

Colorado State Fair 2026

4-H Contest Requirements



2026 COLORADO STATE FAIR

4-H CONTEST REQUIREMENTS

The entry deadline is **Thursday, August 13, unless otherwise indicated. No late entries will be accepted.**

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Contest Superintendents

Vanessa Tranel	Cake Decorating Contest Superintendent
Marlena Griesse	Cat Show Superintendent
Julia Hurdelbrink	Creative Cooks Contest Superintendent
Shaylen Florez.....	Creative Cooks Contest Asst. Superintendent
Dawn Roberge.....	Public Presentations Superintendent
Reggie Foster.....	Public Presentations Assist. Superintendent
Kim Eastwood	Fashion Revue Superintendent
Katie Seelhoff	Fashion Revue Assistant Superintendent
Thomas Kindvall.....	Rocket Fly Day Superintendent
Katie Seelhoff	Rocket Fly Day Assistant Superintendent
Lisa Sholten	Extension State 4-H Specialist

Additional Judging and Project Information

Score sheets and the Colorado State 4-H Exhibit Requirements are available at: <https://co4h.colostate.edu/4-h-resources/>.

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Cake Decorating Contest

Vanessa Tranel, Superintendent
vltranel@ncsu.edu

Contest date: Sunday, August 30

Participant's Entry Fee: \$15 payable to the county offices with contestant's registration materials.

Registration Deadline: August 13

Place: The contest is held in the 4-H Exhibit Building on the State Fairgrounds.

Gate Admission: Counties are responsible for ordering gate passes from the Colorado State Fair and distributing them to the individuals who will be Cake Decorating contestants. The Superintendent will not be sending passes. Parking is not available on the fairgrounds.

Lodging: Lodging is available at the Colorado State Fair/4-H Growing Minds Dormitories (pre-registration required by contacting the State 4-H Office).

Each county office will issue **one check** (or internal transfer) payable to **CSU Extension for county entry total.**

Mail by September 30 to:

CSU Extension, State 4-H Office
Attn: State Fair Contests
Campus Delivery 4045
Fort Collins, CO 80523-4045

RULES:

1. This contest will be open to 4-H members 8 to 18 years of age.
2. Members must be enrolled in the project unit in which they are participating.
3. Counties may enter one contestant in each division for a maximum of three contestants in each unit. The following divisions will be judged in each unit:

<u>Units 1-6</u>	<u>Units 7-9</u>	<u>Unit 10-11</u>
Junior 8-10	Intermediate 11-13	SENIORS ONLY
Intermediate 11-13	Senior 14-18	
Senior 14-18		
4. Judging will be done by units.
5. Project exhibit rules apply to this contest. All contestants in a unit will work at the same time. Judges will circulate to observe methods used.
6. All contestants must bring:
 - Cake or cake forms for decorating.
 - All equipment and materials required to decorate a cake.
 - Frosting needed (colored and ready to use).
7. The frosting must be applied as part of the contest in Units 1 through 7. Units 9 and 10 may frost the cake prior to the contest. For Unit 8 the contestants will need to cover the cake with fondant as a part of the contest. Contestants will be responsible for planning a design that can be completed in the time allowed.



8. Lower Units (1-3) in Cake Decorating should not use Royal Icing or Rolled Fondant as the base frosting. **NO fondant, gum paste, or marzipan decorations** can be used in **Units 1, 2, or 3**. Only required tip work can be used in units 2 and 3. **No fondant, gum paste, or marzipan** may be used for decorations or base icing on the cake.
9. No cell phones are allowed during judging.
10. No parents are allowed in the kitchen area before or during the judging.

UNIT 1 — EDIBLE — 30 MINUTES

Class 100 Jr.
Class 101 Int.
Class 102 Sr.

- A. Frost single-layer 8- or 9- or 10-inch round or square or 9" x 13 **real** cake.
- B. Cake may be crumb-frosted before, but base frosting must be applied as part of the contest.
- C. Apply design using edible materials (no tips).
- D. One fourth of the top of the cake should be visible to show smooth base.
- E. **No fondant, gum paste, or marzipan** may be used for decorations or base icing on the cake. **No royal icing** can be used as icing or decorations. No non-edible material can be used in units 1-6.
- F. Bottom base border required.
- G. Clean up area.

UNIT 2 — SINGLE LAYERED — 1 HOUR

Class 103 Jr.
Class 104 Int.
Class 105 Sr.

- A. Frost single-layer 8" or 9" or 10" round or square or 9" x 13" rectangle **real** cake for this unit.
- B. Cake may be crumb-frosted before, but base frosting must be applied as part of the contest.
- C. Decorate the real cake using a leaf tip, star tip and round tip only. (No fondant, gum paste, marzipan, or royal icing may be used as icing or decorations on the cake.) Only required tip work can be used in Unit 2.
- D. One fourth of the top of cake should be visible to show smooth base.
- E. Bottom base border is required.
- F. Only edible materials may be used. No non-edible material can be used in units 1-6.
- G. No flowers made on a flower nail or materials other than frosting in decorations.
- H. Clean up area.

UNIT 3 — TWO LAYERED — 1 HOUR

Class 106 Jr.
Class 107 Int.
Class 108 Sr.

- A. Frost two-layered **real** cake (8" or 9" or 10" round or square).
- B. Cake may be crumb-frosted before, but base frosting must be applied as part of the contest.
- C. One fourth of the top of the cake should be visible to show smooth base.
- D. Decorate cake using 3-5 different types of tips. The following tips must be used:
 - Leaf tip
 - Round tip
 - Star tip
 - You may also use other tips if you so choose
- E. No non-edible material can be used in units 1-6.

- F. No fondant, gum paste, marzipan, or royal icing may be used.
- G. Side trim is required. Side trim is uniformly placed icing decoration.
- H. Bottom base border is required.
- I. Spatula, brush striping and figure piping are optional.
- J. No flowers made on a flower nail or materials other than frosting in decorations.
- K. Clean up area.

UNIT 4 — CHARACTER CAKES — 1 HOUR

Class 109 Jr.
 Class 110 Int.
 Class 111 Sr.

