

Favorite Foods Day



Kern County 4-H

Favorite Foods Day

This event is planned to give you, the 4-H Member, the opportunity to show all the skills and information that you have been learning.

Your leader will help guide you as you prepare for the event. If you have any questions, your leader or the 4-H Office can help you.

Favorite Foods Day is not only a menu planning and food preparation contest, it is also a wonderful day to meet other 4-H members, learn new nutrition information, and enjoy special activities. We will have new, very fun sessions!

We hope that you enjoy yourself.

Happy Cooking!!!!

Guidelines, Rules, Suggestions, and Ideas for Success!!!

4-H Favorite Food Day Event

Keep this booklet with your project material and refer to the guidelines when any questions concerning Favorite Foods Day arise. There is a lot of basic information that is valuable to you and perhaps can serve as reference material.

To Participate in Favorite Foods Day:

- Plan the menu for a meal.
- Learn all you can about the favorite food you have chosen to prepare. The favorite food should be appropriate to your abilities.
- Learn as much as you can about the [USDA MyPlate](#) Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Check how your menu meets these guidelines.
- Be sure to consider food color and texture when planning your menu. (ex: baked chicken, baked potatoes and cauliflower would not make an appealing meal.)
- Do research (look up in different books or online) to get ideas for place settings and meal or menu planning.
- Practice preparing your favorite food so you can tell others how to do it. Serve it to your family and friends. Get their comments. The 4-H motto is "**Learn by Doing**". And remember...practice makes perfect!
- Be sure your entry is completely ready when you arrive. The only exception is if your entry food is a combination of hot and cold food. Then you may store the cold portion in the refrigerator and the hot part of the food in the oven until your name is called.

The day of the event...

Check Sheet – Before you leave home

Check the list below:

- ✓ MyPlate Dietary Guideline sheet and Menu card (neatly filled out) to place by your plate in the place setting.
- ✓ Your Favorite Food
- ✓ Your place setting--dishes, silverware, placemat, etc.
- ✓ Pot holder, if your dish is hot.
- ✓ Appropriate serving utensil (spoon or knife) for your Favorite Food dish.
- ✓ Tidy hair, hands, fingernails.....a well-groomed you! Be sure your clothes are neat and clean. It is recommended that you wear the 4-H uniform for the event.
- ✓ A box containing all the things you need. Mark your items for identification (Keep your box under the table at your assigned area).

BE SURE ALL OF YOUR EQUIPMENT AND ITEMS ARE MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION PURPOSES

At Favorite Foods Day...

- When you arrive, go to the registration table to receive your number.
- A matching number will be located on one of the tables
- Go directly to your table and leave your supplies. Take food to the kitchen. Someone there will assist you. Return to your table and complete your table setting duties.

- You are responsible for your entry. Proxy members are not allowed.
- Leave your parent or leader at the registration area. Only committee advisors will be allowed in the participant's area.
- **DO NOT** interfere or change another member's arrangements. Parents can **NOT** help members set up their arrangements.
- After the member and judge's orientation, ALL members will take their plate or bowl, and line up to get a portion of their food. After they have their food dished up, they will return their plate to their place setting and go to their assigned session and wait to be called.
- Remove heavy outdoors wraps, such as coats, jackets, etc. while with the judge.
- DO NOT sit with your food BEFORE the judge reaches you. Someone will come get you from your session, when it is your turn.
- Once you are called, do not leave the judging area until after your Favorite Food has been evaluated.
- Be ready to answer any questions the judge may ask. Judges will probably discuss your favorite food, your menu, and how your food and menu fits into the My Plate Dietary Guidelines. They may also ask about your table setting. Most of their questions will **come right out of this book, so study up!** Their questions or comments do not mean that they are not pleased with your work or your answers. Favorite Foods Day is a learning experience and an opportunity to practice interview skills.
- Games and demonstrations on food and nutrition will be on-going in the activity rooms.
- After judging has been completed, exhibitors and guests at the event are invited to taste the foods for a luncheon. Following

- this, there will be a “Nut Bowl” where you will be on a team, and answer questions to earn a medal for your hat. Once this is finished, the awards will be presented!

