

# Bradford County 4-H Table Setting Contest

## OVERVIEW



Friday, February 28, 2025 @ 3:30 PM

Location: TBD

**REGISTRATION FORM DUE BY Monday, February 24, 2025 @ 12:00PM (Noon)**

The **4-H Table Setting Contest** is a creative and educational event where participants select a theme and display **one complete place setting**.

This includes:

- **Table covering** (tablecloth, placemat, or runner)
- **Dishes** (plate, bowl, or other necessary items for the meal)
- **Glassware** (cup, glass, or mug, depending on the menu)
- **Silverware** (fork, knife, spoon—arranged correctly)
- **Centerpiece** (decorative and theme-appropriate)
- **Menu** (a printed menu that complements the theme and meal)

### Why Participate?

This contest is a **fun and engaging** way to build valuable life skills!

Participants will:

- **Learn Proper Table Setting:** Understand how to correctly arrange dishes, utensils, and glassware for a meal.
- **Plan Nutritious Meals:** Gain experience in meal planning that balances nutrition and presentation.
- **Show Creativity & Originality:** Choose a unique theme and bring it to life through colors, decorations, and tableware.
- **Build Confidence in Public Speaking:** Present and explain the place setting and menu to a judge.
- **Demonstrate Knowledge of Food & Safety:** Discuss food choices, nutrition, and safe food handling practices.

This is a county contest only - there is no state contest

# Bradford County 4-H Table Setting Contest

## RULES & GUIDELINES



Friday, February 28, 2025 @ 3:30 PM

Location: TBD

**REGISTRATION FORM DUE BY Monday, February 24, 2025 @ 12:00 PM (Noon)**

1. This contest is open to all Bradford and Union County 4-H and FFA members.
2. Judging will take place by age division. Age is determined as of September 1, 2024.  
Age Divisions are as follows:
  - **Cloverbuds** (ages 5-7) - may enter but will only receive participation ribbons/premium money.
  - **Juniors** (ages 8-10)
  - **Intermediates** (ages 11-13)
  - **Seniors** (ages 14-18)
3. All participants will receive a participation ribbon and premium money, along with additional awards for winners.
4. Each participant **MUST** bring a card table to display their table setting.
5. Participants must arrive by assigned time to set up their display. If participant does not arrive on time, their display may not be judged.
6. **Only participants are allowed in the judging area until the judging is completed, and winners are announced.**
  - During setup, participants may have someone **carry items** into the room, but helpers **must leave immediately** after.
  - **No one** may assist with table setting—doing so will result in **disqualification**.
  - Once a participant **leaves the area after setup, they cannot return** without permission from the contest superintendent.
7. Judges decisions are final.

*NOTE: Every table setting entry may not remain in the 4-H room for display during the fair. A determination will be made by the superintendent the day of the contest based on the number of entries and display space available.*

**Contest Superintendent:** Tamara Dinkins

**4-H Agent:** Bailea Scarbrough

# Bradford County 4-H Table Setting Contest REGISTRATION FORM



Friday, February 28, 2025 @ 3:30 PM

Location: TBD

***DUE BY MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2025 @ 12:00 PM (NOON)***

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

4-H Club/FFA Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Age as of September 1, 2024:

\_\_\_\_ Cloverbud (5-7 years old)      \_\_\_\_ Intermediate (11-13 years old)

\_\_\_\_ Junior (8-10 years old)      \_\_\_\_ Senior (14-18 years old)

Table Setting Theme/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Please write a brief description of your table setting:

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Call 904-966-6224 with any questions.

This registration form can be dropped off at the Bradford Extension Office or emailed to  
Bradford4H@ifas.ufl.edu



## Guidelines for Creating Your Table Setting

Did you know you can be a designer each time you set the table? A designer chooses and arranges elements according to a plan for both beauty and order. A neat, clean, and attractive table setting makes any meal more enjoyable.

