

# Kings County 4-H Food Olympics Guidelines

Revised February 2025



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## General Information for the Food Olympics Contests

The Food Olympics contests are open to all 4-H members. Pre-entry is required.

If you are new to this 4-H event, you may wish to view pictures of previous year's entries to better understand what makes an entry. Pictures are available on the Kings County 4-H website, [Food Olympics page](#).

### ***Age Divisions:***

- *Primary:* 5-8 years old (may enter but will not be evaluated/scored)
- *Junior:* 9-10 years old
- *Intermediate:* 11-13 years old
- *Senior:* 14 years & older

For more information, consult the [Food Olympics page](#) of our website.

## Favorite Food Contest Guidelines (No place setting)

### **General Rules:**

Select a favorite food you would like to prepare - main dish, salad, vegetable, appetizer/snack, or dessert.

Plan a menu for the entire meal in which you would serve that dish. Keep in mind the USDA's MyPlate guidelines.

**Prepare your dish for 4 people** and bring it to the event ready to serve. To comply with food safety rules:

- Cold food must be kept at 40 degrees or colder
- Hot foods must be kept at 140 degrees or hotter
- The dish should not sit out longer than 2 hours and will be discarded after judging.

The display should include:

- recipe card (explained on page 12)
- menu card (explained on page 13)
- table covering (such as a cover or placemat)
- prepared dish should be in an appropriate serving dish with the serving utensil(s)

You will be given a space approximately 22" wide x 29" deep to attractively display your prepared dish. Remember, **NO** place setting is to be used in Favorite Food Contest.

Type your recipe on a separate paper in Times New Roman, size 12. The recipes will be collected after judging. Put your name & club on the recipe only, not on your display.

Showmanship skills can be done at the time of set-up. Entrants may interact with the judges about their entries. (See page 11 to read about Showmanship.)

All entries must be made by the contestant. Contestant must set up their own display. One entry per member per category.

## ***Favorite Food Contest Categories:***

1. **Favorite Food Category:** (See General Rules above)

2. **Healthy Living Category:** (See General Rules above)

\*In addition, entry must include at least 2 out of the following 4 requirements:

Requirements (include at least 2):

- Contain at least 1 fruit and/or vegetable
- Contain a lean protein (legumes, beans, poultry, fish etc.)
- Contain a whole grain (oats, corn, whole wheat, brown rice, quinoa etc.)
- Contain a low fat or fat-free dairy product

Where applicable:

\*No added sugar (honey, molasses, and applesauce are acceptable)

\*Ingredients used should be lower in sodium, where applicable (i.e. - low sodium broth)

All other rules for an entry for the Favorite Food Category apply to the Healthy Living Category. The top placing entry in the Healthy Living Category is eligible to compete for the overall winner of the Favorite Food Contest. If your Favorite Food qualifies for the Healthy Living Category- your ONE entry may be judged in both categories OR you may enter your Favorite Food and/or a separate entry in the Healthy Living Category.

## ***Awards:***

For the Favorite Food Contest, each age division winner (Jr., Int., & Sr.) receives a bronze medal. The overall winner in the Favorite Food Contest is selected from the division winners and will receive a gold medal. The overall winner in the Healthy Living category will receive a bronze medal unless it is chosen as the overall winner in the Favorite Food Contest.



## Place Setting Contest Guidelines (No food)

### ***General Rules:***

Select a theme for your place setting. This can be holiday, family celebration, BBQ, anniversary, or any other occasion.

Plan a menu for the entire meal, keeping in mind the USDA's MyPlate Guidelines.

Select a coordinated place setting for your entry – (You will need dishes & silverware for everything on your menu.)

The display should include:

- tablecloth or placemat
- dishes
- silverware
- centerpiece (low)
- menu card (see page 13 for more information)

Place setting is only for one person.

Arrange your place setting attractively.

