



Gloucester County 4-H Fair

2026 Food Contests

- ✓ Baking
- ✓ Cakes
- ✓ Pies
- ✓ Breads
- ✓ Jam
- ✓ Pickles
- ✓ Relish
- ✓ Salsa



Age Groups

- ✚ Junior Youth K-7th Grade
- ✚ Senior Youth 8th – 12th Grade
- ✚ Adult

Entry Fees

\$5 for the first entry and \$3 for each additional entry per person.



RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
4-H Youth Development
New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

Awards:

- 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place ribbons will be awarded.
- Best in Show will be awarded in each age group.

Baking

- Cakes
- Cookies & Bars
- Pies
- Savory Breads
- Sweet Breads & Muffins

Canning

- Jams- Jellies- Marmalade
- Pickles – Relish
- Salsa, Sweet & Spicy

Drop Off: Location Palate Pleasers Cooking Club, Barn G**Jams - Jellies - Marmalades:**

2 - 1 pint Mason Jars

Friday, July 24, 2026

Drop off: 10.00 AM - 3.00 PM

Judging: TBD

Pickles - Relish - Salsa:

2 - 1 pint Mason Jars

Saturday, July 25, 2026

Drop off: 10.00 AM - 2.00 PM

Judging: TBD

Baking:

Sunday, July 26, 2026

Time: 9.00 - 9.30 AM

Judging: 11.00 AM

Pick-up time for all : Sunday, July 26, 2026, 2-3 PM

Jams, Jellies & Marmalades ~ Friday

Definitions:

Home Canned: Entries which are completely home-prepared. The use of commercial equipment is not allowed.

Professional or Commercial Quality items sold for home use are permitted. **Commercially Canned**: Food items which are prepared in a commercial plant or kitchen. This includes items prepared using commercial equipment. These items are disqualified.

Entry Requirements

1. Time Limit Requirements: Entries must have been canned within the past year
2. Quantity Requirements: Entries must consist of two (2) identical jars of product.
3. One for display and one for judging.
4. The judge will choose which jar to open.
5. Jar Requirements: A clear (non-colored), regular or wide-mouthed, Mason-type (Ball, Kerr, etc.), threaded, home canning jar, sealed with a metal lid and ring band.
6. Jar Sizes:
7. For Fruits, Tomatoes, and Pickles: No larger than one (1) quart (32 ounces).
For Jelly, Jam, Soft Spreads, Sauce, Chutney, Salsa, Relish, etc.: From 4 ounces.
8. Head Space: The following headspace must be utilized for each product:
1/4 inch head space: Jams, jellies, preserves, conserves, butter, marmalades, and curds
1/2 inch head space: Fruits, tomatoes, sauerkraut, pickles, relishes
9. Jar Seal Requirements:
Jars must be sealed with new, two-piece, vacuum seals, specifically made for canning jars. **Seals must consist of a metal screw ring band and a metal lid.**
The ring band must unscrew easily.
9. Label Requirements:
Both jars must be labeled on their lids.
Use plain white labels without any decoration.
Labels must not overlap with the screw ring band of the jars (This includes any tape used to attach the label).

Jars must be labeled. Labels must contain the following information:

Canning method used*/Processing Time** Title of Entry
Division/Class
Date of Preservation (Month/Day/Year)

Title of Entry may not include any names

Example:

*Canning Methods

All Home Canning entries (including jam and jelly) must meet proper acid levels and be processed using only one of the three following canning methods listed below:

Method A. Water Bath Method: Acid foods (example: most fruits, excluding figs). Tomatoes, figs and some fruits are considered borderline low-acid foods. These foods should be made more acid by adding lemon juice, citric acid or vinegar as appropriate for the type of food.

Method B. Pressure Canner Method: Usually used for low acid foods but can also be used to process acid foods. Low acid foods processed using the pressure canner method are not eligible for competition at the Gloucester County 4-H Fair.

Method C. Steam Canner Method: Processing times are the same for both water bath and steam canning. Products requiring a water bath processing time longer than 45 minutes cannot be safely processed in a steam canner. This restriction only applies to a few products, primarily whole or halved tomatoes packed without added liquid, or liquid-packed tomatoes processed at elevations above 1000 feet.

** Processing Time: Minutes in water bath, steam canner or pressure canner.

*** Elevation: Your altitude effects the necessary processing time of preserved foods.

9. Ingredients List:

On a 3-inch x 5-inch card or piece of paper, provide a complete list of all ingredients used in entry preparation. Be specific, for example: pectin (powdered, liquid, low-sugar, if used), vinegar (white, wine, cider), etc., and all herbs, spices, and flavorings used in the entry. Use a separate card for each entry.

Entries must consist of two (2) identical jars of product.