- A. One decorated **real** character pan cake (an entire cake which resembles the shape of a character or object made without cutting or stacking, other than a classic square, round, oblong, heart, hexagon, oval or petal cake shape). Three-dimensional cakes are acceptable.
- B. Cake may be crumb frosted before contest.
- C. Decorate cake using primarily the star tip or other tips appropriate to the design. Fondant, gum paste, marzipan or royal icing can be used only for decorations. No non-edible material can be used in Units 1-6.
- D. Bottom base border is required for any smooth icing. Defined borders should be included if it finishes the overall aesthetic of the character. Otherwise, all tip work should be completed to the cake board.
- E. Clean up area.

UNIT 5 — SMALL TREATS — 1 HOUR

Choose **one** of the following categories:

- Themed Cupcakes or
- Stacked Cupcakes or
- Character Cupcakes

Class 112 Jr.
 Class 113 Int.
 Class 114 Sr.

THEMED CUPCAKES

- A. Decorate a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 6 regular size (2 ¾ inches) cupcakes in liners using frosting and edible materials.
- B. Fondant, gum paste, marzipan, and royal icing can be used only for decorations.
- C. Cupcakes should be of a similar design or theme (themed cupcakes mean that there is a central idea between all the cupcakes; for example: animal theme, flower theme, Disney characters, cupcakes do not have to be all the same.)
- D. Frosting must cover the cupcake and provide a base for decorations.
- E. No non-edible materials can be used in Units 1-6.
- F. Cupcakes can be displayed in a 6-cup muffin tin or in foil liners on sturdy paper/plastic plate.
- G. Clean up area.

STACKED CUPCAKES

- A. Decorate a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 8 cupcakes creating one design or theme where cupcakes are stacked on top of each other and decorated using frosting and edible materials. (Experiment with using mini cupcakes and regular sized cupcakes when stacking.) Non-visible supports can be used to hold stacked cupcakes.
- B. Fondant, gum paste, marzipan, and royal icing can be used only for decorations.
- C. Frosting must cover the cupcake and provide a base for decorations.
- D. Cupcakes (at least 2 and not more than 4) stacked cupcakes should be secured with frosting on a display board.
- E. Spatula painting and brush striping are optional.

- F. No non-edible material can be used in Units 1-6.
- G. Clean up area.

CHARACTER CUPCAKES

- A. Decorate and develop a character or design using multiple cupcakes. Regular or mini-sized cupcakes or a combination may be used to create a character. Character cupcakes are multiple **individually** decorated cupcakes that come together to create the character (for example: cupcakes that create an alligator or scarecrow etc.).
- B. The design should be one dimension – no stacking.
- C. Decorate using frosting and edible materials.
- D. Frosting must cover the cupcake and provide a base for decorations.
- E. Fondant, gum paste, marzipan, and royal icing can be used only for decorations. No non-edible materials can be used in units 1-6.
- F. Cupcake character must be displayed on one cake board with a maximum size of 9" x13" or 14" round.
- G. Clean up area.

UNIT 5 — SMALL TREATS — 1 HOUR

Choose **one** of the following categories:

- Themed Cookies
- Stacked Cookies

Class 115 Jr.

Class 116 Int.

Class 117 Sr.

UNIT 5 — DECORATED THEMED COOKIES

- A. Decorate a minimum of 3 and maximum of 6 regular size (3") cookies. Cookies should be of a similar design or theme.
- B. Decorate using frosting and edible materials.
- C. Fondant, gum paste, marzipan, and royal icing can be used only for decorations. No non-edible materials can be used in units 1-6.
- D. Cookies should be displayed on a 12" disposable platter.
- E. Clean up area.

UNIT 5 — DECORATED STACKED COOKIES

- A. Decorate a minimum of 6" in height and maximum of 12" in height cookies creating one design or theme where cookies are stacked on top of each other.
- B. Decorate using frosting and edible materials.
- C. Frosting must cover the cookie and provide a base for decorations.
- D. Fondant, gum paste, marzipan, and royal icing can be used only for decorations. No non-edible materials can be used in units 1-6.
- E. Cookies should be secured to a sturdy covered board for display not to exceed 12" x 12".
- F. Clean up area.

UNIT 6 — CUT-UP CAKES — 1 HOUR

Class 118 Jr.

Class 119 Int.

Class 120 Sr.

- A. One decorated cut-up cake using **three different types** of decorator tips (not different sizes of the same tips) using only **edible materials**. Non-edible internal supports are allowed but must not show.
- B. No non-edible material can be used in units 1-6.
- C. The member must provide a diagram or pattern of how the cake was cut.
- D. Pieces may be cut, put together, and crumb-frosted prior to contest.

- E. Bottom base border is required.
- F. Clean up area.

UNIT 7 — FLAT SURFACE AND NAIL FLOWERS — 1 HOUR

Class 121 Int.
Class 122 Sr.

- A. Two-layered 8", 9" or 10" cake or cake form. Contestant may be asked to make a flower in front of the judge.
- B. Cake may be crumb-frosted before, but base frosting must be applied as part of the contest.
- C. Flowers may be made prior to the contest.
- D. Use only edible materials except stamens on flowers. Stamens may be purchased or hand-made.
- E. No fondant, gum paste, marzipan, or royal icing.
- F. Decorate cake using a minimum of:
 - One flat surface flower
 - One flower made on a flat flower nail
 - One border
 - **One side trim is required**
 - Texturing is optional
 - No fondant, gum paste, marzipan, or royal icing
- G. Side trim and bottom base border are required.
- H. Clean up area.

UNIT 8 — FONDANT — 1 HOUR

Class 123 Int.
Class 124 Sr.

- A. Decorate one two-layered cake or cake form, 8", 9" or 10" round or square.
- B. Cake can be prepared for fondant.
- C. Cake must be covered in fondant as part of the contest.
- D. Decorate using skills learned from Units 3-7 and fondant and gum paste decorations.
- E. Bottom base border is required.
- F. Clean up area.

UNIT 9 — LILY FLOWERS — 1 HOUR

Class 125 Int.
Class 126 Sr.

- A. One decorated two-layered 8", 9", 10" cake or cake form.
- B. Completely decorate the cake using:
 - **Flower made on a lily-flower nail is required**
 - **Spatula painting, brush embroidery, and texturing**
 Contestant may be asked to make a flower in front of the judge.
- C. Cake may be frosted in advance or as part of the contest.
- D. Bottom base border is required.
- E. Clean up area.