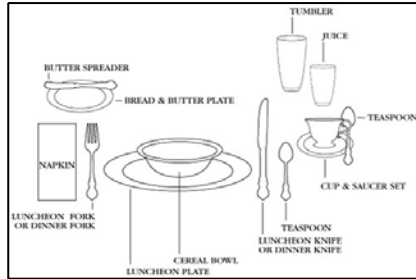
Do not put your name on the display.

You will be given a space approximately 22" wide x 29" deep to display your place setting.

Showmanship skills can be done at the time of set-up. Entrants may interact with the judges about their entries. (See page 11 to read about Showmanship.)

Entry must be made by the contestant. Contestant must set up their own place setting. One entry per member.

(Helpful tip: Take a picture of your place setting at home, print the picture, and bring it to the event so you have a reminder of how you want your place setting to look.)



**Awards:**

For the Place Setting Contest, each age division (Jr., Int., & Sr.) winner receives a bronze medal. The overall winner in the Place Setting Contest is selected from the division winners and will receive a gold medal.

## Cupcake Decorating Contest Guidelines

### **General Rules:**

4-H members participating in the Cupcake Decorating Contest will be given 2 cupcakes to decorate.

Participants have 30 minutes to decorate the 2 cupcakes.



The cupcakes may be decorated identically, or if incorporating a theme, the cupcakes may be decorated differently while still carrying out the theme.

Participants must bring all the equipment and ingredients to decorate the cupcakes. Include items to help keep your workspace clean (i.e.– paper towels, sponge etc.) Please cover any brand names on frosting containers etc.

All decorations used for the cupcakes must be made during the 30 minutes allotted.

Store bought candy is OK to use as an accessory on your cupcake to help decorate.

Cupcakes will be judged on originality and quality of decorating.

One entry per exhibitor.

### **Awards:**

For the Cupcake Decorating Contest, each age division (Jr., Int., & Sr.) winner receives a bronze medal. The overall winner in Cupcake Decorating Contest is selected from the division winners and will receive a gold medal.

# Food Photography Contest Guidelines

## **General Rules:**

1. All pictures must have been taken during the current 4-H year.
2. Photo size: 5" x 7" for Healthy Living and Favorite Food category. Farm to Fork sequence photos shall be no larger than 5" x 7".
3. No names should be on the pictures and there should not be any captions.
4. Name and Club may be written in small print on the backside of the mounting boards to aid in identification.

All pictures must be properly mounted:

- Must be on mat board. (Solid mat boards should be used—pre-cut photo mats will not provide the proper proportions for mounting (see below). Colored mat boards can be used.
- Proper proportions must be used for mounting - with a 2" border all around the picture (i.e., mat board for a 5" x 7" photo needs to be 9" x 11").
- Must be done with dry mount tissue or scrapbooking tape.
- No hanging hardware on back of mounts.
- No picture frames.
- All sequence or related pictures are to be mounted on a 16" x 20" mat board.
- A sequence is 3 to 5 photos showing a progression of something, such as the stages of making something.

## **Categories:**

### **1. Healthy Living:**

Photo should feature a meal (breakfast, lunch, or dinner) that is attractive, appetizing, and nutritious. The meal should be prepared at home with limited processed foods and healthy serving sizes. Use the USDA's MyPlate for recommendations for creating your meal.



Photo size: 5" x 7"



2. **Favorite Food:**

Photograph your favorite food. The food (cooked or uncooked) should be the featured item in the picture, with no people in the picture. The favorite food can be photographed at the market/shop, in the kitchen, on a plate etc.



Photo size: 5" x 7"

3. **Farm to Fork:** (Sequence of 3 to 5 pictures)

This sequence of 3 to 5 pictures should show a progression of taking a food in its natural state to a finished recipe. It may be difficult to find your featured food item in its natural growing state, depending on the season. If this is the case, photograph your featured food item whole.

Photo size: not to exceed 5" x 7". All photos in the sequence must be the same size, but the orientation may vary (portrait & landscape).



