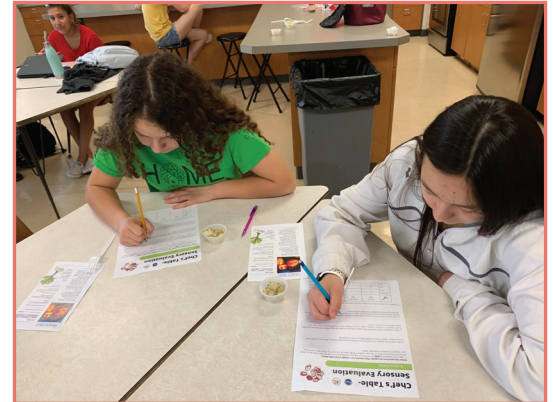


# CHEF'S TABLE - TASTE TEST ACTIVITY

Chef's Table is an interactive tasting event that engages youth in the testing of a NEW recipe. Traditionally run by a Chef, this activity has been adapted for schools to engage youth and school staff outside of the cafeteria environment. The Chef's Table has youth at the center of the taste testing experience and incorporates their perspective on recipes being considered for use in the school meal program. When hosting a Chef's Table, engage a small group of students, 5 to 15 total, to collect feedback on a recipe using local Nebraska food.



## ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

1. Students will participate by making and taste testing the NEW recipe!
2. Students will assist with developing a fun and creative name for the recipe, and how to menu the recipe on the school meal menu using current school meal menu options (fruit, vegetable, grain, etc.) to the student-created menu can be highlighted on the school lunch menu!
3. Feedback collected through a sensory evaluation of the recipes including taste, texture, and appearance will be shared with school lunch program staff.
4. Students will identify ideas for promoting and marketing the materials in your school building for a cafeteria taste test (this can be via print and/or social media created by students).

### CHEF'S TABLE TIP

After-school programs, student club meetings, or classes teaching about food, like family consumer science (FCS), are excellent avenues for conducting the school chef's table due to their small size and hands-on nature.

## PREPARATION STEPS

1. Purchase ingredients needed to test the assigned recipe and have all needed serving/tasting supplies: portion cups, plates, cutlery, and napkins (many FCS classrooms will likely have them on hand).
2. Introduce the students to the recipes and local food they will be tasting using the Nebraska Harvest of the Month trivia sheets, posters, or newsletters to share background information with the students (printed versions of these materials in the toolkit).



<https://www.education.ne.gov/ns/farm-to-school/harvest-of-the-month/downloadable-materials/?p=hom2020#newsletters>

3. Print copies of the school lunch menu for students to use to identify the required meal components (meal, fruits, veggies, grain & milk) that would complement the recipe you are tasting at the final step of the Chef's Table.
4. Set up a "classroom" setting to conduct the sensory evaluation document, at this link. Hard copies & pens are included in your toolkit.

## CONDUCTING A TASTE TEST

1. Prepare the recipes with the students if possible to encourage student participation in every aspect of the process as time allows.
2. After the recipe(s) are prepared, provide each student with at least a 1/4 or 1/3 cup portion of the recipe, so they can take several bites of the food during the sensory evaluation. Review SENSORY evaluation form with students.
3. Prior to eating any of the food, have students focus on the first category: "Look/Color" of the food, rate using the 5-point rating scale. Have students complete the sensory evaluation independently while tasting the recipe.
4. Debrief the sensory evaluation as a group about - what do they like/not like for each component? Have students identify a FUN name for the recipe that peers would like.
5. (Use the school mascot, name after the principal/teacher, etc).
6. Discuss how to market the recipe with the student-generated name, using HOM posters, trivia, and student-generated materials for social media (secondary students).
7. Use the school lunch menu for the current month. Identify items from the menu that would pair well with the tasting item. Create a menu you think students would like!
8. Provide recipe feedback, the name of recipe students selected, and the lunch menu to foodservice manager/staff to prepare for the cafeteria taste test and menu process.

### CHEF'S TABLE TIP

Invite the school nutrition services manager/director to join your Chef's Table so they can hear student feedback and students learn more about them!



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