UNIT 10 — TIERED CAKES — SENIORS ONLY — 1 ½ HOURS

Class 127 Sr.

- A. Decorate one cake or cake form of three or more tiers of graduated sizes, using supports.
- B. Cakes may be frosted in advance and supports placed.
- C. Cake should be assembled and decorated as part of the contest.
- D. Decorate cake using:

- Supports and separator plates
 - Pillars (optional)
 - Flowers, borders, side trim as desired
- E. Bottom base border is required.
- F. Clean up area.

UNIT 11 — MOLDS — SENIORS ONLY — 1 HOUR

Class 128 Sr.

- A. An edible molded or shaped object of any size or shape must be used.
- B. The contestant may decorate a free-standing molded or shaped object as part of the contest or may use a molded object as part of a cake design. If using a cake, the cake may be frosted in advance or as part of the contest.
- C. Molding may be done in advance, but decoration should be applied as part of the contest.
- D. Contestant should explain to the judge how the molding or shaping was done. Tell about the material used, whether ingredients were difficult to secure, how fast the material sets up, etc. If possible, demonstrate shaping of the selected material. Show the molds used.
- E. Clean up area.

AWARDS

- Contestants are placed in blue, red, and white groups.
- A Champion and Reserve Champion may be named in each division.
- A Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion junior, intermediate, and senior contestant may be named overall.

Cat Show

Marlena Griesse, Superintendent
marlena.griesse@colostate.edu

Saturday, September 5: Showmanship
 Conformation
 Cage Decorating

Check-in: 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM
 Cat Show starts at 1:00 PM on Saturday, **September 5.**

Participant's Entry Fee: \$20 per 4-H member

Registration Deadline: August **13**

Each county office will issue **one check** (or internal transfer) payable to CSU Extension for county entry total.

Mail by September 30 to:
 CSU Extension, State 4-H Office
 Attn: State Fair Contests
 Campus Delivery 4045
 Fort Collins, CO 80523-4045

No entries at the contest will be accepted.



All 4-H Cat ID Forms (including health certificates) are to be on 4-H Online by May 1st. The county will complete the online portion of the registration process on behalf of its participants.

Passes to enter the fairgrounds on the day you are showing and the day you set up your cage should be provided by your local 4-H Extension Agent in your local Extension Office. No passes will be sent out by the superintendents of these contests.

The State Fair Cat Show is a 4-H show. As such, 4-H youth development principles are of primary importance.

GENERAL CONTEST RULES:

1. **The Cat Show will be held Saturday, September 5, 2026.** It will be held at the Colorado State Fair 4-H Auditorium stage. Check-in for cats will be from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM on Saturday, September 5, and the show will begin at 1:00 PM.
2. Dates of approved current and effective vaccination of the cat for rabies and FVRCP (feline viral rhinotracheitis, calicivirus and panleukopenia/distemper) must be provided on the State 4-H Cat ID Form. It is highly recommended that you have your cat(s) tested and vaccinated for Feline Leukemia and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus. While this is not mandatory, it is recommended for the health of your cat. If you have a cat that has tested positive for FELV and/or FIN, please alert the show superintendent so that appropriate precautions can be taken. 4-H members vaccinating their own cats must provide proof by including a statement from their vet or by including the vaccination labels. A rabies vaccination is federally mandated to be given by a veterinarian ONLY. This vaccination must be current and include a veterinarian's signature.

Each entrant is required to complete the **State 4-H Cat Identification on 4-H Online** and have it on file in their Extension Office by **May 1st**. This form will be used at the State Fair Cat Show so make sure that all 4-H Cat members have completed this Cat ID.

3. Proof of Rabies vaccination must come from a licensed veterinarian, or the cat is not legally considered vaccinated. If the member's cat receives rabies immunizations which are given by anyone who is not a Colorado State licensed veterinarian, these immunizations will not be recognized by law should the cat bite someone.
4. State Fair 4-H Cat Show officials and/or staff can and will dismiss any entrant or his/her family from the show for any mistreatment of cats entered in this show. If a question should arise as to what constitutes "mistreatment," State 4-H staff and/or officials will meet to decide appropriate action in each case.
5. Any negative behavior on the part of the exhibitor, family members or leaders directed toward any official will result in disqualification and awards forfeited. If there is a question as to the rules or the judging of a class, adult family members or leaders must approach the Superintendent of that division and **not the judge**. The Superintendents will then take the question to the judge if warranted.
6. Protests must be submitted in writing and presented to the superintendent(s) within 24 hours after judging is announced. Protests will be handled first by the superintendent(s) and then reviewed by State 4-H Office personnel. A fee of \$50 must accompany any protest. If the protest is upheld, the fee will be returned. If the protest is not upheld, the fee will be kept and deposited into the State Cat Project Fund.
7. Show management will have final decision authority. If needed, show management may request assistance with arbitration from a committee comprised of the show superintendents, the judge (if willing), and the leader and/or agent from county involved (if present).
8. **Colorado State 4-H Dress Code**

This dress code is to be followed by all Junior, Intermediate, and Senior 4-H members, as well as adult leaders, advisors, and chaperones at all Colorado State 4-H sponsored events including but not limited to the Colorado State Fair 4-H Cat Show. Deviations from the dress code will result in a request to change. This dress code is not subject to personal interpretation.

Exhibitors should wear clean, simple, neat clothing. Dress shirts (with collars) or blouses are preferable. Exhibitors must wear pants and close-toed shoes for protection.

