



Table Setting Competition Guide

Developed by: Kari Sponaugle, Kelly Mallory, Kaci Daniel, and Kim Mayo, Extension Agents, 4-H.

Description of Contest

Through participation in this contest, youth will learn valuable life skills in the areas of meal preparation – either formal or informal – meal etiquette, menu preparation, use of Virginia Agricultural products within a menu and how to coordinate attire with menu and meal themes. Youth can use their imagination and creativity to create a welcoming and fun meal environment.

Levels of Competition

Unit (county), District

Age categories are as follows, using September 30th of the 4-H year as the determining date. The exception is for national contests, in which January 1 or another date may be used. It is the contestant's responsibility to check national rules for age deadlines.

Juniors (ages 9-11)

Intermediates (ages 12-13)

Seniors (ages 14-18)

Awards to be Earned

The Danish awards system will be used at all levels of competition. Blue ribbons will be awarded to competitors earning 90-100 points; red ribbons will be awarded to competitors earning 75-89 points; white ribbons will be awarded to competitors earning 74 points or less.

Certain Extension districts award a purple ribbon to the highest scoring youth in the category. At the state contest, the highest scoring youth will be awarded a project medal. Youth who win the state project medal are ineligible to compete in that category in future years.

Rules for this Contest

Junior & Intermediate Divisions

1. Required Equipment: A standard card table. Does not exceed 45 x 45 inches. You must bring your own table.
2. Arrive 15-30 minutes prior to contest to set up your table and display. An area will be designated for each age division.
3. Contestants must provide table service, centerpiece, and appropriate additional decorations.
4. Entries must have a theme of the contestant's choice. Should the district choose a table setting contest theme, it will be given at the time of district contest registration.

5. An index card with title or theme should be displayed on the table.
6. A complete menu on 4x6in display or larger is required. Include in your menu at least one (1) Virginia agricultural product. The Virginia item should be in **bold** or underlined font.
7. Contestant should wear matching attire, appropriate for the table setting.
8. Recipes for menu items are optional. A meal invitation is optional.
9. Youth should prepare a brief introduction of themselves, their table and a description of their theme and menu.
10. Judges will be given five (5) minutes per table. Youth should be prepared to answer questions about their table during judge observation.
11. Do not bring actual or artificial food. An artificial or real floral arrangement is allowed.

Senior Division

1. All rules for Junior and Intermediate divisions apply.
2. At least 3 corresponding recipes are **required** for seniors. Youth should prepare three (3) copies for the room chair to give to judges prior to contest.
3. Invitation to the meal is required.
4. Menu should include **four to five (4-5)** Virginia agricultural products. These items should be in **bold** on the menu.
5. Seniors must give a three (3) minute prepared explanation to judges of their table theme, decoration, menu, Virginia products used and where those Virginia products may be located within the state.

Educational Resources to Help Prepare for this Contest

4-H Table Setting Contest—Procedures and Guidelines. University of Nebraska Lincoln Extension. <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/fair/documents/tableset.pdf>

Memcott, Margie. *Table Manners that Matter.* Utah State University. www.extension.usu.edu/html/publications/publication=5842

Napkin Folding Guide. <http://www.napkinfoldingguide.com>

Virginia Fruit and Vegetable Availability Calendar. Virginia Cooperative Extension. http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/348/348-127/Table_1.html

Wyoming 4-H Table Setting Contest. Wyoming 4-H Youth Development Program. <https://www.uwyo.edu/4-h/youth/contests/tablesetting/index.html>

Other Guidelines, Suggestions, or Pertinent Information

Descriptions and locations of Virginia grown agricultural products can be found at the Virginia Grown webpage at <http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/vagrown/index.shtml>.

Sample YouTube Videos of 4-H Youth in This Contest

None available at this time, but this is a goal for Virginia 4-H! If you are interested in creating a how-to video or posting a sample of your work, please contact your unit Extension staff who will work with the State 4-H Office.