Awards

- All entries are eligible for green, blue, or gold seals, as determined by judges.
- Gold medals will be awarded to participants with scores ranging from 87-100.
- The Gloria Runyan Health & Nutrition Award may possibly be presented, in each age category, to the member whose Favorite Food and daily menu plans are prepared with special attention to the fat, sugar, and salt content.

Menu

Each exhibitor must plan a menu card around his/her Favorite Food. The menu MUST be written in the card provided, with the exhibitor’s Favorite Food underlined. Please type or neatly print. You will be planning a whole meal. Example:

“Family Dinner”

Oven Baked Chicken with Lemon Herb Sauce

Fresh Garden Salad with Ranch Dressing

Baked Potatoes

Green Beans

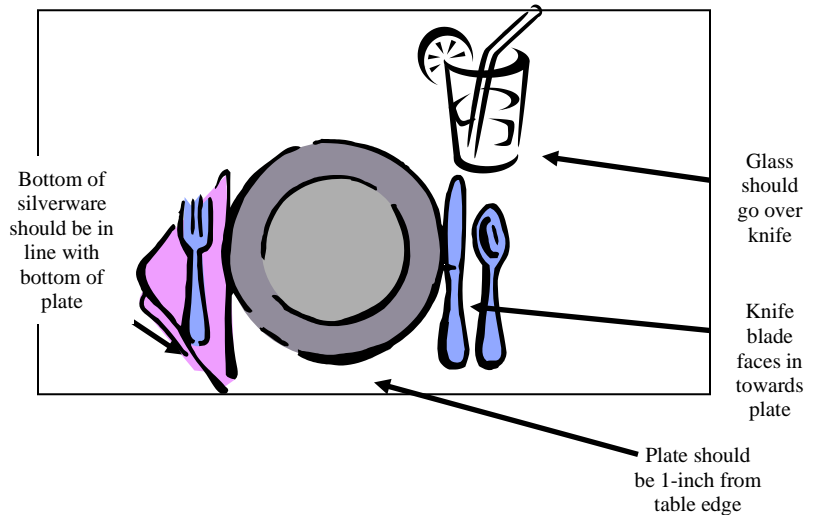
Yeast Rolls with butter

California Fruit Cup

Table Setting Notes

The menu should indicate the type of dinner being served (example: formal dinner, luncheon, etc.). Each member will be assigned an area approximately 20"x24". The table setting should be appropriate for your menu. There is a special category you can enter, where you can win an award for having the best coordinated meal and place setting. (Ex: if your Favorite Food was Chicken Enchiladas, you could have fiesta theme place setting.)

NOTE: A center piece is very attractive to use with a table setting. However, for Favorite Foods Day, where space is limited, your center piece should be small, low and in scale for the one place setting.



1. You do not need to use your family's best china or silverware. Look through magazines for ideas. DISCUSS IDEAS AT PROJECT MEETINGS.
2. Small individual center pieces may be used as part of the table setting (Refer to "Note" above). Practice at home or at a project meeting so that you will be prepared (help WILL NOT be allowed at the event.).
3. Be ready to answer questions on your table appointments and setting, as well as your menu, My Plate Dietary Guidelines, and your Favorite Food.
4. A theme can be used if you would like. A themed award may be given in each cooking category for those members who have used a matching theme with their food.

5. Bring one (1) place setting and serving of silverware or tools. Make sure they are clean; the judges will be using them to eat with!

Food Safety & Sanitation

The food for Favorite Foods Day must be given careful attention so that it is properly handled. If you prepare a cold dish, keep it cold (below 40 degrees); if a warm or hot dish, keep it hot (above 140 degrees). Refrigeration and holding oven space will be provided for you in the kitchen.

Escherichia coli (E. coli), Staphylococcus, and Salmonella, are the most common types of bacteria which cause Foodborne Illness.

FOOD--Bacteria will grow in almost any food except one that is very high in acid (such as pickles). Moist proteins--meat, fish, eggs, poultry, milk, cream, and cream sauce are **VERY** vulnerable.

MOISTURE--Bacteria usually does not grow in dried foods, but may if moisture is added.

TEMPERATURE--A lukewarm or room temperature is ideal for bacterial growth. At temperatures **above 140°F and below 40°F**, food poisoning bacteria does not readily grow.

TIME--In less than **two (2)** hours, food may be unsafe if the right conditions prevail.