9. The general age groups for Cat Project are:
Junior 8-10 years old
Intermediate 11-13 years old
Senior 14-18 years old
Age is determined by the member's age as of December 31 of the current 4-H year.
10. All cats must be brought to the show in a travel carrier, and the carrier must stay near the showing area all times. The carrier should have a towel or blanket in the bottom for traction for the cat.
11. A display cage will be provided at the show for each cat.
12. Exhibitors are to provide their animals with a litter box, litter, food, and water. Additionally, they must provide a bottom liner such as a blanket or a rug to provide traction for the cat. Exhibitors should also have a blanket or some sort of cloth to cover the exterior of the cage when necessary. The cage should be clean and orderly always. Members are invited to decorate their cages as well, and awards will be given for decorations. (See details below).
13. All cats must be on a halter and leash when outside of the cage. The simple, thin, nylon harnesses tend to work best.
14. No cats are allowed beyond the immediate vicinity of the 4-H Auditorium.
15. Each 4-H exhibitor is responsible for preparing and showing his/her own cat(s). Each exhibitor must bring his/her own cat to the judging table. Only 4-H members may show cats at the judging table. All exhibitors are expected to stay in the area with their cats during judging. If a 4-H cat is not on the judging table at the time the class is judged, it will not be judged. Communicate any potential schedule conflicts with other 4-H activities with the superintendent in advance of the show.
16. A cat that becomes difficult to handle may be judged in the cage at the judge's discretion, with A LOSS OF 5 POINTS in showmanship.
17. Overall placing scores, prizes, and score sheets will be given out at the day's closing ceremony.

EXHIBITOR ELIGIBILITY RULES:

1. Member must be enrolled in the 4-H Cat Project.
2. The member must own his/her project cat individually or in partnership with immediate family members or guardians during the complete duration of the project year. No leased cats will be allowed to show at State Fair. If requested the member must have proof of ownership of the cat at the time of entry and provide that to the superintendents. The member must provide majority of care for the cat(s).
3. Any member exhibiting his/her cat at the State Fair 4-H Cat Show must be an official representative of his/her county.
4. An acceptable record book must be done and meet all guidelines required by his/her county for State Fair qualification.

CAT ELIGIBILITY RULES:

1. Cats may be purebred or household pets. Cats do not need to be registered or pedigreed to enter the 4-H Cat Show.
2. It is recommended that all 4-H cats, other than pedigreed breeding animals, be neutered or spayed.
3. No obviously pregnant or lactating queens will be allowed to compete in any classes at the State Fair.
4. No kittens under four months old will be allowed to show.
5. Each cat exhibited will be examined at check-in. Cats must be clean and in good health (clear eyes and nose, etc.) and free from injury or pain. Cats must be free of fleas, ticks, ear mites, worms, other parasites, and diseases. Any cat not meeting these health requirements will not be judged and will be asked to leave the show immediately. The superintendent reserves the right to not allow cats to show that are believed to be a health threat to other animals.
6. All cats must have their front and rear claws clipped for the safety of the 4-Her and judge.

CAGE DECORATING:

Members are encouraged to decorate their cat's cage. Cages will be judged by the following classes:

Class 201 Junior Cage Decorating

This class is for members who are 8–10 years old as of December 31 of the previous year.

Class 202 Intermediate Cage Decorating

This class is for members who are 11–13 years old as of December 31 of the previous year.

Class 203 Senior Cage Decorating

This class is for members who are 14–18 years old as of December 31 of the previous year.

CONFORMATION:

Cats are judged on physical condition, cleanliness, temperament, and presentation, not on specific breed standards (except in the purebred class).

Each youth may show an unlimited number of cats; however, each cat can only be shown in one class. (For example, a cat shown in the purebred class cannot also be shown in the DSH class). Classes are as follows, but may be further divided at the superintendent's discretion:

Class 204 Purebred Conformation

This class is for purebred cats.

Class 205 Domestic Short Hair Conformation

This class is for cats of unknown breed who are short haired (DSH).

Class 206 Domestic Long Hair Conformation

This class is for cats of unknown breed who are long haired (DLH).

Conformation Score Sheets can be found at:

<https://co4h.colostate.edu/4h-proj-material/cat-score-sheets/>

SHOWMANSHIP:

Showmanship is mandatory. All 4-H cat show exhibitors are required to show **ONE** cat in showmanship. Exhibitors must prepare and show their own cats. Exhibitors will be judged on their handling of the cat from its cage to the judge's table. They will also be expected to answer questions as to breed, age, type and date of immunizations, sex, and general knowledge of the cat. Resources include the following 4-H

manuals: Junior – *Purr-fect Pals*; Intermediate – *Purr-fect Pals* and *Climbing Up*; Senior – *Purr-fect Pals*, *Climbing Up*, and *Leaping Forward*.

Class 207 Junior Showmanship

This class is for members who are 8–10 years old as of December 31 of the previous year.

Class 208 Intermediate Showmanship

This class is for members who are 11–13 years old as of December 31 of the previous year.

Class 209 Senior Showmanship

This class is for members who are 14–18 years old as of December 31 of the previous year.

Showmanship Score Sheets can be found at:

<https://co4h.colostate.edu/4h-proj-material/cat-score-sheets/>



Creative Cooks Contest

Julia Hurdelbrink, Superintendent jhurdelbrink@adamscountyco.gov
Shaylen Florez, Assistant Superintendent sflorez@arapahoe.gov

Contest date: Saturday, August 29

Location: Colorado State Fair Grounds, 4-H Exhibit Building

Check-In: West door of the 4-H Exhibit Building



Juniors will compete first, followed by their awards, then Intermediates, followed by their awards, and then Seniors, followed by their awards.

A tentative schedule will be emailed to all contestants during the week prior to the contest.

Registration Deadline:

Register in FairEntry by August 13

Recipes **must** be included with entries. Recipes not received by **August 13** will not be included in the Creative Cooks cookbook.

Each county office will issue **one check** (or internal transfer) payable to **CSU Extension for county entry total**.

Mail by September 30 to:

CSU Extension, State 4-H Office
Attn: State Fair Contests
Campus Delivery 4045
Fort Collins, CO 80523-4045

Participant's Entry Fee: \$15, which includes one cookbook on a jump drive.

Eligibility:

Contestants must be regularly enrolled 4-H members but do not have to be enrolled in a 4-H Foods project.

Counties may enter one entry in each age division as listed for a maximum of 12 entries.

Divisions

Juniors: 8-10 years of age

Class 300 Individual

Class 301 Team

Class 302 Colorado Specialty Individual

Class 303 Colorado Specialty Team

Intermediates: 11-13 years of age

Class 304 Individual

Class 305 Team

Class 306 Colorado Specialty Individual

Class 307 Colorado Specialty Team

Seniors: 14-18 years of age

Class 308 Individual

Class 309 Team

Class 310 Colorado Specialty Individual

Class 311 Colorado Specialty Team

Age divisions are determined by age as of December 31 of the previous year.