**Example of Farm to Fork Category:**

*Featured Food item- Oranges*

Picture #1: Oranges growing on a tree

(If you don't have access to oranges growing on trees, then you may take a picture of a group of oranges or an individual orange.)

Picture #2: Extracting the juice from the orange

Picture #3: Measuring the juice

Picture #4: Adding the juice to the cake batter

Picture #5: Finished cake

\*\* The food item is the focus, not the person making the cake.

**Awards:**

For Food Photography, each age division winner (Jr., Int., Sr.) in each category (Healthy Living, Favorite Food, Farm to Fork) receives a bronze medal. There will be an overall winner (gold medal) in each of the categories (Healthy Living, Favorite Food, Farm to Fork) selected from the bronze medal winners.

**Additional Information:**

1. For information about MyPlate visit:

<http://www.myplate.gov/>



2. For information on Food Photography visit:

<http://digital-photography-school.com/food-photography-an-introduction/>

## Food Olympics Showmanship

Showmanship opportunities are plentiful in animal related projects but are hard to come by in many other 4-H projects. As a result, a Showmanship opportunity has been incorporated into the Food Olympics. Awards are not given for Showmanship, but participation can be counted in the Personal Development Report Form under “4-H Project Skills Activities.”

Showmanship at the Food Olympics is an opportunity to interact with the judge(s) about your entry. You will stand by the entry you wish to show the judges -Favorite Food or Place Setting. (Cupcake Decorating is not an option since the cupcakes are decorated after Showmanship has concluded.)

Showmanship is held as soon as your entry is set-up. To enter this portion of the contest, please check the appropriate area on the entry form.

The judge(s) will ask you questions about your entry. This process will last about 2-3 minutes. Some examples of questions might be:

- How did you select the theme of your place setting?
- Tell us about where you found the pieces used in your place setting.
- Is there a story to go with your Favorite Food? (i.e.- family recipe, found in a magazine etc.)
- Tell us about the food groups represented in your menu.

### Why Showmanship?

- Gives participants an opportunity to share their knowledge of their entry with the judge(s)
- Gives practice in “thinking on your feet.”

### How to prepare for Showmanship:

- You may wear your 4-H uniform, but it is not required
- Clothing should be neat and clean
- If your hair is long, it should be pulled back, since participant is around food and place settings
- Speak loud enough for judges to hear you clearly
- Be confident and relax
- Practice answering questions about your entry at home

## Food Olympics Contest Examples

### *Recipe for Favorite Foods*

Font: Times New Roman– Size 12—on 8-1/2" x 11" white paper

#### **Rice Cereal Treats**

##### Ingredients:

3 tablespoons butter

1 package (10 oz., about 40) marshmallows

6 cups rice

cereal

##### Directions:

1. In a large saucepan melt butter over low heat. Add marshmallows and stir until completely melted. Remove from heat.
2. Add rice cereal. Stir until well coated.
3. Using a buttered spatula or wax paper, evenly press mixture into 13 x 9 x 2-inch pan coated with cooking spray. Cool. Cut into 2-inch squares. Best if served the same day.

Prepared by:

Name of 4-H member

4-H Club:

## ***Menu Writing for Favorite Foods & Place Setting***

The following guidelines are helpful in planning a menu:

1. Use descriptive terms that give information about the temperature, texture, color, or other special characteristics of the food or the method of preparation.

**Examples:** Chilled Apple Cider, Broiled Sirloin Steak, Cream of Asparagus Soup, etc.

2. Write menus in a symmetrical arrangement on the page, listing foods in the order they are served.

**Example:** Broiled Hamburgers  
Baked Potato with  
Sour Cream  
Broccoli and Glazed  
Carrots  
Hot Rolls with  
Whipped Butter  
Iced Tea

3. Capitalize all words except articles and prepositions; words such as “or,” “and,” “of,” “with,” etc. are not capitalized.

