New contest encourages 4-H’ers to get creative with country ham

Source: Isaac Hilpp, senior extension specialist

The 4-H country ham project is one of the most highly anticipated 4-H activities each year. In 2022, senior 4-H members can show off their creativity and knowledge of preparing this southern staple in the 4-H country ham recipe contest.

To compete, youth must submit original, country ham-centered recipes to their county 4-H youth development agent by March 1. Young people can choose to prepare a country ham-inspired dish for either breakfast, lunch/dinner or dessert or youth can choose to enter in multiple categories. Judges will review the recipes based on creativity, technical skills and depth-of-flavor profile. Agents will submit each recipe to the Kentucky State Fair.

Ten young people in each category will advance to a semifinal round. If a 4-H member enters dishes in more than one category and they have multiple entries reach the semifinals, they must choose only one to advance. During the semis, youth in each division will prepare a five-to-15-minute demonstration video preparing their recipe. The video allows young people to showcase their culinary skills, understanding of the recipe and presentation skills. The videos will also be entered in the Kentucky State Fair and included in a 4-H country ham cookbook.

Judges will choose two 4-H’ers from each division to advance to the final round of the competition. The finalists will prepare their recipe live on the Cloverville stage during the Kentucky State Fair on Aug. 25 for a panel of judges. Finalists will be judged on their knowledge of culinary skills, kitchen safety, nutritional information and flavor. Winners will work with a University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service specialist to turn their recipe into a Plate It Up, Kentucky Proud recipe.

To learn more about this exciting new contest, contact the (COUNTY NAME) office of the UK Cooperative Extension Service.

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