



Recipe Development¹

- Start by thinking about food combinations that you would like to eat. Look at restaurant menus, food magazines, television cooking shows, social media outlets, or cruise the aisles of grocery stores to gather ideas about flavors and ingredients.
- Consider your fellow students and their likes/dislikes.
- Review contest guidelines for recipe requirements, such as nutrition guidelines, types of ingredients used, etc.
- Keep in mind that recipes for school nutrition programs should use less expensive ingredients and basic kitchen utensils.
- If your recipe inspiration is an existing recipe, please note that you must make at least three major ingredient changes to consider the recipe original.

Photographing Food²

Lighting

- Avoid using the flash on your camera to prevent unnatural shadows or glare.
- Indirect daylight is the best light for food photographs.
- Find a window where there is plenty of natural light.

Props

- Staging your dish can bring more visual appeal to your photo.
- Props such as utensils, napkins, and fresh herbs can help bring out the color in your dish.
- Avoid overloading the shot with too many items that compete with the food.

Focal Point

- Consider taking photos from all angles to discover where your dish looks best.
- Close up shots of foods are often more appealing as it draws attention to certain ingredients.
- Keep in mind that the center of your dish may not make the best photo, consider moving the focal point of your dish off center.

General Considerations

- Plate one serving of your dish instead of providing a picture of the whole dish.
- Consider using a solid colored backdrop or contrasting colors when staging your photo.
- Provide a high resolution picture whenever possible.



Example of a poorly plated dish.



Example of a well plated dish.

¹ Stanley, Marcia K. "Creating Scrumptious and Reliable Recipes". *Tastings Eat, Drink, Savor, and Learn...* Summer 2015.

² Frasier, Amy "Communicating About Food: What Every Dietitian Ought to Know". *Tastings Eat, Drink, Savor, and Learn...* Winter 2014.