There is more than one way to set a table. The usual method is to place all the dishes, flatware, and food on the table before anyone sits down. However, for company or special meals, some food and dishes may be left in the kitchen and served later. At a buffet or picnic, diners may fill their plates and glasses before they are seated.

The way you set your table depends on how the meal is served. Be creative and have fun!  
**Color, texture, design, and creativity are important.**

### For the Table Setting Contest:

**One place setting** is to be displayed, including:

- ✓ Table covering
- ✓ Dinnerware
- ✓ Glassware
- ✓ Flatware
- ✓ Centerpiece
- ✓ Menu

**DO NOT PREPARE FOOD!**



Participants **MUST bring a card table** for the display (*except for the picnic category, where an appropriate blanket or covering may be placed on the floor*).

**Selecting a Theme** - What is the occasion? A family dinner, a holiday, or lunch with friends? Choose a theme that fits the occasion. Themes can range from a fishing party sack lunch to a formal Mother's Day dinner.

**Table Appointments** - Choose table appointments that match the occasion and theme. Paper plates, plasticware, and paper napkins are acceptable for a picnic, but not for a formal dinner. Flatware and dishware must be safe to eat from—no glitter, glue, or decorations should be applied to eating surfaces.

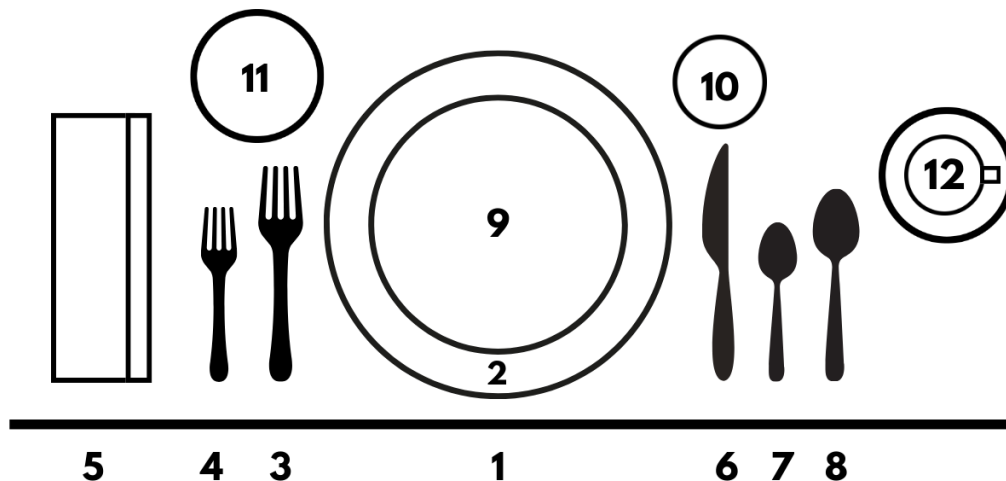
**Table Covering** - The table covering serves as the background for your setting, protecting the table and reducing noise. Placemats and tablecloths are acceptable, or the table may be left bare if appropriate for the theme. Choose colors and textures that match or contrast with your dishes and decorations.

## Guidelines for Creating Your Table Setting (Continued)

**Place Setting** - Each person's cover (place setting) should be at least 20 inches wide and each cover should be set exactly the same. **For the contest, only one cover/place setting is needed!**