A team shall consist of two 4-H members. They may be from different age divisions, but they must compete in the age division of the oldest team member.

Contestants may enter as an individual or as a member of a team, but not both. Contestants participating in other contests may still participate in Creative Cooks if they can arrange to be available for the judging period for their age group and before the judges begin final consultations.

Criteria – Contestant/Team will:

1. Plan a menu for a meal (for example, but not limited to, breakfast, brunch, lunch, dinner, barbecue, picnic, high tea, campout, sports game, holiday, or birthday party).
2. Create a table or serving display around a theme, occasion, or activity and your meal. The display must include and involve the following:
 - Fit into the allowed a 48" square for a display area. All props must fit within the designated space.
 - Contestant(s) provides a card table if needed; must fit within 48" square.
 - One place setting appropriate for the meal planned.
 - A menu displayed on any stiff medium (foam board, tile, chalk board, framed, etc.) detailing the entire menu (no larger than 8-1/2"x11"). It is helpful if the menu can stand alone.
 - Centerpiece. No food, real or artificial, will be used as a centerpiece or part of a centerpiece.
 - Appropriate serving dishes and utensils.
3. Prepare, bring, and display one serving of a food item from the menu. This display will show how you would serve this dish, including garnishes, etc.
Guidelines:
 - No commercially prepared food is accepted.
 - Juniors and Intermediates should not prepare deep fat fried foods due to safety concerns.
 - Display the food prepared on the proper plate or bowl on your table setting.
 - Adults or other youth (not part of the registered team) cannot help contestant(s) do prep work in the contest kitchen or set up the display. To do so may disqualify the member from the contest or forfeit all awards. They may help transport heavy or breakable items, boxes, etc. as needed.
 - Use of garnish is encouraged.
 - Cook, bake, prep food at home as much as possible.
 - See contest kitchen use below.
4. Present your display and food item to a judge. Judge(s) briefly interview participants regarding exhibits and what they have learned in preparing the exhibit. The participant should not begin or end with a prepared speech or demonstration without being asked to by the judge(s).
5. Serve your prepared food item to the judge(s).
Guidelines:
 - Use a separate sample for your food kept at your display table. Do not use your displayed serving for the judge's sample.
 - Serve the judges sample using disposable dishes and utensils. Do not use any food, dishes, or utensils from your display.
 - Use disposable plastic gloves if hands are going to touch the food while serving the judge.
 - Do not use plastic gloves throughout your set up and judging process. They do not remain sanitary for very long.
 - Have a copy of the recipe and be ready to show to the judge if requested.

Food Safety and Contest Kitchen Use:

1. All food used for Creative Cooks should be brought from home unless you choose to purchase perishable items in Pueblo.
2. When selecting your recipe and prepared item, consider how the item will be transported to the State Fair safely (kept at safe temperatures) and attractively displayed. Judges may refuse to sample any food items they feel are unsafe to eat.
3. The kitchen at the Colorado State Fair is extremely limited so do as much food preparation as possible at home. A microwave is available to be used for warming only. Electrical outlets are available to plug in slow cookers, etc. to keep food at correct temperatures.
4. Leave the kitchen clean when finished.

Judging will be based on:

- A. Exhibitor — well groomed; understands meal planning
- B. Menu — balanced for flavor, color, texture, shape, and nutrition
- C. Prepared dish — appearance, flavor, and quality
- D. Table Setting — attractive; suitable for meal
- E. Knowledge of nutrition
- F. Specialty food knowledge
- G. Food safety
- H. Creativity

Colorado Specialty Foods Category:

1. Contestants entered in this category or classes must use the 2026 designated food or ingredient in their Creative Cooks exhibit. The product must be a major ingredient in the recipe to qualify for this division. Ingredients such as oil used to brown meat, as a garnish, or a spice or herb in the recipe do not qualify as a major ingredient.
2. Members entered in this category must also have some general knowledge beyond nutrition and food safety about this year's contest ingredient or food.

See the *Colorado Specialty Foods Category Supplement* for rules, guidelines, and 2026 designated ingredient. Adults or other youth (not part of the registered team) cannot help contestant do prep work in the kitchen or set up display. To do so may forfeit all awards won. They may help transport heavy or breakable items, boxes, etc., as needed.

NOTE: Juniors and Intermediates are not to prepare deep fat fried foods due to safety concerns.

2026 Colorado Specialty Foods Category

1. Members entering this category or classes must use the 2026 designated food or ingredient in their Creative Cooks exhibit. The product must be a **major** ingredient in the recipe to qualify for this division. Ingredients such as oil used to brown meat, as a garnish, or in a small amount in the recipe do not qualify as a major ingredient.

The 2026 Contest Ingredient is Chile Peppers!

Chile peppers are the spicy fruit of plants in the *Capsicum* genus, native to the Americas and cultivated globally for their use in cooking, medicine, and as a spice. Their heat comes from a compound called capsaicin, which is concentrated in the white membrane where the seeds are located, not the seeds themselves. These peppers are rich in vitamins and minerals and linked to several health benefits.

Colorado is known for its *Pueblo chile*, a specific variety of green chile with a spicy flavor. The Pueblo Chile is a specialty pepper grown only in Pueblo, Colorado where the unique growing conditions in Southeastern Colorado render some of the best chile available. Hot, dry, sunny summer days, combined with our rich soils and pure Colorado water yield some of the hottest and most flavorful chilies. Pueblo chile is a meatier and thicker pepper.

NOTE → Although dried, crushed, ground chile spices may be a major flavor ingredient they should not be considered a major ingredient for the contest item. Mild or sweet bell peppers do not fit this specialty category.

2. Members entered in this category must also have some general knowledge beyond nutrition and food safety about this year's contest ingredient or food. The list below is a sample of the type of information that they should discover about the food. The judge might ask one or two general questions appropriate to each age division.

