

2025-26 Junior Chef Competition Fact Sheet

Recipe Submittal

- Teams must submit a completed application via email to Lynsey.Paul@tn.gov by **December 19, 2025**.
- Recipes will be reviewed and scored based on the Junior Chef Recipe Contest Judging Rubric, which can be found on the Tennessee Department of Education School Nutrition website.
- Teams will be notified via email if their recipe was selected to compete in the Junior Chef Competition.

Teams

- Teams must consist of two to four students in grades 9-12 and attend a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Only one team per school district may enter the recipe contest.
- Each team must have at least one adult team supervisor who is a school district employee.

Recipe Requirements

- The recipe must be a reimbursable meal.
- The recipe must contain 2 oz. meat/meat alternate, 2 oz. whole grain-rich food, plus ½ cup vegetable or fruit.
- Recipes must include two or more Tennessee-grown products that are integral to the dish.
- Recipe must include one USDA commodity item.
- The recipe must serve six people.
- Recipes must meet the NSLP meal pattern and nutrient standards. Your district's School Nutrition Director must check this.
- Recipes must be replicable by school nutrition.

Top Teams

- Students on the first-, second-, and third-place teams will become eligible for scholarships to Sullivan University in Louisville, Kentucky. The first-place team will have the choice between scholarship funds to Nashville State Community College OR Sullivan University.
- The first-place team **must commit to making their best efforts** to compete in the Southeast Region Junior Chef Competition. The Southeast Region Junior Chef Competition will be held at Jefferson State Community College, Birmingham, AL, on April 23-24, 2026.

Questions

- Contact Lynsey Paul at Lynsey.Paul@tn.gov with any questions about the Junior Chef Competition.