1. **Plate** – Centered about **one inch from the table's edge (1)** and at the center of the place setting **(2)** *Placement may vary if a table is not used.*
2. **Forks & Spoons** – Forks are placed to the left of the plate. **(3 & 4)** Spoons are placed to the right of the plate/knife. **(7 & 8)**  
If multiple forks or spoons are used, the one needed first is placed on the outside.  
*Example: The salad fork and soup spoon should be placed on the outside.*  
*The dinner fork and teaspoon should be placed on the inside.*
3. **Knife** – Placed to the right of the plate with blade facing the plate **(6)**
4. **Napkin** – Folded and placed to the left of the fork with the fold on the left **(5)**, OR under the fork, OR on top of the plate. *Decorative folds are encouraged; placement may vary.*
5. **Beverage Glass** – Placed one inch above the tip of the knife. **(10)** Additional glasses should be arranged to the right in the order served.
6. **Coffee/Tea Cup** – Placed on a saucer to the right of the spoon, with the handle pointing right. **(12)**
7. **Soup Bowl** - May be placed on the dinner plate. **(9)**
8. **Salad, Bread, or Dessert Plates/Bowls** – Placed above the forks **(11)**

Each dish used in your cover should correspond to your menu...  
Placement may vary based on meal service!



## Guidelines for Creating Your Table Setting (Continued)

**Centerpiece** - The centerpiece should complement the table setting and theme. Even though only one place setting is displayed, imagine the full table and ensure the centerpiece does not obstruct the view. If candles are used, they may NOT be lit. *Points will be deducted for lit candles.*

**Menu** - When planning a menu, first decide on the **main dish**. Then, select appropriate vegetables, appetizer, soup, or salad. Add a bread, dessert, and beverage, if desired. Participants are encouraged to develop creative menu items. For example, you might name a food to fit your theme. NOTE: The use of alcoholic beverages in any menu will disqualify table setting!

**Attire** - Participant's attire should correspond with the theme/ occasion of their table setting.

**During the Contest** - Each participant will spend 5 to 10 minutes presenting their table setting to a judge.

**Presentation:** Act as a host, welcoming the judges as your guests. Explain:

- Why you chose the theme
- The thought process behind your menu
- Food preparation and food safety
- Table setting techniques

**Interview Questions:** Be prepared to answer questions about:

- Ingredients and preparation of menu items
- Food safety considerations





## Guidelines for Creating Your Table Setting (Continued)

**Writing the Menu** - The menu should be displayed on a **4x6 card or larger** using a medium of your choice (index card, ceramic tile, chalkboard, etc.). The menu must be **printed or typed** by the participant. It may be decorated or propped up for display.

### Menu Formatting Guidelines:

- List foods in the order they are served.
- Use single spacing between food items, and double spacing between courses.
- Use CAPITALS for the first letter of each word (except articles, conjunctions, and prepositions) Correct spelling is important!
- When an item on the menu has an accompaniment, either place the main dish to the left and the accompaniment to the right, OR center the main dish, with the accompaniment below, OR list them together on the same line below.
- When a food is commonly prepared in more than one way, avoid confusion by describing the method of cooking, such as: Roast Turkey or French Fried Potatoes.
- List every food item except for butter, cream, sugar, or salad dressing (unless it's a specialty item like Honey Butter or Poppysseed Dressing)
- List beverages last.
- Creative naming is encouraged (excluding formal menus)

*Example: Patriotic Punch for a 4th of July Theme, but Cherry Punch for a Formal Theme.*

Menus may include an appetizer, main dish, starchy vegetable, other vegetable, salad, bread, dessert, and beverage - but each menu will vary!

### Common Meal-Planning Mistakes

#### 1. Preparation & Variety

- No clear main dish or too many main dishes
- Same cooking method (all fried, all sauced, etc.)
- Repetitive ingredients (too many starches, proteins, or the same fruit/vegetable)

#### 2. Color

- Too much of one color or clashing colors

#### 3. Nutrition

- Too much of one food group or missing key groups
- Lacking variety to meet nutritional needs

#### 4. Temperature

- Too many foods at the same temperature

#### 5. Flavor

- Too bland or too strong
- Repetitive flavors or no balance (sweet, tart, savory)

#### 6. Texture

- Too much of one texture (all soft, all chewy, no crunch)
- Lack of variety in size and shape

Aim for balance in flavor, texture, color, and nutrition for a more enjoyable meal!