingredient.

The 2024 Contest Ingredient is Potatoes!

The potato is not a root but a storage area that is part of the plant's underground stem. Vigorous potato plants that have plenty of sunlight, water, and nutrients from the soil produce more energy than the growing plant can use at one time. The plant stores the excess energy in oval packages, called tubers (the potatoes). These tubers provide the plant energy to regrow in the spring. When the greenery starts to wither and turn brown, the potatoes are ready to harvest. Colorado produces more than 2 billion pounds of potatoes per year and ranks fifth in the United States for potato production. There are over 70 unique varieties of Colorado potatoes. Colorado potatoes are primarily grown in the San Luis Valley in south central Colorado and in Weld County in northeast Colorado. Potatoes produce more pounds of protein per acre than corn, rice, wheat, or oats. They are packed with nutrients, low in fat, generous in bulk and efficiently packaged in their own skins. They can be prepared in many ways and are delicious.

Members entered in this category must also have some general knowledge beyond nutrition and food safety about this year's contest ingredient or food. The list below is a sample of the type of information that you should discover about the food. The judge might ask one or two general questions appropriate to each age division.

- Locations in Colorado where ingredient is grown
- Part of the country or world where it is grown other times of the year
- Varieties of food, ingredient, crop
- Unique production or harvest methods
- Plant type or animal origin
- Specific cuisines or cultures that use a lot of this ingredient
- The "specialness" of the ingredient—may be flavor, nutritional or diet value, color, texture, trendiness, cost
- Special handling or preparing techniques
- Other uses for the product
- Any other knowledge or interesting facts members may discover

Members do not need to know all of the above. The questions should serve as a guide for possible research searches.

Examples of contest food items and resources for the 2024 Contest Ingredient – Potatoes: Potato Lasagna, Loaded Potato Soup, Potato Salad, Au Gratin Potatoes, Parmesan Potato Balls, Mashed Potato Truffles, and so much more!

Resources:

Food Smart Colorado

<https://foodsmartcolorado.colostate.edu/food/foods-and-beverages/colorado-produce/colorado-potatoes/>

Potatoes USA – All About Potatoes <https://potatogoodness.com/>

Colorado Reader – Spud-Tacular Colorado Potatoes

<https://viewer.joomag.com/colorado-reader-spud-tacular-colorado-potatoes-2022-2023-issue1/0922626001668545601?short&>