

GUIDELINES – 4-H FOOD SHOW EVALUATIONS

Thank you for volunteering as a 4-H Food Show Evaluator.

The Food Show provides an opportunity for participants to show what they have learned in a 4-H foods and nutrition project. Participants plan and prepare an exhibit related to their food and nutrition project or a particular theme. Exhibitors are given an opportunity to discuss their exhibit with an adult who interviews them and helps to evaluate what they have learned.

YOUR JOB AS AN EVALUATOR

You will have several minutes to interview each exhibitor or group of exhibitors assigned to you. Your comments should provide recognition for a job well done and encouragement to continue learning more about food and nutrition. If you have questions or want another opinion, you may consult with another evaluator.

You should find an Evaluation Sheet, Food Group Menu Chart and Recipes for the exhibited foods at each exhibit. During the interview, look at the menu, table setting and other aspects of the exhibit. Ask the 4-H'ers about the menu, why they selected certain dietary guidelines (food pyramid), how they prepared the food, etc. Be sure to write your comments and specific suggestions in the space provided. You will also taste the food and evaluate its texture, flavor, etc.

ACCENT THE POSITIVE by complimenting the participant on something favorable about the exhibit; then move on to suggest ways of improving the exhibit. You might comment on the attractiveness of the table setting, the appropriateness of the menu, the choice of nutritious foods, the flavor of the food, etc.

ACCEPT AND RESPECT each individual exhibitor's special interests and abilities. Try to see the exhibit through the eyes of the child as well as from your own viewpoint – but don't let personal tastes influence your evaluation.

FOCUS EVALUATION ON THE EXHIBIT rather than on the exhibitor. Praise should be sincere and in line with achievement. Critical comments should not portray disapproval of the person or overemphasis of unimportant details.

EVALUATE EACH EXHIBIT with consideration of how well participants have prepared their exhibits and their understanding of relevant nutrition principles. Avoid comparing one exhibit to another. Keep in mind that more is expected from senior than junior exhibitors.

ENCOURAGE SELF EVALUATION by helping the exhibitor look at his own exhibit to consider ways it might be improved. For example, if the menu needs improving, as a question such as "How could you improve your menu"?

ASK QUESTIONS that test the understanding of “whys” as well as “hows”. For example, someone exhibiting a salad should be able to answer: “why should you serve salad with a meal?” “How does your salad contribute to helping balance your menu?” “How did you prepare your salad?” “Have you ever added other vegetables to a salad?” Food preparation skills are considered the practical application of nutrition principles. Nutrition information should be up-to-date.

ENCOURAGE CONTINUATION of learning. For example, ask “What would you like to learn more about next time?” Some participants may need higher goals to challenge them; others may need easier goals that they can achieve without getting discouraged. Keep in mind that favorable experiences encourage further learning.

Please familiarize yourself with any enclosures you receive.

Some evaluators will be asked to evaluate posters (specific theme) or foods demonstrations. There are score sheets for these.

Thank you for sharing your time and expertise with the 4-H youth who are participating in this educational program.