Proper Hand Washing

You can't see, taste or smell them.... they're sneaky little critters, and they can spread throughout the kitchen and your foods! They're bacteria, and if eaten they can cause foodborne illness. By washing your hands correctly and frequently you can help to get rid of bacteria!

Proper Hand washing Techniques:

- Get your hands wet warm water, apply soap.
- Rub your hands together for 20 seconds. Make sure to get between your fingers, around your finger nails and even your wrists and forearms.
- Use a paper towel, or single use towel to dry your hands.
- Turn off the water.
- Throw away the towel!

******An easy way to count to 20 seconds is to sing “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” or “Happy Birthday” a couple times while you’re scrubbing!******



Wash Hands after ...



Using bathroom or changing diapers



Handling Pets

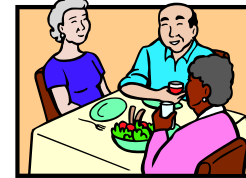


Sneezing, blowing nose & coughing



Touching a cut or open sore

AND before



Handling food!

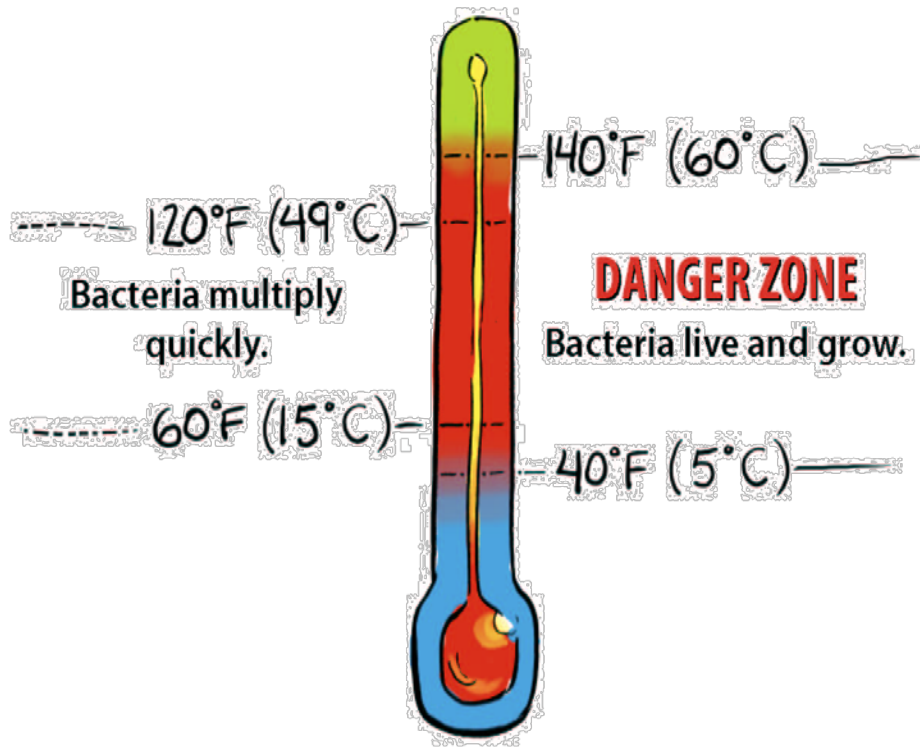
How You Can Prevent Foodborne Illness

Your only protection against this unseen enemy is proper food handling.

1. Avoid cross contamination. Use strictly fresh ingredients, sanitize equipment, clean and sanitize hands, and avoid sneezing or coughing into food; keep pets, sick people, insects and dust out of the food preparation area.
2. **KEEP HOT FOODS HOT--above 140°F. KEEP COLD FOODS COLD--below 40°F**
3. Take special precautions with foods when they are refrigerated and reheated. If a hot food is prepared the day before, refrigerate immediately when removed from the stove. Just before you leave home, preheat the food thoroughly. Take hot or cold foods to the kitchen as soon as you arrive at the event.

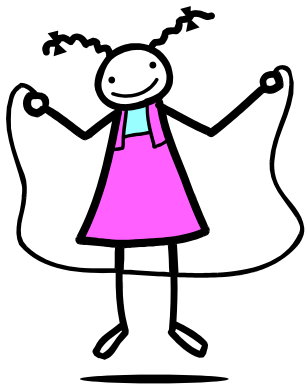
4. To carry hot or cold foods. Use well insulated containers-- cardboard cartons thickly lined with newspaper works well.