Berry Jam or Jelly

- A) Single Berry Jam or Jelly
- B) Mixed Berry Jam or Jelly

Fruit Jam or Jelly

- A) Single Fruit (anything other than berries)
- B) Mixed Fruit (anything other than berries)

Specialty Jam or Jelly

- E) Low Sugar Jam
- F) Spiced Jam
- G) Peppered Jam (any jam made from or including peppers)
- H) Any Other Jam (any jam that does not fit in another class)

Judging Criteria

Texture 35%

Flavor 35%

Appearance 30%

(Color - 15%, Clearness - 10%, Container - 5%)

Jam - Crushed fruit, no separation of fruit and juices

Jelly - Tender, should quiver, cut easily and retain shape, no crystals

Division Descriptions

Jam: Jams are made by cooking crushed or chopped fruits with sugar until the mixture will round up in a spoon. There should be no separation of fruit and juice.

Jelly: A semi-solid mixture of fruit juice and sugar that is clear and firm enough to hold its shape, yet it is soft enough to spread easily. A Jelly should not contain pieces of product. (Exception: pepper jelly may have pieces of pepper suspended in it.)

Marmalades:

A soft fruit jelly containing small pieces of fruit or peel evenly suspended in transparent jelly. Marmalades are a traditional way of preparing citrus-based jellies.

Preserves: Preserves are fruits (or uniform pieces of fruit) preserved with sugar so that the fruit retains its shape, is clear and shiny, tender and plump. The syrup is clear and varies from the thickness of honey to that of soft jelly.

Conserves are made with dried fruits and nuts and are cooked. They have a very thick and chunky texture. Conserves work very well as a spread and as a condiment for meats and cheeses.

Pickles, Relish, and Salsa ~ Saturday

Pickles

- A) Sweet Pickles
- B) Dill Pickles
- C) Any Other Pickles (Including bread and butter type pickles, etc.)

Relish

Judging Criteria - Pickles & Relish *Product 65%*

Pack 25% Container 10%

Division Descriptions

Pickles: Foods fermented in a brine or vinegar

Relish: Relishes are prepared from fruits and/or vegetables which are chopped and cooked to desired consistency in a spicy vinegar solution. Sometimes sugar is added if a sweet relish is desired and sometimes hot peppers or other spices are added for a hot relish.

Olives: Must be left whole, cured, then pressure canned in a freshly prepared brine (pint 60 min, quart 70 min)

Judging Process

The Palate Pleasers Cooking Club considers the judging process to start after the jar has been opened. Disqualifications occur before the jar is opened. After the jar has been opened points may be taken away or lowered to a "No Award" status depending on the results of the judging.

The Palate Pleasers Cooking Club judging of Home Canning Classes will be based on guidelines established by the USDA (USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning.)

This information is available online at www.uga.edu/nchfp/index.html, or contact the Master Food Preservers through your local Cooperative Extension Office. Rules in this handbook take precedence over other sources.

Disqualifications

The following are examples of disqualifications:

1. Entry is "Commercially Canned"
2. Jars not identical
3. Incorrect jar (such as mayonnaise jar)
4. Jar not sealed with two-piece vacuum seal with lid and matching metal screw ring
5. Jar
unable to be opened
6. The label does not include the required information
7. Label incorrectly placed on the jar
8. Decorations on the jar (not including those from the manufacturer)
9. 9. Dirty jar or rust on the lid
or metal screw ring.
10. Late Delivery of Entry
11. Ineligible ingredients included in the entry
12. Method of Processing other than by water bath, steam or pressure
13. Inadequate Processing Time

No Award

The following conditions will result in "No Award"

1. Unsealed jar
2. Mold, foreign objects (hair, insects, etc.) found in a sealed jar
3. Product considered
unsafe to taste by Judges
4. Product entered in the wrong Division

Major Considerations

The following considerations may change award placing or may cause the loss of enough points for a "No Award." Examples of major considerations are as follows:

1. Product under the band or food on the jars
2. Bubbles in jam and jellies
3. Incorrect Headspace
4. Soft pickles
5. Poor presentation of the pack

Ineligible Entries

Due to food safety concerns the following items are not eligible:

1. Non-pickled vegetables
2. Pesto
3. Mustards
4. Any pumpkin product (i.e. pumpkin butter, jam, etc.)
5. Any entry containing meat or other protein foods such as eggs (exception: curds)
6. Chocolate sauces
7. Freezer jams (No freezer and refrigerator available)

Display of Winning Entries

The unopened jar will be on display as space allows. There are no guarantees regarding display.

Return of Jars

Unopened jars will be available for pickup on Sunday at Fair. You must have the Claim Checks. Opened and unclaimed jars will be donated to the Palate Pleasers 4-H Cooking Club.