**Example:** “Cream of Mushroom Soup”

4. Foods should be grouped by courses. The item of most importance should be listed first.

**Example:** “Broiled Hamburgers”

5. If foods are served with an accompaniment, list the food first.

**Examples:** “Baked Potatoes with Sour Cream” or Cheddar Cheese Cubes with Rye Chips

6. If the main dish has two or more accompaniments, center the main dish and space the accompaniments on the same line on either side or write them on the line below.

**Example:** Whole Grain Crackers - Chicken Soup - Soda Crackers  
or

Chicken Soup  
Whole Wheat Crackers and Soda Crackers

7. Items such as butter, cream, sugar, or salad dressing are not written on menus unless they are special in some way.

**Examples:** Crusty Rolls with Whipped Butter  
or

Wedge of Lettuce with Thousand Island Dressing

8. The beverage(s) appears as the last item(s).

**Example:** Iced Tea

9. Allow extra spacing between courses; this is often omitted in menus printed in books, magazines, and newspapers in order to save space. The following menu is for a three-course meal.

***FAMILY HOLIDAY CELEBRATION***

French Onion Soup  
Whole Wheat Wafers  
Celery Sticks Assorted Olives  
Prime Rib of Roast Beef au Jus  
Potato Souffle  
Asparagus with Hollandaise Sauce  
Mixed Green Salad  
Hot Rolls with Whipped Butter

Lemon Ice  
Coffee and Hot Tea

\*\* For Favorite Foods Contest– the menu card is a decorative part of your display

Taken from: <http://www.four-h.purdue.edu/foods/Writing%20menus.htm>

## ***Place Setting Contest Helpful Tips***

The purpose of a table setting is to make the act of eating easy.

Objects that are used in the right hand are placed to the right of the plate: knives, spoons, and beverage containers. The fork is laid to the left of the plate because historically it **was** used only in the left hand.

### **The Cover**

The *cover* consists of the dinnerware, beverageware, flatware, and linens to be used by each person; it is the individual's place at the table. The cover size for the place setting contest is approximately 22" wide (left to right) by 29" deep (front to back).

#### **Linens**

Linens consist of the tablecloths, placemats and other table covers and napkins used on the dining table, regardless of fiber content. Linens should be spotless and wrinkle-free. Plastic and paper tablecloths, placemats and napkins are permissible if they compliment the theme of the place setting.

#### ***Napkins:***

The napkin is usually placed to the left of the fork(s). However, if the covers are close together, it can be placed in the center of the plate, in a glass etc. A 12-inch size napkin is usually for breakfast and lunch. For the dinner meal, the eighteen-inch (or larger) napkin is preferred.

#### ***Placemats:***

Lay placemats flush with the table edge or not more than approximately ½" from it. (If using a tablecloth- fold to the appropriate size designated for the cover.)

#### **Table Decorations**

Table decorations should be appropriate for viewing while dining. Resist the temptation to make the centerpiece too grand as it can be a distraction. Keep it low so your guests can easily see over it and feel comfortable talking with those across the table. Centerpieces should be in good taste.

#### **Dinnerware**

#### ***Bread-and-Butter Plate:***

Place the bread-and-butter plate to the left of the cover near the tip of the fork. In this position, it balances the glass or glasses on the right of the cover. In addition, the bread-and-butter plate can be used for celery, olives, and other relishes eaten with the fingers. The dinner or luncheon plate, if not overcrowded with food, is a suitable place for bread and butter, especially when the bread is served hot. The bread-and-butter plate is used when a table is large enough to accommodate it, but it is not a "must" in table setting.

#### ***Salad Plate:***

Unless served at the table, the salad is placed at each cover shortly before serving time. It may be placed in any of several positions.

- If no bread-and-butter plate is at the cover, place the salad at or near the tip of the fork. This is a widely used position and one that allows good leverage in cutting salad vegetables.