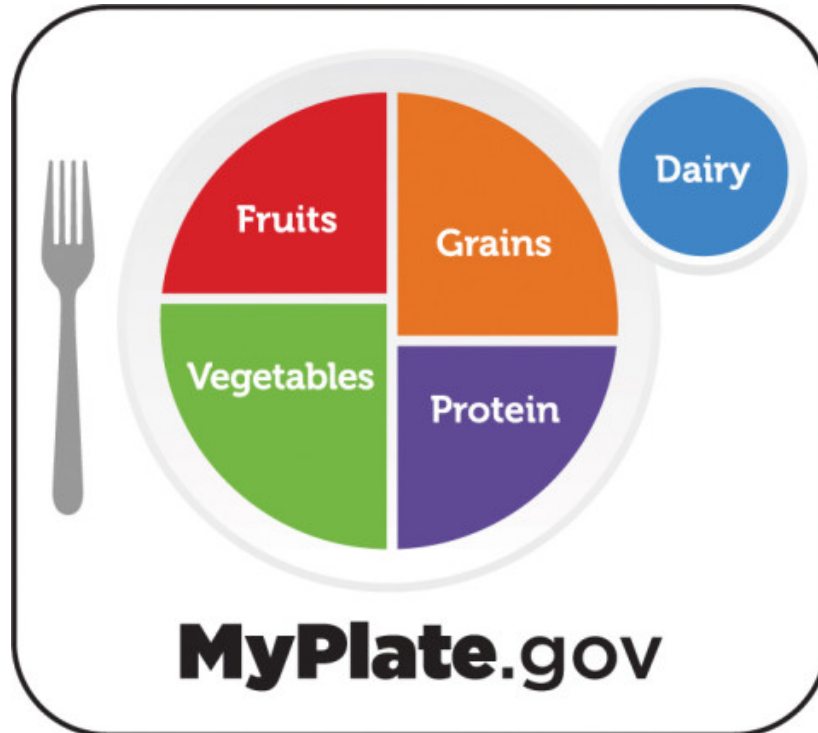
Bacteria like warm temperatures.



Nutrition

The key to improved nutrition is moderation. Do little things, not drastic changes. Most of us can live with a little modification to our daily diet. The long term benefits are great. Most Americans consume over a hundred thousand meals and snacks in a lifetime. A little change applied consistently goes a long way.





Using the MyPlate Dietary Guidelines

The USDA [MyPlate](https://www.myplate.gov) dietary guidelines offer a simple visual representation of how to build a healthy and balanced meal. It divides a dinner plate into four sections: fruits, vegetables, grains, and protein, with a smaller side for dairy. This visual tool encourages people to fill half their plate with fruits and vegetables, a quarter with grains (preferably whole grains), and a quarter with protein. It emphasizes choosing a variety of nutrient-dense foods from each food group, while also promoting moderation and portion control and to create balanced meals that contribute to overall well-being and long-term health.

Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits are like nature's delicious multivitamins, and they're essential for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber, and antioxidants, fruits provide a wide array of benefits for our bodies. From boosting our immune system to promoting healthy digestion and glowing skin, fruits offer a variety of health benefits. Plus, they're naturally sweet and satisfying, making them a perfect

choice for satisfying cravings without added sugars or artificial ingredients. So, make sure to include a rainbow of fruits in your diet to nourish your body and enjoy the vibrant flavors of nature.

Vegetables are like the superheroes of nutrition, essential for everyone to thrive and feel their best. Packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber, and antioxidants, vegetables offer a powerhouse of nutrients that support overall health and well-being. They help strengthen our immune system, keep our digestive system happy, and promote healthy skin and eyes. So, whether you're enjoying them raw, steamed, roasted, or in a delicious stir-fry, make sure to load up your plate with plenty of vegetables to nourish your body and fuel your adventures.

Grains

Grains are the sturdy foundation of a balanced diet, offering a wealth of nutrients and energy to power through busy days. Whether it's whole grains like brown rice, quinoa, or oats, or refined grains like bread and pasta, grains provide essential carbohydrates, which serve as the primary fuel for our bodies and brains. Additionally, grains are rich in fiber, vitamins, and minerals, supporting healthy digestion, heart health, and overall well-being. Make sure to embrace the goodness of grains to nourish your body and fuel your adventures.