Baking ~ Sunday

Rules for Baked Goods

Production Requirements

Entries must be **“Made from Scratch,”** and NOT “Commercially Prepared Products.” “Commercially Prepared Products” may be used as an ingredient as long as they are not apparent as the finished product. For example, a pudding mix may not be submitted as a pudding or pie filling, but may be used as an ingredient in cupcake batter.

Entry Requirements

1. Time Limit Requirement: Entries must arrive fresh the morning of judging.
2. **Quantity Requirements:**
 - a. Cakes – One whole cake, 8-10 inch or whole standard loaf
 - b. Cupcakes – Six cupcakes
 - c. Coffee Cakes – One whole coffee cake
 - d. Pies – One whole pie, 8-10 inch
 - e. Pastries – Six pastries
 - f. Breads or Quick Breads – One whole standard loaf
 - g. Donuts, Scones, Biscuits, Muffins and Rolls – Six pieces

h. Cookies and Confections – Six pieces

3. Container Requirements:

Due to limited storage space please be considerate and do not use oversized plates, cake boards, etc. Containers become property of the Palate Pleasers 4-H Club. Disposable containers are recommended.

4. Perishables Requirement:

For food safety reasons, all perishables must be kept under refrigeration prior to delivery. Due to high temperatures during the fair, you may wish to deliver in an insulated container such as an ice chest.

5. Ingredients List:

On a 3-inch x 5-inch card or piece of paper, provide a complete list of all ingredients used in entry preparation. Be specific, for example: butter (unsalted or salted), oil (vegetable, canola, olive, etc.), flour (all-purpose, cake, bread), etc., and all spices and flavorings used in the entry. Use a separate card for each entry. Do not put your name on your ingredients list. Bring the list with you when you deliver your entry for judging. Lists are used by Judges during judging and to avoid allergens.

Ineligible Entries

The following items are not eligible for entry.

1. Entries made with a bread machine
2. Entries requiring a refrigerator or freezer
3. Hot foods

Judging Process

Disqualifications occur before the food is tasted as noted below. After the food has been tasted, points will be taken away or lowered to a “No Award” status depending on the results of the tasting.

Disqualifications

1. Late delivery of entry
2. Hair or foreign object found on the entry
3. Ineligible entries
4. Failure to follow the “Made from Scratch” rule
5. Perishable entry arriving at a temperature deemed unsafe for consumption by Judges ***All entries are stored at room temperature.***
6. Entry does not meet quantity requirements

Baked Goods * Note that no refrigerated items will be accepted

Rules & Requirements Rules for Baked Goods

Leavened Bread

Any type of Bread using yeast or culture as the leavening agent, including sourdough bread.
Non-Yeast Bread: Bread made without using yeast, baking soda, or baking powder as a leavening agent (flatbread).

- A) - Whole Grain Bread
- B) - French Bread
- C)- Rolls
- D) - Sourdough Bread
- E) - Any Other Leavened Bread

Unleavened Bread

Unleavened bread is bread made without any raising agents like yeast, baking soda, or baking powder. Because the dough does not rise, it results in a flat, dense, or crispy texture

- F) - Tortillas
- G) - Crackers
- H) - Any Other Non-Leavened Bread

Quick Bread

A quick bread is any baked good leavened with chemical agents (like baking powder or baking soda) rather than biological ones (like yeast or sourdough starter). Because it requires no proofing or resting time, the batter can be mixed and baked immediately, resulting in a dense, cake-like crumb

- J) - Nut and/or Fruit Bread
- K) - Scones
- L) - Muffins
- M) - Any Other Quick Bread

Judging Criteria Flavor - 30%

Taste and aroma, sweet, nutty, blended

Texture - 25%

No streaks or close grain, size and uniformity of cell walls, elasticity

General Appearance - 15%

Shape, proper dome, smoothness, crust color

Lightness - 15%

Crust - 15%

Thickness, quality, crispness, tenderness, and uniformity

Cakes

Frosted Cake

Any frosted cake that does not have any filling or any frosting that requires refrigeration

1. Frosted chocolate Cake
2. Any Other Frosted Cake

Unfrosted Cake

Any unfrosted cake (i.e. pound cakes, fruit cakes, or any other type of cake not frosted—may include a light glaze or powder sugar dusting)

1. Pound Cake
2. Any Other Unfrosted Cake

Specialty Cake

1. Donuts
2. Cupcakes
3. Any Other Specialty Cake Item

Judging Criteria for Baked Goods

Flavor - 35%

Delicate and pleasing, natural flavor of ingredients

Appearance - 30%

Crust - color, texture, and depth

Frosting/glaze - glossy, not granular, soft, not sticky, suitable flavor

Filling - if appropriate- minimum 1/4 inch, fluffy, good flavor blend with cake.