- Locations in Colorado where ingredient is grown/raised
- Part of the country or world where it is grown/raised other times of the year
- Varieties of food, ingredient, crop
- Unique production or harvest methods
- Plant type or animal origin
- Specific cuisines or cultures that use a lot of this ingredient
- The "specialness" of the ingredient—may be flavor, nutritional or diet value, color, texture, trendiness, cost
- Special handling or preparing techniques
- Other uses for the product
- Any other knowledge or interesting facts members may discover



Members do not need to know all of the above. The questions should serve as a guide for possible research searches.

3. Examples of contest food items and resources for the 2026 Contest Ingredient – Chile Peppers:

Chile Relleno
Green Chile Corn Bread
Candied Chiles

Chile Grilled Cheese
Stuffed Chile Peppers
And so much more!!

Resources:

Pueblo Chile

<https://pueblochile.org/>

Chili Pepper Fun Facts – Twisted Taco

<https://www.twistedtaco.com/fun-chili-pepper-facts>

How Chili Peppers Work

<https://home.howstuffworks.com/chili-peppers.htm>

Digital Photo Contest

This contest is a state contest. 4-H members do not need to qualify at their county fairs to enter. The contest will open on May 1st and close on July 17th.

Submit all entries to Colorado 4-H State Fair using the FairEntry system. Instructions are located at: co4h.colostate.edu/statefair/4-HDigitalContest.pdf.

Classes:

4-H in Action

Class 400 4-H in Action Jr.
Class 401 4-H in Action Int.
Class 402 4-H in Action Sr.

Animals/Insects

Class 403 Animals/Insects Jr.
Class 404 Animals/Insects Int.
Class 405 Animals /Insects Sr.

Architecture

Class 406 Architecture Jr.
Class 407 Architecture Int.
Class 408 Architecture Sr.

Landscape

Class 409 Landscape Jr.
Class 410 Landscape Int.
Class 411 Landscape Sr.

People

Class 412 People Jr.
Class 413 People Int.
Class 414 People Sr.

Plant Life

Class 415 Plant Life Jr.
Class 416 Plant Life Int.
Class 417 Plant Life Sr.

Enhanced Photos (for photos edited with Photoshop, Lightroom, or Artificial Intelligence applications, etc.)

Class 418 Enhanced Jr.
Class 419 Enhanced Int.
Class 420 Enhanced Sr.

GENERAL CONTEST RULES:

1. This contest is open to (and only to) all Colorado 4-H members ages 8-18. Participation is NOT limited to those 4-H members enrolled in photography. This contest is strictly a state contest, which means that the 4-H member does not have to qualify at the county level to enter.
2. 4-H members will upload their photo directly into the correct class in FairEntry.



2025 Senior Grand Champion Photo by Braylon Bruns

3. All entry photos must have been taken by the 4-H member submitting the entry during the contest year.
4. Any photos using photo editing tools, such as Photoshop, Lightroom, or Artificial Intelligence applications to enhance or edit the photo must be entered in the Enhanced class. Any photo submitted in another class deemed by the judges to have used photo editing tools will be moved into the Enhanced class.
5. 4-H members may submit up to six entries. However, each entry must be in a different class. Photos cannot be dually entered in more than one class.
6. Photos may be in color or black-and-white. Photos submitted must be 8" x 10".



2025 Intermediate Grand Champion Photo
by Wyatt Pieken



2025 Junior Grand Champion Photo
by Joslyn Pieken

Fashion Revue Contest

Kim Eastwood, Superintendent

keastwood@weldgov.com

Katie Seelhoff, Assistant Superintendent

Katie.Seelhoff@colostate.edu

Class 600 Fashion Revue

Judging Guide for Fashion Revue

PREPARATION

- Design and style
- Choice of fabric and color
- Overall appearance of garment
- Accessories
- Grooming

PRESENTATION

- Appropriate for garment style
- Poise/Posture
- Use of space and creativity
- Attitude and enthusiasm

Contest Date: Saturday, August 22, 2026

Public Style Show: 5:00 pm

Contest Location: Hoag Hall, CSU Pueblo, 2200 Bonforte Blvd, Pueblo, CO 81001

Participant's Entry Fee: \$45 payable to the county offices with registration materials

County Registration Deadline: Counties need to register their participants online by August 13.

For counties with late county contests, please contact the State 4-H Office.

Each county office will issue **one check** (or internal transfer) payable to CSU Extension for county entry total.

Mail by September 30 to:

CSU Extension, State 4-H Office

Attn: State Fair Contests

Campus Delivery 4045

Fort Collins, CO 80523-4045

No entries at the contest will be accepted.

Participants must upload their photo and narration in FairEntry by **August 13.**

1. Contestants – Each county may send up to three representatives. Contestants must model a **garment**, not accessories, made in Clothing Construction, Heritage Arts, Leathercraft or Artistic Clothing, or a purchased garment in the Clothing Buymanship project. **Each contestant may model only one outfit.** Contestants must be a senior 4-H member to participate in the State 4-H Fashion Revue.



2. Judging Time – Contestants will be judged either morning or afternoon. A judging list that tells which session a contestant is in will be emailed to the contestants on the **Monday prior to the contest**. Contestants must be present for their judging session, rehearsal and public show. A complete schedule is available at: <https://co4h.colostate.edu/statefair/fashion-schedule.pdf>.
3. Script – Contestants are to upload a script with their entry that is no more than 150 words.
4. Lodging, Meals & Transportation – No lodging, meals, or transportation are included in the contest. Contestants may stay at State Fair/4-H Growing Minds Dormitories (pre-registration required by contacting the State 4-H Office), commercial lodging, private homes or come only for the day.
5. Chaperones/Parents – During the judging, chaperones are free to leave or spend the day as they please. If they choose to stay and watch the judging, they must remain silent. Leaving and entering the theater will only be allowed between judging groups. Only group leaders will be allowed in the dressing rooms. We have established this policy out of courtesy and in fairness to our judges and all participants.
6. Group Leaders – Applications are on the 4-H website at: <https://co4h.colostate.edu/statefair/FashionRevueGroupLeader.pdf> and are due on August 8 for individuals who may be interested.
7. Three Grand Champion and Top 10 ribbons will be awarded to the top models in the Fashion Revue.
8. *All garments that have been judged as exhibits at State Fair can be left at the contest venue on Saturday evening and will be taken back to the fairgrounds. If your garment is not being judged as an exhibit, you may take it home.*

4-H Public Presentations Contests

Dawn Roberge, Superintendent droberge94@gmail.com
Reggie Foster, Assistant Superintendent reggie.foster@colostate.edu

Contest Dates:

Saturday, August 29:

Interpretive Reading

Sunday, August 30:

Demonstrations and Illustrated Talks



Time: 8:00 am

Location: 4-H Auditorium – Colorado State Fairgrounds

Participant's Entry Fee: \$15 per person

Registration Deadline: August 13

Each county office will issue **one check** (or internal transfer) payable to CSU Extension for county entry total.

