

North Carolina Jr. Chef Competition FAQs

What is the North Carolina Jr. Chef Competition?

The NC Jr. Chef Competition (NCJCC) will recognize students for their ability to work as members of a *team* to demonstrate valuable skills in recipe development, food preparation, marketing, public presentation, organization, and local food systems. The NCJCC consists of two parts: 1) a recipe contest and 2) cook-off. Student teams must **develop a recipe for a school lunch entrée** that meets the guidelines to submit for the NCJCC recipe contest. During the NCJCC cook-off, finalist teams must **prepare, cook and plate their recipe** and **present (2) plates of their prepared recipe** to judges.

Why have a NC Jr. Chef Competition?

The NCJCC hopes to inspire the next generation of culinary professionals, stimulate interest locally produced agriculture, increase participate in School Nutrition Programs, and encourage healthy eating habits.

When and where is this event taking place?

The North Carolina Jr. Chef Competition will be held at Piedmont Food & Agriculture Processing Center (500 Valley Forge Rd, Hillsborough, NC 27278) on April 1, 2019. The finalist teams and winning team will be recognized at the NC FCCLA State Conference Opening Session at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro the evening of April 1. The first place team from the NC Jr. Chef Competition will advance to the Southeast Jr. Chef Competition May 9-10, 2019 at Sullivan University in Kentucky.

Who can participate?

Teams of 2-4 high school students (grades 9-12) enrolled in North Carolina Career and Technical Education Food, Nutrition, and Culinary Arts courses may participate. In addition, students should be enrolled in a North Carolina school that participates in the National School Lunch Program.

Can schools have more than one team enter?

We are excited about the interest in the North Carolina Jr. Chef Competition. Schools may have more than one team submit a recipe; however, only one recipe per team is allowed and students may not be on more than one team.

How do I register my team?

The link to the NCJCC Intent to Compete form along with the team application and parental permission and release forms are available from the NC FCCLA website, www.ncfccla.org/nc-jr-chef.html. The Intent to Compete form can be completed online and is due February 6. The completed application and parental permission and release forms are due February 13 and must be emailed to FCSEducation@dpi.nc.gov. Completed and signed parental permission and release forms must be submitted in order for a student to participate.

Can our adult team supervisor/chaperone help us cook?

Only students may cook during the competition. Any adult involvement in the cooking during the competition will result in disqualification.

How much time do teams have for the cook-off?

Finalist teams will have 1.5 hours to prepare, cook, and plate their recipe (yield of 6 servings). No food preparation may be done in advance. Twenty minutes will be scheduled for equipment and ingredient check. Finalist teams will have 15 minutes to organize their work area, obtain supplies, and adapt the time management plan, if required. Teams will have 30 minutes for clean-up.

What do teams need to bring to the competition?

Teams should bring six (6) copies of their recipe, nutrient analysis and cost analysis. In addition, they must be prepared to share the results of the student taste tests conducted with their recipe. Student teams must bring all ingredients and required small equipment. The materials and ingredients needed for developing and preparing the recipe are the responsibility of the team/program/school and will not be reimbursed by NCJCC. Ingredients will not be provided during the NCJCC. Ingredients should be purchased and transported to the competition location. Food should be stored safely

with ice for perishable items, with meat/poultry/seafood stored separately. Food will be inspected and food that does not meet temperature controls will be discarded. Teams should bring necessary small wares (pots, pans, utensils, aprons, hairnets or other appropriate head cover, oven mitts, knives, garnishing kit).

EQUIPMENT			
Each team will have access to typical commercial kitchen equipment:			
Oven and Range	Blenders/Food processors	Refrigerator/Freezer	Prep sink/Hand sink
Teams should expect to provide their own (All team equipment must be labelled with team name.):			
Spoons (Mixing, Slotted)	Vegetable peelers	Rolling pin	Cutting boards
Spatulas	Measuring spoons	Mixing bowls	Strainers
Tongs	Measuring cups	Baking pans/sheets	Electric mixers
Whisks	Scales	Sauté and Saucepans	
Knives	Plates for presentation	Thermometers, Timers	Aprons, hairnets/covers
Garnishing kit	Oven mitts	Dish cloths, paper towels	Cleaning supplies

What is the attire for students on the day of the cooking competition?

Students should dress appropriately for food preparation. Appropriate attire includes chef attire/coat, if available, long pants, and closed-toed, low heel shoes with non-slip soles. Jewelry is not allowed. Hair should be properly restrained, and no nail polish should be worn. Students should bring hair nets and aprons.

Does my team have to get approval of our recipe from our district's School Nutrition Program?

Yes. Student teams are encouraged to work with their FACS teachers/FCCLA advisers and local School Nutrition Programs to develop creative entrée recipes for school lunch. Teams must obtain approval of their recipe by the district's School Nutrition Program prior to entering the contest. This collaboration and partnership between the students, adult supervisors and local School Nutrition Program is integral in your team's success.

How do we connect with our local School Nutrition Program?

Contact information for your local School Nutrition Program and School Nutrition director should be available on the website for your local education agency. In addition, a directory of School Nutrition Programs is available on the NCDPI, School Nutrition Services website, <https://childnutrition.ncpublicschools.gov/who-we-are>.

Is there a registration fee?

No. There is not a registration fee for the NC Jr. Chef Competition. Due to insurance requirements, students are required to be registered for the NC FCCLA State Conference in order to participate in the NC Jr. Chef Competition Cook-off

What type of recipe should student teams develop?