Texture - 25%

Crumb - 10%

Division Descriptions

Coffee Cake: A sweet, leavened, bread-like cake usually flavored with nuts, fruit, or spices and topped with frosting, glaze, or streusel- traditionally served for breakfast or brunch)

Any Other Specialty Cake Item: i.e. whoopie pies or cake pops.

Pies & Pastry

Pie

1. Single Crust Pie
2. Double Crust Pie (top and bottom Crust)
3. Tart
4. Pastry

Judging Criteria - Pastries

Crust - 40% (Flavor - 15%, Texture - 25%)

Appearance - 25% (Color - 10%, Shape - 10% Overall - 5%) Filling - 20%
(Flavor - 10%, Consistency - 10%)

Topping - 15%

Division Descriptions

Single Crust Pie: Any non-refrigerated pie with only a bottom crust and does not require refrigeration.

Double Crust Pie: Any non-refrigerated pie with a top and bottom crust and does not require refrigeration.

Pastries: Types of pastry--Shortcrust, Suet, Choux, Puff, Danish, and Filo. Made by exhibitor.

Cookies

Judging Criteria - Cookies

Appearance - 40% (Uniformity - 20%, Color - 20%) Crumb (Texture) - 30%

Flavor - 30%

Cookies Class Descriptions:

Drop Cookies: Any cookie that is formed by dropping dough from a spoon to the cookie sheet.

Bar Cookies: Any cookie that is cut into “bars” on the cookie sheet, except brownies.

Chocolate Chip Cookies: Any type of Chocolate - chip-type cookies (bar or drop)

Any Other Cookies: Any other type of cookie including shaped, rolled, filled, or cut cookies

- A) - Chocolate Chip Cookies
- B) - Bar Cookies
- C) - Any Other Cookies

Brownies

- D) - Chocolate Brownies (chocolate only)
- E) - Any Other Brownies

No Award

The following conditions will result in “No Award”

- 1. Hair or foreign object found in entry
- 2. Product considered by judges to be unsafe to taste
- 3. Product entered into the wrong Division

Display of Winning Entries

- 1. Baked goods will only be displayed as long as they have visual appeal and as space allows
- 2. There are no guarantees regarding the display
- 3. Any items not picked up by 4 PM Sunday become property of the Palate Pleasers 4-H Club.

Do not put your name on your ingredients list.

Bring the list with you when you deliver your entry for judging. Lists are used by Judges during judging and to avoid allergens.

Please print out a form for each entry and bring them with you for entry. Don't forget to label your jars and bring your ingredient/recipe cards.

Gloucester County 4-H
Cooking Contests
Jam, Jelly, and Marmalade Entry Form

Name _____ 4-H Club _____

Age Category Adult Junior Youth (K-7th) Senior Youth (8th-12th Grade)

Note:
2 jars required for entry.
See contest rules.

Entry #

Class/Category (please check)

- Jam** **Jelly** **Marmalade**
- Single Berry
Mixed Berry
Single Fruit
Specialty
- Low sugar Spiced
Peppered Any Other

Address:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Entry Description:



Palate Pleasers Contest Receipt

Name:

Entry Description:

Gloucester County 4-H
Cooking Contests
Pickles, Relish, and Salsa Entry Form

Name _____ 4-H Club _____

Age Category Adult Junior Youth (K-7th) Senior Youth (8th-12th Grade)

Note:
2 jars required for entry.
See contest rules

Entry #

Class/Category (please check)

- Pickles**
Sweet Pickles
Dill Pickles
Any other Pickles
Relish
Salsa

Address:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Entry Description:



Palate Pleasers Contest Receipt

Name:

Entry Description:

Gloucester County 4-H

Cooking Contests

Baking Entry Form

Name _____ 4-H Club _____

Age Category Adult Junior Youth (K-7th) Senior Youth (8th-12th Grade)

Class/Category (please check)

Note:

See contest rules for quantities needed for entry.

Entry #

Address:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Entry Description:

Frosted Cake

Chocolate Any Other Frosted

Unfrosted Cake

Pound Cake Any Other Unfrosted

Specialty Cakes

Donuts Cupcakes Any Other Specialty

Pie

Single Crust Double Crust

Tart Pastry

Cookies

Chocolate Chip Bar Cookies

Drop Cookies Any Other Cookies

Brownies

Chocolate Brownies Any Other Brownies

Breads

Leavened Bread

Whole Grain French Bread Rolls

Sourdough Bread Any Other Leavened

Non Leavened Bread

Tortillas Crackers Any Other NL

Quick Bread

Nut/Fruit Scones Muffins

Any other QB



Palate Pleasers Contest Receipt

Name:

Entry Description: