Why should I participate in the table setting contest?

You can have fun learning how to:

- Express originality and creativity in choosing a theme.
- Properly set a table
- Plan nutritious meals
- Choose a costume that fits your theme
- Use your skills for entertaining

Did you know that you can be a designer each time you set the table? A designer chooses and arranges things according to a plan.

Actually, there is more than one way to set a table. The usual way to set a table is to put all the dishes, flatware, and food on the table before anyone sits down.

When there is company or for a special meal, part of the food and dishes may be left in the kitchen and served later. Diners at a buffet or a picnic may fill their plates and glasses before they are seated. The way to set your table depends upon the way the meal is to be served. Be creative and have fun! Color, texture, design and creativity are important.

The table setting contest is open to all Carroll County 4-H’ers grades K-12. Entries may be made by individuals or in teams of two.

Clover Kids will be for comments only.

Four divisions will be judged:
- Clover Kids (grades K-3)
- Juniors (grades 4-6)
- Intermediates (grades 7-8)
- Seniors (grades 9-12)

For the table setting contest one place setting is to be displayed. This place setting will include:

- A table covering
- Dinnerware
- Stemware or glasses
- Flatware
- A centerpiece
- A menu of the food to be served. (DO NOT BRING FOOD)
- You must furnish your own card table for the display unless it is a picnic where the table settings may be place on an appropriate blanket or other covering on the floor.

Contest Details

When?:
Tuesday, June 18th at 1:30 p.m.

Where?:
SunnyBrook Assisted Living- Carroll

Registration Details:
Due June 3rd to the Extension Office
Table Setting Terms to Know...

**What is Flatware?** Flatware is your knives, forks, spoons and other eating utensils.

**What is Dinnerware?** Those are the plates and possibly bowls that you will use for eating.

**What is Stemware or Glass-ware?** Those are the cups, goblets, glasses and cups and saucers or mugs that you use to drink liquids in the meal.

**What is a Centerpiece?**
This is what you choose to put in the center of your table to tie your theme together.

**What is a Cover?**
A cover is the space needed for each person’s dishes and contains the dinnerware and flatware for the meal being served.

**What are Table Appointments?**
These include any item used to set a table: tablecloth, placemats, dinnerware, glassware, flatware, and centerpiece.

Contest Categories

4-H’ers may enter **casual** or **formal** themed table settings.

**Formal themed** table setting would include candles, more than three pieces of flatware, china, table cloth and/or mats and cloth napkins. Formal themes are for occasions where you would dress up.

**Casual themed** table settings could be planned for indoors, outdoors, use any type of cover (table cloth, blanket or paper) and any type of table service.

Overall table setting should be an expression of the youth’s creativity; homemade touches are encouraged! It should be evident which theme you have selected.

Set-up and Contest Judging

You MUST bring a card table for the display (except for the picnic category, in which an appropriate blanket or other covering may be placed on the floor). Please make sure your card table is sturdy and can handle the weight of your table setting.

During judging, you PRESENT your table setting to the judge by telling them about your ideas and why you chose this particular theme. You should view yourself as a host and the judge as your guest. You should extend a welcome to your guest and present your ideas behind your theme, choice of menu, food preparation and food handling for your meal.

Following your presentation, be prepared to answer any questions your guest may have. Senior age members should be able to describe the ingredients and preparation required for all menu items as well as food safety.
How to Create Your Table Setting

**Theme**

What is the occasion... a family dinner, a holiday, or lunch with friends? Select a theme which fits the occasion. Possibilities can run from a fishing party sack lunch to a formal Mother’s Day dinner.

**Table Appointments**

These include any item used to set a table: table cloth, placemats, dinnerware, glasses, flatware, and centerpiece. Choose table appointments to fit the occasion and carry out the theme. Paper plates, plastic ware and paper napkins may be used for a picnic but they would not be appropriate for a formal dinner. Flatware and dishware must be safe to eat from i.e., no glitter, glue, chipped plates or glassware, etc. is to be used on eating surfaces.

**Table Covering**

This is the background for the food and table appointments place on it. It protestes the table and makes for less noise. Placemats and/or table cloths may be used. Sometimes the table is left bare. Choose a covering which is appropriate for the occasion and the other table appointments. You may match or blend colors and textures in the dishes—or use something quite different for contrast.

**Place Setting**

Allow at least 20 inches for each person’s dishes. This is called a cover and each cover contains the dinnerware and flatware for the meal being served.

- put the plate, china, pottery, paper, glass, etc. in the center of the cover about one inch from the edge of the table. If a table is not used at the event, placement may vary.

- Place the knives and spoons on the right side, the forks on the left about one inch from the plate and one inch from the edge of the table. Turn the cutting edge of the knife towards the plate. If there is more than one piece in each cover, such as one dinner fork and a salad fork or one teaspoon and one soup spoon, place the one that will be used first outside the other.

- Napkins folded into oblongs are placed next to the forks with the fold to the left so it opens like a book. Decorative and creative fold are encouraged. Placement of the napkin may vary.

- The first beverage glass is placed about one inch above the tip of the knife. If serving more than one beverage, place additional glass(es) to the right of the first glass in order served.

- If coffee or tea is served, the cup is placed on the saucer and set to the right of the spoon. Have the handle pointing to the right.

- Salad, Bread and or dessert plate(s) or bowl(s) - may be placed at the top of the fork(s).

When selecting your cover, include a dish for each course. Placement may vary according to how and when food is served.

**Centerpiece**

The centerpiece should be coordinated with the table appointment and be appropriate for the occasion. The centerpiece should be visible to all as if the entire table was set and should not obstruct anyone’s view of each other. You may select or make your centerpiece. Centerpiece candles are NOT to be lit Points will be deducted for lit candles.
How to Create Your Table Setting (con’t)

Menu

When planning a menu, first decide on the main dish. Select appropriate vegetables, appetizer, soup or salad, add a bread, dessert and beverage, if desired. Use MyPlate to plan a nutritious meal. Participants are encouraged to develop interesting and creative menus. For example, you might name a food to fit your theme. For more information on MyPlate, go to https://www.choosemyplate.gov/

***NOTE: the use of alcoholic beverages in any menu will disqualify the table setting.

Writing the Menu

The menu should be displayed on a 4” x 6” index card or paper, ceramic tile, chalkboard, etc. and be printed or typed by the participant. You may decorate and prop the menu.

1) (a) List the foods in the order in which they are served. (every menu will not include all of the foods listed.)
   - Appetizer
   - Main Dish
   - Starchy Vegetable
   - Other Vegetables
   - Salad
   - Bread
   - Dessert
   - Beverage

   (b) Group foods that are served together. Use single line spacing between food items and a double line spacing between courses.

2) Use CAPITALS at the beginning of all words except: the, a, an, and, or, for, to, with, or on

3) When an item on the menu has food or sauce that goes with it, place them both on the same line with the main item to the left

   Braised Pork Chops  Applesauce
   Tomato Soup  Sesame Seed Wafers
   Saltines

4) When a food is commonly prepared in more than one way, avoid confusion by describing the method of cooking, such as: Roasted Turkey or French Fried Potatoes.

5) List each food with the exception of butter, cream, sugar, or salad dressing, unless it is something special, such as Honey butter or Poppy seed dressing.

6) Breakfast, party or picnics should include two or three food groups and formal dinners should include all five food groups.

7) List beverages last.

8) Plan the spacing and arrangement of the items on the menu so that the written menu is symmetrical.

9) Consider creativeness when choosing names of menu items (except for formal menus).