



**Culinary
Arts
Competition
High School**

March 11, 2026

Columbia, SC

The High School Culinary Arts Competition is a Modified Market Basket format.

1. Competitors will receive a market basket with various vegetables, fruits, and starches. The contents of the basket are listed below.
2. Competitors must use a noticeable amount of each item in their market basket.
3. They can supplement those ingredients with items from the community pantry.
4. The competitors will present four copies of a menu that includes an appetizer, a soup, two entrees and a dessert following the competition guidelines. The menus must be turned in at the beginning of the competition and must include which market basket items will appear on each course. Competitor number must be listed on top of each menu.

2026 Market Basket

4 oz Parsnips
6 oz Green Beans
½ head Broccoli
4 oz Forest Mushroom
1 Lemon

2 Zucchini
2 oz Berries

SkillsUSA
High School Culinary Arts
Competition

MENU

Clear Soup

Sautéed Chicken with Sauce
Grains
Vegetables

Custard

High School Judging Categories

Sanitation: 135 pts

Hygiene and Safety
Food Handling

Technical Skills: 120 pts

Mise en Place
Time Management and Planning

Knife Skills: 50 pts

Vegetable Cuts

Butchery: 40 pts

Chicken Butchery

Finished Product: 520 pts

Cleanliness

Cooking Methods and Techniques

Creativity: 20

Taste/Technique: 25 **Written**

Dessert: 70 pts

Presentation: 25 Creativity: 20

Taste/Technique: 25

Entrée: 140 pts each

Presentation: 25

Protein Taste/Technique: 35

Sauce Taste/Technique: 20

Starch Taste/Technique: 20

Vegetable Taste/Tech: 20

Creativity: 20

Menu: 10 pts

Stock: 20 pts

Appetizer/First Course: 80 pts

Presentation: 25

Cracker: 10

Soup: 70 pts

Presentation: 25 Creativity: 20

Taste/Technique: 25

Poor/no clean-up and reset of station and/or

overall competitor area From SkillsUSA –

Uniform infraction

No Resume'

Complete menu and matches dishes served No ANSI approved food safety card

Total Points: 1000

Deductions:

10 points
10 points

10-50 points 10 points
Late Service Windows 10-300 points

8:00 am 8:10

their station with equipment only. No one will be allowed to their station after 8:25 until their scheduled start time. All equipment must fit completely under the station.

8:25

Open question and answer with Technical Committee Chair– all questions will be answered in such a way that everyone will be able to hear the questions and the answers. If a competitor is late and misses this session, the questions will not be repeated or re-answered.

8:45

Competition Schedule

Competitors meet in competition area for roll call. Menus will be turned in at this time.

Competition begins. Competitors will start in groups of 8, based on your competitor number, staggered in 15-minute intervals. The chart below is the competition schedule showing when each presentation window opens.

Every competitor has from 8:10 until 8:25 to set

Competition Timeline

- Please be aware of the time frame for presentation of all items. The time will be based on when the plate is presented for evaluation at the judge's area.
- The window for presenting is 5 minutes. For example, competitors in Group 1 have between 10:15 AM and 10:20 AM to present their appetizer course without penalty.
- Butchery and knife cuts will be judged at your station. These may be presented when

completed, even if completed before the respective window opens.

- You may not present any courses before the window opens.
- On all courses, the competitor will present one plate to the judges and one plate will go on the display table for the public to view.
- **Late service window penalties**

Knife Skills/Butchery: 5-10 minutes late: -10 points; 10-15 minutes late: -20 points

Dessert: 5-10 minutes late: -15 points; 10-15 minutes late: -40 points

Entrees: 5-10 minutes late: -25 points; 10-15 minutes late: -70 points

Any items presented more than 15 minutes late will not be scored.

ALL FOOD PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION MUST BE COMPLETED BY 3:45pm

3:45pm Station clean and begin tear down.

SKILL COMPONENT: CHICKEN BUTCHERY

- Each competitor will have one chicken to butcher. They will execute the 1. Two breasts – The breast should be skin on and following: d boneless, except for the first bone of the wing, which should be attached. The tender should be intact and attached to the breast. 2. Two leg/thigh portions – the leg and thigh should be separated, skin on and bone-in 3. Carcass meat, trim and bones are to be used for stock and soup. 4. Chicken may be further fabricated after evaluation.

SKILL COMPONENT: VEGETABLE CUTS

Prepare the following vegetable cuts and/or tasks and present for judging. These items will be used in other menu items:

1. Small Dice (1/4"x1/4"x1/4") – ½ Onion
2. Chopped Parsley – ¼ Bunch
3. Tomato Concasse –1 tomato
4. Minced 4 large cloves garlic
5. Julienne (1/8"x1/8"x2") Carrots -2 oz. prepared weight required.

STOCK

Skill component: Stock

Prepare stock to be used throughout the competition.

ENTRÉE 1

Skill Components: Sauté, Sauce, Grains, Vegetable

Prepare two identical plates following guidelines below.

Protein: Sautéed Chicken

Vegetable: At least two vegetables displaying distinct knife cuts. One of the vegetables must be prepared using the sauté method.

Starch: Simmered grain, pilaf, or risotto

Sauce: Pan sauce or a derivative of a Mother Sauce

DESSERT

Skill Components: Baking, Custard, Fruit

Prepare two identical plates of basic custard following guidelines below. May be served hot or cold. Serve in soup cups and garnish with fruit.

Suggested recipes, competitor may use their own recipe.

2 cup Milk

2 eggs

¼ cup sugar

½ tsp vanilla

Heat milk until just bubbling at the edge of the pan. Whisk together eggs, sugar and vanilla. Pour a small amount of hot milk into egg mixture to temper. Whisk continuously while slowly adding remaining milk. Pour mixture into cups. Cook in a water bath at 325°F (163° C) for 45 minutes or until set.

Alternate method:

Start a double boiler on the stove top, bring the water to a boil then reduce to a simmer.

Pour the milk into a bowl and place bowl of milk on top of a double boiler over simmering water. Stir occasionally until milk is heated through.

Beat eggs in a large bowl until light. Add sugar and mix well. Temper the egg mixture with a small portion of hot milk into egg mixture, whisking constantly, until warmed and thinned. Pour mixture slowly back into hot milk, whisking constantly.

Cook and stir until custard is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon. An instant read thermometer inserted into custard should read 180° F (82° C). Remove from heat and stir in vanilla.

Transfer custard to cups and serve warm or chilled with appropriate garnish.