

# Columbia County 4-H Cupcake Wars – April 12, 2025

*(Loosely based on the Food Network Series)*

## 2025 Theme: “Christmas In July”

*(It is the same theme as the 2025 Columbia County Fair)*



### Time of event:

9:00 – Arrive and set up

9:15 – 10:00 – Decorate cupcakes and create display

10:00 – Presentations and Bite-ability Testing

- \* Team Presentation (order chosen by random drawing)

- \* Presentation and Theme Reaction by Guest Cupcake Expert/s and Audience

- \* Team's Choice Selection for each Division

- \* Guest Cupcake Expert/s Bite-ability Testing (order chosen by random drawing)

- \* Cupcake Expert/s Choice Selection for each Division

Announce Selections

Clean up Workstations

Self-assessments and Door Prizes

*Note: Teams will be invited to place extra cupcakes on a designated table to share with audience members following the team presentations.*

### Location:

Health & Human Services Building, 111 E. Mullet Street, Portage. Meeting rooms 2-3

**Grade Divisions:** Team must enter in the Division of the oldest member of their team. \*

- Division 1: Grades 3 – 5
- Division 2: Grades 6 - 8
- Division 3: Grades 9 and older

### Objectives:

- To promote self-confidence.
- To develop public presentation ability.
- To showcase baking and decorating ability.
- To work together as a team.
- To allow for self-expression in a safe supportive environment.
- To develop safe food handling skills.

### Guidelines for Cupcake Wars:

1. Teams shall consist of two or more Columbia County 4-H members. Cloverbuds may be part of any team.
2. Participants **do not** need to be a member of foods or cake decorating projects.
3. Each team will create a display following the annual Columbia County Fair theme. A minimum number of cupcakes is required which is equivalent to the number of team members. There is no maximum.
  - (e.g., If you have 3 team members, you must display at least 3 cupcakes. If you have 5 team members, the minimum number is 5 cupcakes).
  - There is no maximum number of cupcakes allowed for the display.
4. Cupcakes must be made from scratch (no box mixes).
5. Each team will bring “naked” cupcakes. The cupcakes should have no frosting and be in paper wrappers only.
6. Participants need to exhibit knowledge of their recipe and bring three copies of the recipe.
7. Each team will bring the frosting mixed in bowls. The frosting should not be tinted prior to contest. Teams will tint and place in frosting bags, if needed, at the contest.

8. Additional decorations may be used as long as the size does not exceed a card table display (34" X 34"), however, there is no minimum or maximum height for the display.
9. Each team will be assigned to a preparation table and a display table. A team may bring their own card table.
10. Each team will have **45 minutes** to frost and decorate their cupcakes and prepare their display prior to the presentation.
11. Electricity is available at the contest. Teams should bring extension cords if electricity will be needed.
12. Each team must provide their own equipment. Washing facilities will not be available for teams to wash and share equipment.
13. Food safety: Each team should bring a food safety kit (enough for each member) which includes the following: plastic aprons, head coverings, disposable wipes, garbage receptacle (ice cream pail), non-latex gloves will be provided. Teams should practice proper food safety and be prepared to discuss food safety practice used by their team in their presentation to the judges. Guest Cupcake Experts will observe preparation to assist in determining the safe food handling score.
14. Adult leaders may be on site, but cannot assist with decorating the cupcakes or putting the display together.
15. Each team is to clean up the preparation area at the end of the competition.
16. Teams with additional cupcakes may share them with the audience between team presentations and bite-ability testing.

### **Team Presentation:**

1. Each team will present a verbal presentation to the Guest Cupcake Expert/s and the audience describing their team's efforts.
  - Describe the steps your team followed to create your display. Details may include, but are not limited to:
    - \* How your team made decisions.
    - \* How you decided on your cake and frosting recipe.
    - \* How your team incorporated the theme in your display.
    - \* Skills your team needed to practice.
    - \* How you made and decorated your cupcake and created your display.
    - \* Role each person on the team played in creating your Cupcake Wars product.
    - \* What your team learned because of your participation in Cupcake Wars.
2. Each team will vote for a team choice in each Division following all the team presentations. Each must complete a self-assessment form following team presentations.

### **Bite-ability Testing:**

1. Each team needs to select 3 cupcakes from their display for the Bite-ability Testing.
2. The Guest Cupcake Expert/s will taste test each team's selected cupcakes for "Bite-ability".
3. Teams should be prepared to answer any questions asked by Guest Cupcake Experts. Think about where your cupcakes might be served and why you made the design decisions you did. Also, how will it be served?
4. The Guest Cupcake Expert/s will share their reaction with the team and audience. (See Bite-ability Testing Sheet for testing categories.)

### **Recognition:**

Participation Ribbons will be awarded to all participants.

- One Cupcake Expert Choice will be awarded in each division based on bite-ability.
- One Team's Choice will be awarded in each division based on team voting.

## Columbia County Fair “Cupcake Wars” entry process:

Members must enter the Cupcake Wars exhibit, in their specific grade area, on their Columbia County Fair Entry Form in order to receive a premium. Youth (*in all project areas*) are eligible to participate in this class.

### JUNIOR

- Department 31
- Communications
- CLASS G – CUPCAKE WARS
- Entry/Judging Time: Tuesday, 2:00 – 7:00 PM
- Face-to-Face Judging

#### Lot

- 1 Beginners – Grades 3-5
- 2 Intermediate – Grades 6-8
- 3 Advanced – Grades 9 and older

- Teams will create a display that shows the process they used to create their “4-H Cupcake Wars” Exhibit.
- Fair displays should be a maximum of 30” x 30” x 15.”
- Decorated cupcakes like those made for the original event are required to be part of the fair display.
- Additional display information could include recipes, photos, equipment used, team roles, or responsibilities.
- Team members will describe to the fair judge the steps followed to complete their exhibit using effective communication skills.
- All team members must be present during the face-to-face judging unless an exemption is requested and approved; otherwise, the entry will be penalized one placing.
- Guidelines for the Cupcake Wars event are available at the Columbia County Extension Office or on the Columbia County 4-H website.

# Columbia County 4-H Cupcake Wars Bite-ability Testing – Guest Cupcake Expert/s

	Possible Points	Score	Comments
<b>Three Presented Cupcakes</b>			
<b>Bite-ability:</b> What is the cake to frosting ratio? Does the ratio impede the ability to take a complete bite? Do we have to resort to using a fork? Size matters. Not too big, not too small. Is it too hard to get the paper off and when you do, does cake hold together?	10		
<b>Frosting:</b> Flavor, Type, texture are all important. Does the frosting complement the cake? Is there enough for each bite? Too much?	10		
<b>Cake:</b> We're looking for moistness, flavor, and texture. Ingredients were used to enhance the flavor of the cupcake. Cupcake has a nice crumb texture to it. Flavors mesh well; not dry, burnt or underdone. The cake supports the frosting well? Does it collapse after you take a bite?	10		
<b>Cupcake Presentation:</b> How pleasing is the cupcake to the eye? Are the icing colors appropriate for the flavor? Does the cupcake have flair and originality?	10		
<b>Safe Food Handling:</b> Do team members have proper attire to limit cross contamination? Is bare-hand contact managed appropriately? Is work station neat at all times?	10		
<b>Knowledge of Recipe &amp; Ability to answer questions:</b> Team members explained their use of the ingredients in cupcakes. Knowledgeable in their ingredients for both the cupcake and frosting.	10		
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>60</b>		

## Team's Choice Award -- Best Overall Cupcake Wars Cupcake Design

Cupcake Wars teams may vote for one Cupcake Wars display. You may ask the exhibitor questions if desired. One team in each division will be awarded the Team's Choice Award. Please place your "ballot" in the ballot box at the Registration Table.

I vote for **team** number \_\_\_\_\_ because\* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*\*(because they are my friend is not a valid reason)*

When voting for Best Overall Cupcake Wars display, please consider the following:

- The cupcakes look "good enough" to eat?
- The theme is carried through in the display and cupcakes?
- The cupcakes and display is creatively decorated?
- The design of the cupcakes/display is well thought out?
- The cupcakes and display are pleasing together?
- The team explained how they created their display?
- The team explained how they made/decorated their cupcakes?
- The display is connected with the cupcakes?
- The members exhibited a sense of teamwork?

# Columbia County Cupcake Wars Self-Assessment

## Page 1

Your completed form will serve as your entry for the door prize drawings.



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

Club: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Please reflect on the following:

<p>GOAL: Youth increase their self-confidence and learn new skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Baking and decorating ability.</li><li>• Developed confidence in my skills and abilities.</li><li>• Willing to try something new.</li></ul>	<p>What I did well:</p>  <p>What could have been improved:</p>
<p>GOAL: Youth work effectively as a team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I had a voice and role with the team.</li><li>• Opportunity to contribute to the team effort.</li><li>• I helped all members feel like they belonged to the team.</li><li>• As a team members, I helped develop a plan, supported the plan and carried through with my responsibilities.</li></ul>	<p>What I did well:</p>  <p>What could have been improved:</p>
<p>GOAL: Youth complete a creative project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exhibit has a neat appearance and is well organized.</li><li>• The exhibit shows self expression through creativity and innovation.</li><li>• The main theme is easily identified.</li></ul>	<p>What I did well:</p>  <p>What could have been improved:</p>
<p>GOAL: Youth demonstrate effective communication skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Helped to share our team plan and process.</li><li>• Displayed professionalism such as eye contact during the verbal presentation.</li><li>• Demonstrated poise and comfort when speaking in front of group.</li><li>• Answered any questions clearly and completely.</li></ul>	<p>What I did well:</p>  <p>What could have been improved:</p>

Circle the Life Skills you learned or practiced on the wheel on the back of this form.



# Columbia County Cupcake Wars Self-Assessment

## Page 2

This life skill wheel identifies many skills 4-H members learn or practice.

Circle the words on the outside of the wheel you learned or practiced as a Cupcake Wars participant.