- When a bread-and-butter plate is included in the cover, you may place the salad to the left and a little below the bread-and-butter plate; however, unless covers are spacious, such a position is often not possible. Where covers are close together, you may move the bread-and-butter plate a little to the left and place the salad to the right of it; in this position, it is above the luncheon or dinner plate.

### Flatware

Lay pieces of flatware (silverware) in the order of use from the outside toward the plate. This is done for convenience during dining. Pieces should be laid close together but not touching.

#### ***Knife:***

Lay the dinner knife to the right of the plate with the cutting edge directed toward the plate. All knives are laid with the cutting edge toward the plate, a position that protects the fingers of the right hand as it grasps the knife.

When no dinner knife is required for the eating of a simple family meal, it can be omitted from the setting.

Butter Knife: You may place the butter knife on the bread-and-butter plate.

#### ***Spoons:***

Lay spoons with the bowls facing up at the right of the knife. Spoons should be placed in the order they will be used, with the spoon used first farthest from the plate.

#### ***Forks:***

Always lay the fork(s) with the tines facing up at the left of the plate, with this exception- a fork for eating seafood is laid to the right of any spoons in the cover because this fork is used in the right hand only. Lay the salad fork nearest the plate and the dinner fork to the left of it if you intend that the salad be eaten with the main course or after it. Lay the dinner fork nearest the plate and the salad fork to the left of it if you intend that the salad be eaten before the main course.

\*\*It is not necessary to provide a salad fork when the salad accompanies the main course.

### Beverageware

Place the water glass at the tip of the knife, or a little to the right or left of the knife, depending on the size of the table, the cover etc.

Glasses placed in addition to the water glass are positioned successively closer to the table edge but not so as to modify the position of the flatware on the right side of the cover. Generally, no more than three glasses appear within a cover.

### Misc. Notes for Place Setting Contest

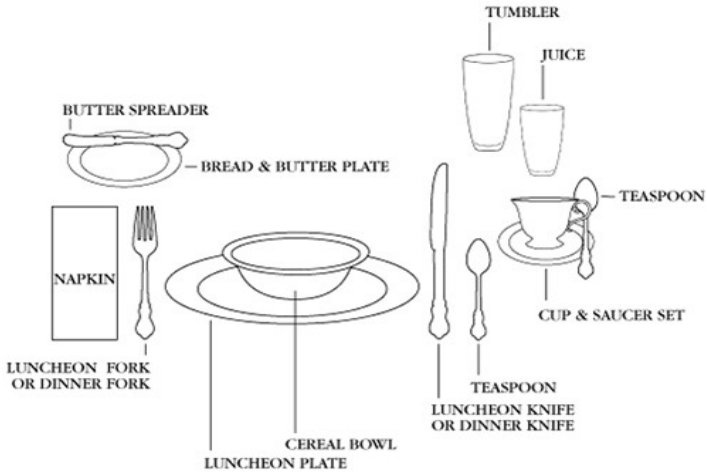
- If your table is marred, you may cover it with a tablecloth, and then use the placemat you would normally use. (Keep in mind your space allocation.)
- If using a formal table setting, the arrangement of the cover may look cramped, but the judge will understand.
- Breakfast and lunches are usually simpler meals with most food items on the same plate. Dinners may be served in courses with necessary dishes stacked in order of use with first item used on top.



## Sample Place Settings

### Breakfast/Lunch:

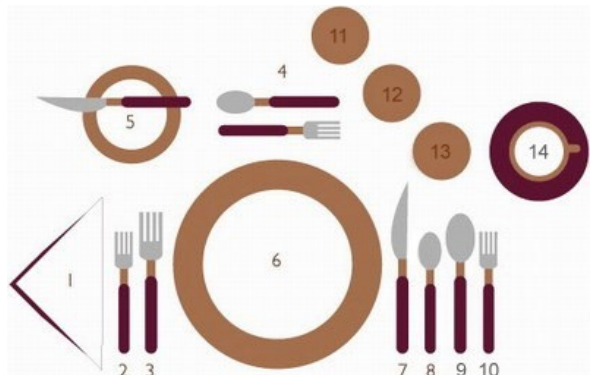
(Dinnerware, flatware, and beverageware may vary depending on *your* menu.)



