



BEST PRACTICES FOR FOOD CHALLENGE ACTIVITIES

Team practices and contests, especially Food Challenge, may be difficult to navigate during Covid-19. The following recommended best practices will help agents and volunteers conduct safe practices and contests at the local and district levels.

1

UNDERSTAND LOCAL GUIDELINES

Local guidelines may vary from county-to-county; however, it is critical that agents and volunteers conduct activities that adhere to local guidance.

2

USE 4-H BEST PRACTICES GUIDE AS PRIMARY RESOURCE

Agents and volunteers should follow the guidelines provided in this document to insure the health and safety of 4-H youth.

3

FOOD CHALLENGE TEAM PRACTICES & WORKSHOPS

When conducting team practices and/or workshops, the following best practices have been identified.

FACILITIES

To adhere to the limit of no more than 10 Extension employees in one room, it is recommended that contests be held at a location with multiple rooms and/or buildings available for use. Another option is to use multiple days or heats to conduct contest.

TEAMS

It is recommended that teams be comprised of youth from the same family, school and/or club.

PARTICIPANTS

Food Challenge practices should be limited to team members and coach only. General food and nutrition workshops should be limited to youth participating and necessary volunteers to meet risk management guidelines (8 youth: 1 adult).

The pick-up and drop-off of youth should be completed outside of the building unless there is a legitimate need for the parent/guardian to enter. Should the parent/guardian have a legitimate need to enter the operation, the parent must be screened using the Covid-19 screening form.

MASKS

Masks should be worn at all times during the Food Challenge practice and/or contest.

HANDWASHING

Upon entering facility, all team members should wash hands with soap and water following hand washing guidelines. Each team member should sanitize their hands again immediately prior to start of practice/contest and continually throughout the event.

CONTEST CHECK-IN

It is recommended that only team members check-in upon arrival. Once checked-in, they should be directed to their contest table for orientation and contest start.

ORIENTATION

It is recommended that orientation occur once teams are at their contest table. Only team members should be in orientation/contest area; no parents or coaches. Another option is think creatively and provide orientation via FB Live prior to the event start time/date.

EQUIPMENT

It is recommended to limit the sharing of equipment among team members. If items must be shared, the item should be disinfected before another team member can use.

FOOD CHALLENGE TEAM MEMBER ROLES

It is recommended each team member have a specific role to limit sharing of equipment between team members. Each member should practice using only the equipment needed to fulfill their role.

FOOD CHALLENGE TABLE SET-UP

It is recommended to use 2-six foot tables for the Food Challenge practice and/or contest. Tables should be placed side-by-side with team members placed at each corner to practice social distancing. Tables should be placed to allow a minimum of 10 feet between teams to ensure safe social distancing. If using classroom style seating for workshop, social distancing guidelines should be followed.

Tables used for practices and/or contest should be disinfected before and after use. Tablecloths are not recommended; however, if used they should be disposable and thrown away after each use.

GROCERY STORE

To follow social distancing guidelines, it is recommended that the number of youth “shopping” at the contest grocery store is limited to one person per team with social distancing enforced. Teams should be given a list at their contest table so they may make their decisions prior to coming to the grocery store. They should “pay” for their items by depositing their “currency” into a central box/bucket.

Another creative option is for contest officials to offer “curbside” delivery. Teams would select from a grocery list provided at their table and turn into a contest official who would deliver their order directly to the table. Since teams may bring certain pantry items in their equipment box, contest officials may consider limiting the grocery store items offered.



AWARDS

Although awards ceremonies are fun to attend in person, social distancing is difficult. Contest officials should consider broadcasting the awards at a designated time following the conclusion of the contest. All teams, parents, and coaches should depart contest areas immediately after teams are dismissed and tune in virtually for the awards. Contest officials may consider taking a photo of teams with their masks on and dishes in hand at the backdrop to use for social media recognition.