Mail by September 30 to:

CSU Extension, State 4-H Office
Attn: State Fair Contests
Campus Delivery 4045
Fort Collins, CO 80523-4045

Age Divisions: All ages are as of December 31 of the previous year:

- Juniors: 8-10 years of age
- Intermediates: 11-13 years of age
- Seniors: 14-18 years of age

Gate Passes: Counties are responsible for ordering and distributing gate passes for contestants. The superintendent **will not** be sending passes.

Lodging: Lodging is available in the State Fair/4-H Growing Minds Dormitories. Pre-registration is required by contacting the State 4-H Office.

Demonstrations & Illustrated Talks

Class 700 Individual Junior
Class 701 Team Junior
Class 702 Individual Intermediate
Class 703 Team Intermediate
Class 704 Individual Senior
Class 705 Team Senior

Interpretive Reading

Class 706 Interpretive Reading Junior
Class 707 Interpretive Reading Intermediate
Class 708 Interpretive Reading Senior

Public Presentation Contest Rules:

Please see contest-specific section for additional rules pertaining to each division.

1. The contest will begin at 8 a.m. Awards will be given after each program. Superintendents will schedule each class after entries are received and will email a tentative schedule out to participants to let them know when they should arrive.
2. Contestants must be enrolled 4-H members in one of the following age categories:
 - a. Junior: 8-10 years 4-H age
 - b. Intermediate: 11-13 years 4-H age
 - c. Senior: 14-18 years 4-H age
3. Each county is limited to three entries per class. The top three blue ribbon winners from each age division and class can compete at the state contest. In addition to awarding blue ribbons using the Danish System, counties should have judges rank their top blue ribbons winners in each class to select State Fair entrants.
4. Presentations must be directly related to 4-H projects or activities that members are enrolled in. 4-H members are asked to be sensitive to the diverse audience that attends the fair. All materials to be presented are subject to review by the county extension office. Materials which are deemed inappropriate by the county will not be allowed.
5. Contest materials, including writing, must be the member's own work. If the work was not created by the 4-H member or if it was submitted as a representation of the member's work without proper acknowledgement that it was created by another, then it is considered plagiarism. **Sources must be cited. Plagiarism will result in disqualification. Direct quotes may be used and should be cited.**
6. Members may use their 4-H dogs, cats, or pocket pals that are identified in 4-H Online in their presentations. We are not able to accommodate larger animals, such as livestock or horses.
7. The only public presentation division that allows teams is Demonstrations & Illustrated Talks. A team shall consist of two 4-H members. Both team members may be from the same age division. If they are not, they must compete in the division of the oldest member.
8. Time limits are event and age specific. Two points will be deducted from the total score on each judge's score sheet for every 30 seconds over or under the event and age division time limits. After the individual has been introduced by the superintendent, the time will start once the contestant begins to speak and end when they stop speaking. For demonstrations, timing ends at the end of the presentation and does not include the question and answer period.

Please check the rules for each division for more details. For Demonstrations and Illustrated Talks, an additional five minutes is allowed for set-up and take down.

	Junior	Intermediate	Senior
Demo & Ill. Talk	4-6 min	6-8 min	8-10 min
Interpretive Reading	3-5 min	4-6 min	6-8 min

9. Each individual and team will be expected to provide their own visual aids, props, or special equipment. The contest will provide a table, projector, screen, microphone, and easel. If contestants need more than one easel, they should bring the second easel. A podium will not be provided. A laptop will be present for presenters to use with the projector. Participants should bring their presentation on a flash drive but are encouraged to bring their own computer to present with (along with any special adaptors) as a backup. **If you have additional special needs, please email the contest superintendent.** Early arrival on the contest day is suggested for setting up any equipment.
10. A tentative contestant order will be emailed in advance of the contest. Contestants must contact the superintendents to notify them if they are competing in another event that may conflict with this

contest. Attempts will be made to make accommodations within reason, and with advance notification.

11. Awards: Junior, Intermediate, and Senior team and individual participants will be ranked 1-10. Champion and Reserve Champion individuals and teams will be designated in each age division.

Demonstrations & Illustrated Talks Division Rules:

1. Each Demonstration and Illustrated Talk will be timed. Senior demonstrations must be between 8–10 minutes in duration. Intermediate demonstrations must be between 6–8 minutes in duration. Junior demonstrations must be between 4–6 minutes in duration. Two points will be deducted for each 30 second over or under the time limit. Participants will be given a 30-second warning before end of the time period. An additional five minutes is allowed for set-up and take down.
2. Only the judges will ask questions to presenters at the end of their presentations. There will be no questions from the audience. Generally, each judge asks one question, but some judges may choose to ask a follow-up.

Interpretive Reading Division Rules:

1. Members deliver a rendition of a piece of pre-written material. The pre-written material should be a selection from a book, poem, story, etc., and should be 4-H appropriate. This area is not intended for presentation of original material written by the presenter. Members may choose which selection or multiple portions of a text to present but may not change the content. Content should be cohesive and transition smoothly from one portion to the next.
2. During the beginning of the reading, speakers should introduce their piece and explain the significance of the material.
3. Costumes and small props can be used but they need to be simple and minimal and not detract from the strength of the presenter. Everyone will be expected to provide their own equipment. General equipment and supplies such as tables and chairs will be furnished when requested in advance of competition.
4. Each Interpretive Reading will be timed. Senior readings must be between 6–8 minutes in duration. Intermediate readings must be between 4–6 minutes in duration. Junior readings must be between 3–5 minutes in duration. Two points will be deducted for each 30 seconds over or under the time limit. Participants will be given a 30-second warning before end of the time period.