Student teams should develop a recipe for a school lunch entrée (yield of 6 servings).

What are the judging criteria for the Recipe Contest?

School lunch entrée recipe entries will be judged and scored on:

- Meeting the USDA School Nutrition Program requirements;
- Creativity;
- Reproducibility by School Nutrition professionals;
- Use of at least one (1) USDA Foods item; and
- Use of at least two (2) North Carolina grown products.

Nutrition Standards *

Nutrient	Entree
Calories	350 calories or less
Sodium	480 mg or less
Total Fat	35% of calories or less
Saturated Fat	Less than 10% of calories
Trans Fat	0
Sugar	35% by weight or less

*Smart Snacks in Schools Nutrition Standards

A school lunch entrée* is defined as the main course of a meal that has a combination of:

- meat/meat alternate + whole grain-rich food;
- vegetable + meat/meat alternate;
- fruit + meat/meat alternate; and a
- meat/meat alternate alone, except for meat snacks (e.g., beef jerky), yogurt, cheese, seeds, and seed butters.

How can I find North Carolina grown products?

A list of North Carolina grown products is available in the NCJCC guidelines. In addition, the Got to Be NC website, www.gottobenc.com, and NC Farm to School Program website, www.ncfarmtoschool.com, from the NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services can provide additional information about products from North Carolina.

What is the USDA Foods Program?

The USDA Foods Program provides healthy foods to schools for use in preparing school meals. USDA Foods include a wide variety of vegetables, fruits, dairy products, whole grains, lean meats and other protein options. To learn more, go to <https://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/food-distribution-programs>. A list of USDA foods for School Year 2019 is available at: <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/fdd/schools-institutions-foods-available.pdf>.

What is the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service at the Federal level works with State Agencies, such as the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, to administer several programs that provide healthy food to children, including the National School Lunch Program. The National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and non-profit private schools and residential child care institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day.

What are the required components for the school lunch meal?

Meals offered in the National School Lunch Program must meet a meal pattern and nutrition standards set by the USDA. The meal pattern consists of five components: fruit, vegetable, grain, meat/meat alternate, and milk. Please note that grains must be whole grain rich (i.e. $\geq 50\%$ of the grains in the product are whole grains). Additional information about school meal nutrition standards are available at <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/school-meals/nutrition-standards-school-meals>.

What is a whole grain?

Whole grains consist of the entire cereal grain seed or kernel. The kernel has three parts – bran, germ, and endosperm. Usually the kernel is cracked, crushed, or flaked during the milling process. If the finished product retains the same relative proportions of bran, germ and endosperm as the original grain, it is considered a whole grain. Examples of whole grains include whole wheat flour, cracked wheat, wheat berries, rolled oats, brown rice, wild rice, etc.

How is whole grain-rich defined?

Whole grain-rich is a term which refers to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) criteria for school meal requirements for grain. Foods that meet the whole grain-rich criteria for School Nutrition Programs contain at least 50 percent whole grain. The remaining 50 percent or less of grains, if any, must be enriched. Further information is available in the United States Department of Agriculture. Food and Nutrition Service. Whole Grain Resource for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. A Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-Rich Criteria. January, 2014 available at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/WholeGrainResource.pdf>.

How do I know if a grain ingredient in my recipe meets the whole grain-rich criteria?

It is if the ingredient statement lists a whole grain ingredient as the first ingredient (or the second ingredient behind water).

How many teams will be selected for the NC Jr. Chef Competition Cook-off?

Up to eight teams can be selected as finalists to participate in the NC Jr. Chef Competition cook-off.

When will student teams be notified if they have been selected to participate in the NC Jr. Chef Cook-off?

Look for a notification by email on or by February 21 to see if your team has been selected as a finalist. The email provided in the completed application will be used for notification. Please make sure the contact information provided is correct.

What are the judging criteria for the Cooking Competition?

Teams will receive scores on recipe development, uniform and appearance, safety and sanitation, food production, food taste and presentation. See the NCJCC guidelines for more information.

What, if any, prizes are available?

For the North Carolina Jr. Chef Competition, Sullivan University is offering the following scholarships: 1st place \$16,000 for each student team member, 2nd place \$10,000 for each student team member, and 3rd place \$6,000 for each student team member. For the Southeast Jr. Chef Competition winners, Sullivan University is offering the following scholarships: 1st place full tuition and fees for each student team member (value of \$45,000 - \$55,000 each), 2nd place tuition for each student team member (value of \$47,000 each), and 3rd place \$20,000 scholarship for each student team member. The scholarships are to be used to attend Sullivan University.

Are any hotels available nearby to the NC Jr. Chef Competition?

A special rate of \$158.98 was negotiated with the Sheraton Four Seasons at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro for the NC FCCLA State Conference. More info is available at www.ncfccla.org/hotel-information.html. A credit card is required to reserve the room by March 14, 2019.

Do students have to register for the NCFCCLA State Conference to participate in the NC Jr. Chef Competition?

Due to insurance coverage requirements for the NC Jr. Chef Competition, students should also be members of FCCLA and registered to attend the NC FCCLA Annual Conference. We are seeking funding to support travel and other costs associated with the NC Jr. Chef Competition. If fees for FCCLA membership or registration for the NC FCCLA Annual Conference are a barrier for any particular students, please reach out to us at FCSEducation@dpi.nc.gov.