Exploring 4-H Food Science
Spark Activity: Extra-Sweet Coffee Can Ice Cream

Food science is understanding how to put together the correct ingredients with the correct conditions to create a tasty new food... like ice cream. Follow this simple recipe to make a sweet treat!

**Materials:**
1/2 cup half and half or whipping cream, 1/2 Tbsp. brown sugar, 1 tsp. vanilla, 2 quart-sized zipper-lock bags, empty coffee can (or 1 gallon-size zipper-lock freezer bag), ice, rock salt

**Experiment Instructions:**
1. Fill the coffee can about half full with crushed ice and add about 1/3 cup rock salt to the ice. Put the lid on the coffee can and shake the ice and salt for about five minutes. You may need to wear your gloves or wrap the can in a towel because the temperature of the ice and salt will drop down to about 14º F.
2. Use a 1-quart size, zipper-lock bag to mix the following ingredients: 1/2 cup of half & half, 1/2 tablespoon brown sugar, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract (optional for flavor).
3. Seal the bag tightly, allowing as little air to remain in the bag as possible. Then double-bag into the second bag, again pressing out as much air as possible. Too much trapped air may cause a bag to break open and using two bags decreases the risk of salt and ice leaking into the ice cream.
4. Place the two bags inside the coffee can with the ice and securely put the lid on top.
5. Find a friend or family member and take turns shaking your can. The more energy you put into it, the sooner you’ll have ice cream. Your ice cream should be ready after about 15-20 minutes. Once mixed, remove the inner bags from the can and rinse them well with water. You don’t want any salt water accidentally getting into your ice cream. Enjoy!

Try this again, experimenting with a new ingredient - a different “milk,” a different sweetener or a different flavor.

4-H Project Levels and Goals

**Beginner**
- Learn about leavening agents
- Conduct food experiments
- Explore mixing methods
- Learn how to make soft pretzels and muffins
- Learn about yeast
- Learn why and how holes develop in Swiss cheese; compare to cheddar
- Learn about food spoilage
- Learn parts of an egg

**Intermediate**
- Learn about protein coagulation
- Learn egg properties and functions
- Prepare a chocolate soufflé
- Make fresh cheese
- Learn how to cook fruit
- Prepare cut produce to delay browning
- Learn about gluten development in baked goods

**Advanced**
- Explore food science careers
- Learn about flavor principles
- Learn how to make a new beverage – from product formulation to labeling
- Learn about sugar crystallization and caramelization
- Learn about fermented foods
- Learn about osmosis and diffusion in food preparation
Put Your Project Into Action

Show Your Skills
• Create a display on how to cut fresh produce to prevent browning
• Compare different types of leavening agents used in baking and why different types are used
• Compare types of cheese and how they are made
• Demonstrate various egg properties and purpose of each in food preparation

Service and Leadership
• Bake homemade muffins; donate to a homeless shelter
• Volunteer for a free community mealsite to prepare and serve fresh fruits and vegetables using your knowledge to prevent browning in freshly cut produce
• Teach a food science technique or concept to fellow club members
• Teach a county 4-H food science workshop

Entrepreneurship
• Invent your own beverage; name and market your new product

Technology Connection
• Shadow a Quality Assurance professional at a local dairy, market or food production operation; ask what technology they use to do their job well
• Learn more about the equipment used

Connecting with a Mentor
• Local baker
• Family or friend working in the field
• Higher education facility that offers culinary arts
• Professional associations and organizations like Registered Dietitians locally or Les Dames d’Escoffier in Chicago

Events
• 4-H General Project Show
• Illini Summer Academies
• Illinois 4-H Food Advocacy Team
• Local / regional cooking or baking competitions
• Tour a food factory

Start a Conversation
What do you already know about preparing food safely?
What do you think will happen if we don’t use baking powder in our muffin recipe?
What’s the difference between using fresh produce vs. frozen or canned produce for our recipe?

Want to learn more?
go.illinois.edu/4Hfoodscienceproject

Explore more at Illinois 4-H!
4-H.extension.illinois.edu