4-H Rocket Fly Day Contest

Tom Kindvall, Superintendent

Katie Seelhoff, Assistant Superintendent Katie.Seelhoff@colostate.edu



Contest date: Sunday, September 20

Time: Registration/Check-in 6:30am
Launch begins at 7:00am sharp!

Location: Greeley Saddle Club Center at Island Grove Regional Park, 1229 D. Street, Greeley, CO 80631

Participant's Entry Fee: \$15 per participant.

Registration Deadline: August 13

If a county did not have its own fly day due to fire bans, you may still enter one member from each unit if they register by the due date.

Each county office will issue **one check** (or internal transfer) payable to **CSU Extension for county entry total.**

Mail by September 30 to:

CSU Extension, State 4-H Office
Attn: State Fair Contests
Campus Delivery 4045
Fort Collins, CO 80523-4045

Awards will be given after the event.

Following is a description of the events for the state Rocket Fly Day contest. County organizers may design their contest differently to meet their specific goals. To ensure the greatest success of the county's representative at the state contest, it is suggested that these rules be followed within reason.

Rocket Fly Day Contest Rules:

1. Exhibitors must fly a rocket pertaining to the skill level in which they are enrolled.
2. The rocket used in the contest will have been built by the contestant during the current 4-H year.
3. Rockets in Units 1–4 **must** be checked in with color panel (picture) from kit which indicates engine size or catalog with proof of skill level and recommended first flight engine. Unit 6 must state the size of the first flight engine at check-in.
4. All rockets must use a parachute recovery system.
5. Rockets **must** be launched with **FIRST FLIGHT ENGINES ONLY.**
6. Rocketry members must bring their own rocket. Each contestant will be required to launch his/her rocket twice (time and weather permitting).
7. Both contest launches will be made with the same rocket. If a rocket is damaged during the first launch, time will be allowed for field repairs. If the rocket cannot be repaired, there will be no score for the second launch.

8. Launching equipment will be set up. Members are to supply rocket, engines, igniters, parachutes, and wading. A field box is advisable.
9. Each contestant will prepare their rocket for launch in the designated rocket preparation area. When a rocket enters the preparation area, it will be checked in as not launch ready. The contestant will prepare the rocket for launch in the preparation area and the rocket will remain in the area until it is transferred to the launch pad.
10. Event will be judged on construction, flight stability, range safety, chute deployment and landing. Rockets **must** be painted.
 - a. Construction is scored based on the judge's objective and subjective opinion of how the rocket meets the desired condition for launching a model rocket.
 - b. Flight stability is scored based on the judge's objective and subjective observation of the flight path when the rocket leaves the launch pad. A straight vertical flight path leaving the launch pad will score the highest.
 - c. Range safety is scored based on the judge's objective and subjective observation of the procedure used by the contestant before, during, and after the launch of the rocket. The Range Safety evaluation should include, but is not limited to:
 - i. Use of the launch pad cap
 - ii. Path of movement around the launch pad
 - iii. Safety checks of the range/ground and sky/airspace
 - iv. Seeking permission for launch
 - v. Handling any misfire occurrences correctly
 - vi. Disarming the launch system after the launch of the rocket
 - d. Chute Deployment is scored based on the judge's objective and subjective observation of the deployment of the parachute during the recovery phase. A parachute that opens fully will score the highest.
 - e. Landing is scored based on the distance between the launch pad and the landing point of the main body tube of the rocket. Scoring is earned using the following schedule:
 - i. Distance is less than 5 yards = 4 points
 - ii. Distance measured is greater than or equal to 5 yards and less than 20 yards = 3 points
 - iii. Distance measured is greater than or equal to 20 yards and less than 45 yards = 1 point
 - iv. Distance measured is greater than or equal to 45 yards = 1 point
 - v. If the rocket lands outside the designated launch range/arena, does not reach the ground, or is too far away to measure, then no points are awarded.
11. If the contestant's rocket does not meet the requirements for the entered unit, the contest superintendents and/or officers can apply a 2-point reduction in the construction score for all flights. The details of the situation will determine if the reduction is applied.
12. Coaching or instruction of the contestant when they are in the contest area, including but not limited to the preparation area, the launch pad and launch control table is not permitted. If any coaching is witnessed by the judge or contest superintendents/officials, the launch score will be a zero.
13. **Rockets entered in State Fair Exhibit judging may not be used for Rocket Fly Day competition.**
14. In case of a tie score between competitors, tied participants will launch a third time to break the tie. In the case of a tie during the third launch, the tie breaking criteria will be:
 - a. Range Safety score on third launch
 - b. Combined Range Safety scored on the first and second launch

- c. Combined Landing scores for all three launches
- d. Combined Chute Deployment scores for all three launches
- e. Combined Flight Stability scores for all three launches
- f. Combined Construction scores for all three launches
- g. Actual distance recorded for Landing score on the third launch

Counties may enter one exhibitor per unit as follows:

Juniors are 4-H ages 8-13. Seniors are 4-H ages 14-18.

UNIT 1

- Class 800 UNIT 1 – Level 1 Junior
Rocket with Balsa Wood Fins
- Class 801 UNIT 1 – Level 1 Senior
Rocket with Balsa Wood Fins

UNIT 2

- Class 802 UNIT 2 – Level 2 Junior
Rocket with Balsa Wood Fins
- Class 803 UNIT 2 – Level 2 Senior
Rocket with Balsa Wood Fins

(A member may exhibit in this unit more than one year.)

For Units 3-6 — finished fins of any type.

UNIT 3

- Class 804 UNIT 3 – Level 3 Junior
- Class 805 UNIT 3 – Level 3 Senior

UNIT 4

- Class 806 UNIT 4 – Level 4 Junior
- Class 807 UNIT 4 – Level 4 Senior

UNIT 6

- Class 808 UNIT 6 – Level 6 Junior
- Class 809 UNIT 6 – Level 6 Senior

Awards given:

A Champion and Reserve Champion will be awarded in each unit.

Overall Grand and Reserve Grand Champions will be awarded to the highest point exhibitor—Units 1-6 Junior and Units 1-6 Senior.

If sponsorship is available, the highest score overall individual in each age division will receive a trophy.