



Foods & Nutrition project resource guide

What is this guide?

The purpose of this project resource guide is to help support your learning within the foods and nutrition development project area. It provides step-by-step suggestions on how to get started and how to continue learning within the project area.



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What is project learning?

We believe young people learn best by doing. In our program, you have the opportunity to choose project areas that interest you. We then offer opportunities for positive learning environments and guidance from adult mentors. We also encourage you to take leadership roles and learn independently.

What is the foods and nutrition project?

Everyone eats, but not everyone makes healthy eating choices. Learn how to pick healthy foods, prepare nutritious meals and make smart food purchases. Discover the science behind making food and keeping it safe. Explore careers related to foods and nutrition and more in this 4-H project. Develop your understanding of foods through the [4-H food revue](#). You could challenge yourself to bake a cake or bread, prepare a meal complete with a description of the nutritional value, learn about food preservation, compare food labels, or make your own nutritious smoothie recipe. So many options! Let's get started.

Getting started with a foods and nutrition project

Figure out what you want to learn

First, think about what you want to learn about foods and nutrition. One way to do this could be to write down all your questions—anything you are currently wondering about or want to learn how to do. Here are some ideas to get you started.

- Why is it important to eat fruits and vegetables?
- What are carbohydrates, proteins, and fats, and why do we need them?
- How does food give us energy?
- Why is it important to eat breakfast?

- Why should we limit sugary foods and drinks?
- What are some easy healthy snacks I can make?
- How do you make chewy bread?
- What are some ways to preserve vegetables?
- What meal can I prepare for four people with less than \$20?

Do some research

Next, find some resources that can guide you and provide answers to your questions. Here are a few resources you may find useful.

- [All about food, health and nutrition](#)
- [Foods and nutrition activities](#)
- [Food safety information](#)
- [National 4-H foods and nutrition activity books](#)
- [Utah 4-H cake decorating, healthy snacks and family & consumer science activity sheets](#)
- [Staying healthy](#)
- [Kid-friendly nutritious recipe ideas](#)

Identify your project

Now it's time to narrow down your research into a specific project focus. What do you want to do? Here are some examples.

- Explore foods from cultures different from your own.
- Prepare a food item from scratch (no commercial mixes), such as bars & Cookies, breads, cakes, pastries, or a homemade meal.
- Do something creative with convenience foods.
- Adapt a recipe to improve the nutritional value.
- Decorate a cake/cupcakes.
- Make a gluten free baked item.
- Do a food-related science experiment, like comparing a cookie recipe with different amounts of baking soda.
- Make a display about food and/or kitchen safety.
- Investigate a food allergen of your choice—what are some tasty alternatives?
- Make a display about one serving of nutritious food (vegetable or fruit dish, snack, bread, dairy, etc.) showing nutritional value, recipe, and a photo.
- Make a food or fitness plan for yourself or someone else and show how it relates to nutritional and energy needs (such as for an athlete, or a busy teen.
- Show how physical fitness and/or food choices are related to disease (such as: cancer, heart disease, osteoporosis, diabetes, etc.)

Do your project!

Once you know what you want to do, it's time to do it! This is the fun part. You may get messy or encounter challenges, but in 4-H we learn by doing. It's all part of the learning process! You can ask others for help and ideas. Be sure to take pictures or video as you go or have some other way to record what you're doing and how it's going.

Reflect

The most important part of doing a project is the learning that happens as a result. Think about:

- What was my goal for this project when I began?
- What am I learning from this project that I didn't know before? OR What was the most challenging part of this project? Why?
- Did you have fun doing the project? What would you do differently?
- What am I learning about myself by doing this project?

Share your work

After you finish your project, it's time to share what you learned! Sharing your new skills and getting others excited about your project is a great way to continue learning and can be a valuable way to serve your community! Here are some ideas:

- Share your project at school, with your 4-H club or other out-of-school time program.
- Ask to set up an info table at your local library, community center, or community event such as a festival or farmer's market.
- Develop an exhibit to take to your local county fair through the 4-H program. Head back to the [foods and nutrition project page](#) for more information about how to showcase your project at a county fair. Participate in a local [food revue](#) judging event.

Take your learning further

You've wrapped up one project...what's next? What questions did this project spark for you? What are you inspired to learn more about? You can dig into those questions with another foods and nutrition project, or you may want to check out these other project areas!

- [Health and wellness](#)
- [Bicycle](#)
- [Vegetable, fruit, and herb gardening](#)

Explore these future study and career opportunities:

- You could study [food science & nutrition](#) at the University of Minnesota.
- There are many jobs in the food industry. [Commercial cooks and food servers](#) work in restaurants, hospitals and other large food service businesses. [Nutritionists and dietitians](#) are healthcare workers with expertise in food science and nutrition. A chef is a professional cook who runs a commercial kitchen.



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