

Buc Days Food Show Competition

2026 Special Rules



Superintendent – Norma Munoz
Assistant Superintendent – Erika Bochat

Chair- Zachary Narvaez
Co-Chair- Page Gray

Total Prize Money Awarded: **\$5,000**

Event Date:	Thursday, May 7th, 2026
Check-In Begins:	2:00pm
Competition Begins:	2:30pm
Preliminary Rounds:	2:30pm-5:30pm
Tie Breakers (if needed):	5:30pm-6:00pm
Awards Presentation: (On the Community Stage)	*6:30pm

1. **Participation:** The contest will be divided into three age divisions.
 - a. **Junior Division** (3rd, 4th, and 5th graders only)
 - i. 8 years of age (in addition to being in the 3rd grade) and not over 10 years of age as of August 15th, 2025.
 - b. **Intermediate Division** (6th, 7th, and 8th graders only)
 - ii. 10 years of age (in addition to being in the 6th grade) and not over 14 years of age as of August 15th, 2025.
 - c. **Senior Division** (9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders only)
 - iii. 14 years of age (in addition to being in the 9th grade) and not over 18 years of age as of August 15th, 2025.
2. **Eligibility:** Participation in the Buc Days Food Show is limited to TX resident students, who are enrolled in a Texas Youth Development program and are actively participating in the Food and Nutrition project. Each 4-H, FFA, and FCLA member must be in good standing with its state and National affiliates.
3. **Registration:** Registration will be open on December 15, 2025, and completed through our website at '<https://bucdays.com/buc-days-food-show/>'. Registration will close when the event has reached capacity of 75 participants. Each participant must pay a \$30 registration fee to participate.
4. **Entry Categories:** There are four entry categories, allowing contestants to present a variety of foods while demonstrating food preparation skills. Many recipes could fit more than one category; contestants should be prepared to explain their choice. When selecting a recipe, contestants should keep good nutrition and healthy preparation methods in mind, consult the [Choose MyPlate](#) website, and work with their County Extension Agent or project leader for guidance.
 - a. **Appetizer** – Small dish served before the main course. Recipes should be lighter options that don't spoil the appetite and are lower in fat, sodium, and calories.
 - b. **Main Dish** – The featured dish of a meal, typically hearty and substantial. Often built around a protein source but may include a variety of foods.
 - c. **Side Dish** – Foods served alongside a main dish, such as salads, cooked vegetables, pasta, rice, fruit, or combination dishes.
 - d. **Healthy Dessert** – Sweet dishes prepared with healthy substitutions, aligning with MyPlate and Dietary Guidelines, and served at the end of a meal or for special occasions.

5. **Preparation & Presentation:** All dishes must be prepared prior to the event. Participants may only add garnishes or stir dishes upon arrival. No on-site preparation is allowed except for last-minute assistance from other 4-H members—no adults. Garnishes must be edible.
 - a. **Dish Display:** Present in a serving dish or the original cooking vessel. Seniors must bring the full recipe; Juniors and Intermediates may bring a single serving. No elaborate placemats, linens, or decorations are allowed. Only necessary utensils may be included.
6. **Contest Format:** Each food show participant will complete/compete in each of the following components. A brief description and/or rules are shown for each.
 - a. **KNOWLEDGE SHOWCASE:**
 - i. Contestants will take a 10-question quiz (multiple choice and true/false) covering food prep, food safety, kitchen safety, and nutrition. No study materials will be provided; contestants should use the Texas 4-H Food Show guide as a resource
 - b. **FOOD SHOW DISH PRESENTATION/ INTERVIEW:**
 - i. Contestants introduce themselves and their dish, then give an oral presentation (up to five minutes) on MyPlate, nutrition, food preparation, or food safety. Presentation is required for Seniors; optional but encouraged for Juniors and Intermediates. Judges may follow with up to four minutes of questions on preparation, ingredients, substitutions, nutrients, Dietary Guidelines, calorie content, cost, food safety, or menu ideas. Seniors serve judges a single portion during this time; Juniors and Intermediates do not serve.
 - c. **SKILL SHOWCASE:**
 - i. Contestants demonstrate a food and nutrition skill assigned by judges. All materials provided; scoring based on correct procedures, safety, and knowledge. Examples include knife skills, zesting, table setting, dry & wet measurements, and food safety demonstrations. A time limit will be announced during participant orientation.
7. **Timing:** Juniors & Intermediates have a maximum of 9 minutes per contestant. Seniors have a maximum 10 minutes per contestant (includes one minute for serving).
8. **Tie Breaker:** If ties should occur, the ties shall be broken using scores of various categories on the scorecard. The order followed will be: Interview and Contestant Presentation, Skills Showcase, Communication Skills, Food, and Recipe.

9. **Awards:** A total of \$5,000 in prize money will be awarded throughout the event.
- a. A total of \$1,200 will be awarded to the Grand Champion contestant for each category in the Junior Division (3rd, 4th, and 5th graders).
 - i. Grand Champion – Appetizer: \$300 prize money
 - ii. Grand Champion – Side Dish: \$300 prize money
 - iii. Grand Champion – Main Dish: \$300 prize money
 - iv. Grand Champion – Healthy Dessert: \$300 prize money
 - b. A total of \$1,200 will be awarded to the Grand Champion contestant for each category in the Intermediate Division (6th, 7th, and 8th graders).
 - i. Grand Champion – Appetizer: \$300 prize money
 - ii. Grand Champion – Side Dish: \$300 prize money
 - iii. Grand Champion – Main Dish: \$300 prize money
 - iv. Grand Champion – Healthy Dessert: \$300 prize money
 - c. A total of \$2,600 will be awarded to the top three (3) contestants in the Senior Division (9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders).
 - i. Grand Champion – Appetizer: \$650 prize money
 - ii. Grand Champion – Side Dish: \$650 prize money
 - iii. Grand Champion – Main Dish: \$650 prize money
 - iv. Grand Champion – Healthy Dessert: \$650 prize money