### Formal Dinner:

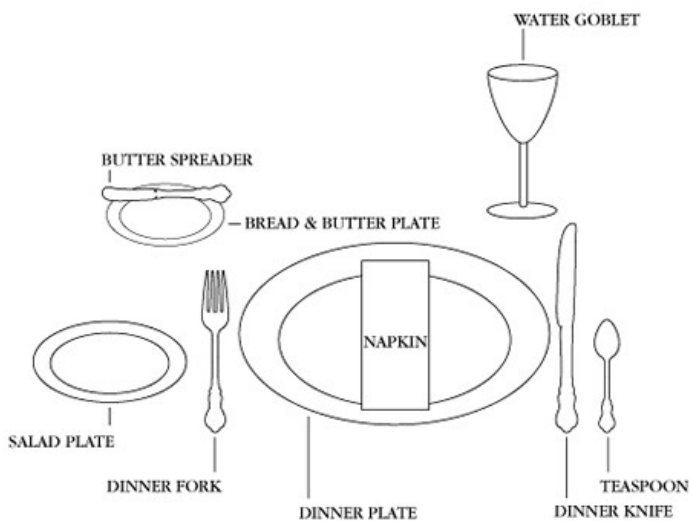
(Dinnerware, flatware, and beverageware may vary depending on *your* menu.)

1. Napkin
2. Salad fork
3. Dinner fork
4. Dessert fork & spoon
5. Bread & butter plate with spreader
6. Dinner plate
7. Dinner knife
8. Teaspoon
9. Soup spoon
10. Cocktail fork
11. Water glass
12. Beverage glass
13. Beverage glass



## Family Dinner:

(Dinnerware, flatware, and beverageware may vary depending on *your* menu.)



**FOOD OLYMPICS**  
**Favorite Food Contest Evaluation Form**  
**Favorite Food Category**

Participant Name _____
Gold Seal <input type="checkbox"/> (42-48)      Blue Seal <input type="checkbox"/> (37-41)      Red Seal <input type="checkbox"/> (36-Below)

	Needs Improvement	Fair	Good	Excellent	COMMENTS
	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points	
<b>OVERALL APPEARANCE</b>					
Originality					
<b>MENU/FOOD PREPARATION</b>					
Menu Nutritionally Balanced					
Selection of food for flavor, color compatibility, texture & shape					
Appropriate for theme or occasion					
Food – properly prepared					
Flavor					
<b>DISPLAY</b>					
Tablecloth and/or placemat choice and placement					
Serving dish					
Serving utensil					
Menu card					
Recipe – correctly written					
Neat & Clean					
Total Points:					
		<b>Grand Total:</b>			

*Total of 48 Points      Gold: 42-48      Blue: 37-41      Red: 36- Below*

**FOOD OLYMPICS**  
**Favorite Food Contest Evaluation Form**  
**Healthy Living Category**

Participant Name _____
Gold Seal <input type="checkbox"/> (42-48)      Blue Seal <input type="checkbox"/> (37-41)      Red Seal <input type="checkbox"/> (36-Below)

	Needs Improvement	Fair	Good	Excellent	COMMENTS
	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points	
<b>OVERALL APPEARANCE</b>					
Originality					
<b>MENU/FOOD PREPARATION</b>					
Menu Nutritionally Balanced					
Selection of food for flavor, color compatibility, texture & shape					
Appropriate for theme or occasion					
Food – properly prepared					
Flavor					
<b>DISPLAY</b>					
Table cloth and/or placemat choice and placement					
Serving dish					
Serving utensil					
Menu card					
Recipe – correctly written					
Neat & Clean					
Total Points:					
		<b>Grand Total:</b>			