Protein Foods

Protein foods are essential as they provide the building blocks for growth, repair, and maintenance of the body. Whether you're hitting the gym or studying hard for exams, protein is your best friend. Not only does it help build strong muscles, but it also supports healthy skin, hair, and nails. Including sources like lean meats, fish, eggs, beans, and nuts in your diet ensures you're getting all the amino acids your body needs to function at its best. Protein also helps regulate hunger and keeps you feeling full longer. Make sure to prioritize protein in your meals and snacks to fuel your active lifestyle and promote overall well-being.

Dairy Foods

Dairy foods are crucial as they provide a rich source of calcium, vitamin D, and other essential nutrients vital for bone health and overall well-being. Whether it's a glass of milk, a serving of yogurt, or a slice of cheese, dairy products offer a powerhouse of nutrients that support strong bones and teeth, helping to prevent osteoporosis later in life. Additionally, dairy foods are packed with high-quality protein, which is essential for muscle repair and growth. Remember to incorporate dairy foods into your meals and snacks to ensure you're getting the nutrients you need for a healthy and active lifestyle.

MyPlate Dietary Tips

1. Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables: Try to include a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables in your meals to ensure you get a wide range of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.
2. Make at least half your grains whole grains: Choose whole grain options like whole wheat bread, brown rice, and oatmeal for added fiber, nutrients, and sustained energy.
3. Include lean protein sources: Incorporate lean protein sources such as poultry, fish, beans, lentils, tofu, or nuts to support muscle health and keep you feeling full and satisfied.
4. Limit saturated fats: Choose lean cuts of meat, low-fat dairy products, and healthier fats like olive oil, avocado, and nuts to reduce your intake of saturated fats and promote heart health.
5. Reduce added sugars: Minimize consumption of sugary drinks, desserts, and processed snacks, opting for naturally sweetened options like fresh fruit or unsweetened beverages.
6. Watch portion sizes: Pay attention to portion sizes to avoid overeating, and use smaller plates to help control portion sizes without feeling deprived.

7. Be mindful of sodium intake: Limit the amount of salt and sodium-rich condiments in your meals, opting for herbs, spices, and other flavorings to season your food instead.

8. Drink plenty of water: Stay hydrated throughout the day by drinking water instead of sugary beverages, which can help maintain energy levels, support digestion, and promote overall health.

9. Plan and prepare meals ahead of time: Take the time to plan and prepare healthy meals and snacks in advance to avoid relying on convenience foods that may be higher in unhealthy fats, sugars, and sodium.

10. Enjoy meals together: Whenever possible, enjoy meals with family and friends, savoring the experience and focusing on mindful eating to promote better digestion and overall satisfaction.

Goal: Boost the Fiber!

Fiber is a dietary superhero crucial for maintaining optimal health. Found in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and seeds, fiber offers a myriad of benefits for our bodies. It aids in digestion by promoting regular bowel movements and preventing constipation. Additionally, fiber helps regulate blood sugar levels, promoting stable energy levels and reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes. Moreover, fiber keeps us feeling full and satisfied, aiding in weight management by curbing excessive hunger and promoting a healthy gut microbiome. Including fiber-rich foods in our diet is essential for overall well-being, promoting digestive health, heart health, and maintaining a healthy weight.

Goal: Go Easy on Sugar!

Limiting sugar intake is paramount for maintaining overall health and well-being. While sugar can add sweetness to foods and beverages, consuming it in excess can lead to various health issues. High sugar intake has been linked to weight gain, obesity, and an increased risk of chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Moreover, sugary foods and drinks often lack essential nutrients and can displace healthier options in our diet, leading to nutritional

deficiencies. Additionally, excessive sugar consumption can negatively impact dental health, contributing to tooth decay and cavities. By minimizing the intake of added sugars and opting for naturally sweet alternatives like fruits, individuals can better control their blood sugar levels, support weight management efforts, and reduce the risk of chronic diseases, ultimately promoting long-term health and vitality.

My Meal Planning Card

Favorite Food:

Add your Favorite Food to the appropriate food groups in the MyPlate graphic



Type of Meal (circle one)

Breakfast Lunch Dinner Snack

Plan a meal around your Favorite Food

Add your menu to the back of this page