



# Adding a Youth Flavor to Local Foods

## Chopped Competition

### Intended Audience:

- 8 year olds-18 year olds
- Adults who work with youth on food topics

### Lesson Objectives:

Session participants will:

- Plan and prepare a locally-sourced meal through a competitive format to engage with and increase their interest in local foods.

**Time:** About 3.5 hours:

- Part 1 = 30 minutes
- Part 2 = 2 hours
- Part 3 = 1 hour

### Equipment and supplies:

- Harvest of the month calendar (see attachment)
- Writing utensils
- Paper for grocery lists
- Kitchen utensils to prepare meals (e.g. knives, cutting boards, paper towels)
- Serving dishes (e.g. paper plates, bowls, plastic forks)
- Hand sanitizer and dish soap
- Rubric (see attachment)
- Prize for the winning team (not provided)
- Timer

### Do Ahead:

- Review activity instructions.
- Gather equipment and supplies.
- Reserve a facility with a kitchen to prepare the meals.
- Prep kitchen (clean, set up stations, tear down, etc.).
- Secure 2-3 judges.
- Review “Additional Information and Precautions for Chopped Activity” (see attachment).

### BACKGROUND

Experiential learning is one of the best methods for encouraging people to adopt new habits by having them engage in an activity. In this activity, youth compete to prepare a delicious and eye-appealing meal using locally sourced products.

### WHAT TO DO

#### Activity:

This activity is split into 3 parts; adjust the parts to accommodate the meeting times and schedules of your group. For instance, you may choose to facilitate parts 1 and 2 together and part 3 at a later time.

#### *Part 1: Select a recipe and craft grocery lists*

- Split the group into teams of 2-4 youth.
- Ask, “By a show of hands, how many of you have seen the television show ‘Chopped’ on Food Network? For those who have not, chefs are provided with a basket of unknown ingredients and have to prepare a dish, which is judged by a panel of expert chefs. We are going to conduct our own version of ‘Chopped’!”
- Handout the harvest of the month calendar. Turn to the current month and have each group select one of the featured foodstuffs and accompanying recipes.
- Each group should prepare a list of food items they will need and turn it into the facilitator.

#### *Part 2: Purchase foodstuffs at a local farmer’s market and/or grocery*

- If time and resources allow, take the group on a field trip to a local farmer’s market and/or grocery to purchase their items.
- Encourage interest by having youth find and write down other locally produced items. Award bonus points to the team with the longest and most accurate list, which can be applied to the team’s score in part 3.
- If time and resources do not allow, the facilitator can purchase recipe ingredients on his or her own.

#### *Part 3: Prepare meals and present to judges*

- Review proper food safety, handling, and preparation with youth before preparing the meal. See the ‘Sources’ section for web resources and consult your local Family Consumer Sciences Educator, if available.
- Pass-out foodstuffs and set a timer (approximately 30 minutes) for youth to prepare their meals. Periodically announce time remaining (e.g. 20 minutes, 5 minutes, 1 minute remaining).



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## Sources:

- Keep Food Safe preparation tips:  
<http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/>
- Basics for Handling Food Safely:  
<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/safe-food-handling/basics-for-handling-food-safely>
- Locate a local farmer's market:  
<http://www.localharvest.org>
- Research Ohio products:  
<http://www.ohioproud.org/searchpartners.php>
- Learn more about local foods in Ohio:  
[www.localfoods.osu.edu](http://www.localfoods.osu.edu)

### Additional lessons in this series can be found online at:

<http://localfoods.osu.edu/adding-youth-flavor-extensions-signature-programs>

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- Shortly before time expires, instruct youth to plate their meals and prepare for the judges to evaluate their meals. Use the included 'Chopped Rubric' for the judges to score.
- Total the points from each rubric, announce the winning team, have judges provide feedback, and award a prize.

### Additional Ideas:

- Invite local 'celebrities' to judge the dishes such as your county 4-H educator, parents, teachers, county commissioners.
- Add a social media component to promote local foods. Teams could receive bonus points for each 'Like' and 'Retweet'. Create and share a hashtag such as #Chopped Challenge.
- For a more challenging activity, have teams select a featured foodstuff from the current month and research a recipe to prepare.
- Invite a producer to talk with the group about local foods.
- Award bonus points. For example, the group to clean up their work station the best could receive 5 bonus points.

### TALK IT OVER

#### Reflect:

- Ask, "Why did you choose your specific recipe? Did you find the recipe easy or difficult to plan, purchase, and prepare? Why? What have you learned about local foods? What other local foods did you discover during our lesson?"
  - No right answer
- "What are the benefits to purchasing local foods?"
  - Example answers: taste, support local economy, etc.
- "How will you take what you have experienced here and share it with your family and friends?"
  - No right answer

#### Apply:

- Next time you go to the store, commit to purchasing \$10 worth of local foods.
- Find additional ideas at: <http://localfoods.osu.edu/ohio-local-foods-week/ideas-celebrating>
- Challenge youth to prepare at least one of the recipes in the harvest of the month hand-out with their families.