*Total of 48 Points      Gold: 42-48      Blue: 37-41      Red: 36- Below*

## FOOD OLYMPICS

### Place Setting Contest Evaluation Form

Participant Name \_\_\_\_\_

Gold Seal  (50-56)      Blue Seal  (44-49)      Red Seal  (43-Below)

	Needs Improvement	Fair	Good	Excellent	COMMENTS
	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points	
<b>OVERALL APPEARANCE</b>					
Originality					
<b>MENU</b>					
Menu Nutritionally Balanced					
Selection of foods for flavor and color compatibility					
Appropriate for theme or occasion					
<b>DISPLAY</b>					
Table cloth and/or placemat choice and placement					
Choice of dishes					
Placement of silverware					
Placement of napkin					
Placement of dishes					
Placement of glasses and cups					
Centerpiece – height (lower than eye level) –					
Appropriateness of centerpiece					
Menu card					
Neat and clean					
Total Points:					
		<b>Grand Total:</b>			
<i>Total of 56 Points      Gold: 50-56      Blue: 44-49      Red: 43- Below</i>					

## FOOD OLYMPICS

### Cup Cake Decorating Contest Evaluation Form

Participant Name \_\_\_\_\_

Gold Seal  (28-32)      Blue Seal  (24-27)      Red Seal  (23-Below)

<b>30 MINUTE OBSERVATION PERIOD</b>	Needs Improvement	Fair	Good	Excellent	COMMENTS
	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points	
Work was completed within time allowed					
Entrant had all necessary materials & equip.					
Work area kept neat & sanitary procedures used					
<b>OVERALL APPEARANCE</b>					
Originality					
<b>FOOD PREPARATION</b>					
Frosting gives good base for decorations					
Decorations – Exhibit skills					
Design – suitable for cup cake					
Colors compatible – go well together					
Total Points:					
		<b>Grand Total:</b>			
<i>Total of 32 Points      Gold: 28-32      Blue: 24-27      Red: 23- Below</i>					

## FOOD OLYMPICS

### Photography Contest Evaluation Form

Participant Name \_\_\_\_\_

Gold Seal  (39-44)      Blue Seal  (35-38)      Red Seal  (34-Below)

<b>CATEGORY:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Favorite Food Photo <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Living Photo <input type="checkbox"/> Farm to Fork Sequence Photos	Needs Improvement	Fair Quality	Good Quality	Excellent Quality	<b>COMMENTS</b>
	<b>1</b> Point	<b>2</b> Points	<b>3</b> Points	<b>4</b> Points	
<b>TECHNICAL</b>					
<b>Focus</b> – the focus is appropriate to the theme/mood and/or photographic class.					
<b>Exposure</b> – the exposure compliments the composition and gives the picture a smooth feeling or a particular effect.					
<b>Lighting</b> – use of light to produce the desired mood or effect.					
<b>Print Quality</b> – the absence of blemishes, scratches, overly enlarged (graininess), and pixilation.					
<b>SUBJECT</b>					
<b>Creative use of subject</b> – the photo clearly communicates the subject and fits the chosen category.					
<b>Composition</b> – a pleasing balance exists among all components of the composition.					
<b>Impact</b> – the composition conveys a strong message.					
<b>Uniqueness</b> – the photographer exhibits creativity through the photo.					
<b>Storytelling Ability</b> – a central idea given simply, that you can grasp quickly and easily.					
<b>OVERALL</b>					
<b>Displaying your photo</b> – quality and accuracy of mounting.					
<b>Originality</b> – the photographer exhibits creativity that is new and different.					
Total Points:					
<b>Grand Total:</b>					

*Total of 44 Points*

*Gold: 39-44*

*Blue: 35-38*

*Red: 34- Below*