



Explore the world of cooking with tasty, hands-on experiences; from the sweet and simple to the complex and savory and everything in between.



## Exploring 4-H Cooking

### Spark Activity: Kitchen Scavenger Hunt

See how many of these things you can locate and/or do within your kitchen.

- ½ cup dry measuring cup
- 1 cup liquid measuring cup
- 1 Tablespoon measuring spoon
- Cookie sheet
- Cutting board
- Fruits & vegetables: Identify 2 fruits and 2 vegetables you have on hand (may be fresh, frozen, canned, or dry).
- Flour: Measure 1 cup of flour by spooning the flour lightly into the measuring cup until it is overfull. Level off the flour with the straight edge of a knife. Repeat.
- Food thermometer
- Hand soap
- Herbs & spices: Identify 3 herbs or spices you have on hand.
- Hot pads
- Microwave safe dish
- Oven: See how long it takes to preheat to 350 °F.
- Recipe
- Refrigerator
- Whisk

These everyday kitchen items are essential for learning how to cook!



## 4-H Project Levels and Goals

### Beginner

- Learn the basics of cooking
- Learn how to measure dry and wet ingredients
- Learn to properly set the table
- Learn to prepare a daily and weekly menu
- Practice food and kitchen safety
- Learn about and prepare items from each food group
- Become familiar with different kitchen tools and techniques

### Intermediate

- Continue to prepare items from food groups
- Demonstrate a cooking skill to your club
- Explore and complete food experiments
- Plan and complete a community service project

### Advanced

- Explore career paths
- Prepare a taste test
- Try using new herbs and spices
- Create your own herb and spice blends and start your own business selling the mixtures to friends, neighbors, and/or family

## Put Your Project Into Action

### Show Your Skills

- Create a menu for a balanced special meal
- Design a traditional meal of a specific culture
- Practice plating techniques
- Start a kitchen garden and develop dishes with the harvest
- Write instructions on how to prepare a meal so that all items have the same finishing time

### Service and Leadership

- Cookie baking day with a nursing home
- Kitchen supply drive for a community center
- Volunteer at a soup kitchen
- Coordinate a meal train for families in-need
- Donate to / volunteer at a local food pantry
- Chair your 4-H club's refreshment committee
- Coordinate food-related 4-H service projects
- Youth liaison for a food stand at a 4-H show
- Assist a food SPIN club in using new recipes

### Entrepreneurship

- Make & sell homemade candy for holidays
- Create a cookbook
- Mix and sell locally sourced dried spice blends

### Technology Connection

- Explore new kitchen gadgets and how they improve the kitchen experience
- Set up a virtual cooking show
- Start a food blog

### Connecting with a Mentor

- Community college with a culinary arts program
- Local restaurants, bakeries or caterers
- Local food company
- Family and consumer education teachers
- College or university food and nutrition majors or faculty

### Events

- 4-H Food Challenge
- 4-H food SPIN club
- 4-H Presentations Contest - Food Demonstration
- Illini Summer Academies
- Local cooking / baking challenges / cook-offs
- Community-wide food festivals
- Local grocery store cook-offs or demonstrations



### Careers for People Interested in Cooking

|                        |                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Chef                   | Recipe Developer          |
| Food Scientist         | Taste Tester              |
| Research & Development | Restaurant Owner          |
| Food Stylist           | Food & Nutrition Educator |
| Registered Dietitian   |                           |
| Nutritionist           |                           |

## Start a Conversation

What are the different styles of knives and what are their functions?

Why is yeast needed in certain breads?

Besides steaming, what other methods could you use to prepare green beans?

Are you passionate about food? What careers could you pursue that channel that passion?

Is there an old recipe you want to try from your ancestors?

What new food do you want to try? What is that food's nutritional value?

## Want to learn more?

[go.illinois.edu/4Hcooking](http://go.illinois.edu/4Hcooking)

## Explore more at Illinois 4-H!

[4-H.extension.illinois.edu](http://4-H.extension.illinois.edu)



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