

DEPARTMENT 15 HOMEMADE CHOCOLATE CAKE CONTEST

and DEPARTMENT 11

PA PREFERRED® JUNIOR BAKING CONTEST - COOKIES, BROWNIES & BARS

Chairperson: Missy Van Zant - (717) 844-4198

2026 HOMEMADE CHOCOLATE CAKE CONTEST

Sponsored: PA State Association of County Fairs

RULES

- Open to any individual amateur baker who is a Pennsylvania resident. One entry per person.
- Entrants may NOT have won 1st place in this Homemade Chocolate Cake contest at any other fair in 2026.
- The cake and any fillings and frostings must be made from scratch with edible ingredients. No pre-packaged ingredients may be used (ex: no pre-made mixes, cookie dough, pie crust, frosting, etc.). Any decorations must be edible. No supports can be used.
- Cake recipe must feature chocolate or cocoa as a main ingredient.
- Entry must be a layered chocolate cake. The finished overall size of the cake, including decorations, shall not exceed 12" high by 12" wide by 12" deep.
- Entry must be frosted and frosting must also be made from "scratch" (no pre-packaged frosting).
- The entire cake entry must be submitted for judging on cardboard or other food safe disposable setting. (All pans, plates and dishes are considered to be disposable and will not be returned.)
- The cake entry and its recipes will become the property of the Fair or PA Farm Show and will not be returned.
- Recipes must be submitted with the entry, printed on one side of 8-1/2" x 11" sheets of paper. Recipe must list all ingredients, quantities, and the preparation instructions. Entrant's name, address and phone number must be printed on the back side of all the pages.
- Refrigeration is not available at the fair or PA Farm Show. Entries that require refrigeration after baking must indicate so in the recipe. Those entries will not be sold, auctioned or otherwise distributed for consumption after judging for food safety reasons.

11. Judging Criteria:

Flavor	35 points
<i>(aroma, taste, good balance of flavorings)</i>	
Inside Characteristics	25 points
<i>(texture, moist and tender crumb; not soggy or dry)</i>	
Frosting	20 points
<i>(taste, texture, even color)</i>	
Overall Appearance	15 points
<i>(surface, shape, finished size, color)</i>	
Creativity	5 points
TOTAL	100 points

FAIR PRIZES: 1st = \$100 2nd = \$20 3rd = \$15

First Place Winner is eligible for the 2027 PA Farm Show competition.

Premiums for the 2027 PA Farm Show competition

1st = \$500, 2nd = \$250, 3rd = \$100

Fourth Place - Rosette Ribbon

Fifth Place - Rosette Ribbon

Top Overall
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2026 PA PREFERRED® JUNIOR BAKING CONTEST COOKIES, BROWNIES AND BARS

The goal of the PA Preferred® Junior Baking Contest is to encourage young people across the Commonwealth to participate in Pennsylvania's agricultural fairs by showcasing Pennsylvania grown and produced products in their contest entries.



RULES

- Open to amateur bakers ages 8 through 18 who are a Pennsylvania resident. Anyone who bakes for a bakery business, derives a consistent income from baking, and/or advertises set pricing for purchasing their baking is considered a "professional" baker and should not compete in this contest. Entrants cannot be a first place winner at any Fair from last year for the Junior Baking Contest.
- Entrants may NOT have won 1st place in this PA Preferred® Junior Baking contest at any other fair in 2026.
- Entry must be six (6) individual sized portions of the baked entry item (cookies, brownies or bars).
- The cookies, brownies or bars, and any fillings and frostings, must be made from scratch with edible ingredients. No pre-packaged ingredients may be used (ex: no pre-made mixes, cookie dough, pie crust, frosting, etc.). All decorations must be edible.
- At least two (2) PA Preferred® or locally produced ingredients must be used in the recipe. The recipe MUST clearly state each "PA Preferred" ingredient or locally produced ingredient with the words "PA Preferred" and then the name of the source that made/grew the product.
- A PA Preferred® logo is not required because not all PA Preferred® products carry the label. The name of the ingredient and the source is sufficient. Contact RA-AGPAPPreferred@pa.gov for any assistance with qualifying ingredients.
- Entry must be submitted for judging on a food safe disposable setting. (All pans, plates and dishes are considered to be disposable and will not be returned.)
- The PA Preferred® entry and its recipes will become the property of the Fair or PA Farm Show and will not be returned.
- Recipe(s) must be submitted with the entry, printed on one side of 8-1/2" x 11" sheets of paper. Recipe must list all ingredients, quantities, and the preparation instructions. The name of each PA Preferred® ingredient or locally produced ingredient must be clearly listed along with the name of the source that made/grew the product (ex: PA Preferred Milk - Galliker's brand; or Apples - Smith Farm Orchard). Entrant's name, age, address and phone number must be printed on the back side of all the pages.
- Refrigeration is not available at the fair or PA Farm Show. Entries that require refrigeration after baking must indicate so in the recipe. Those entries will not be sold, auctioned or otherwise distributed for consumption after judging for food safety reasons.

11. Judging Criteria:

Flavor	40 points
<i>(aroma, taste, good balance of flavorings)</i>	
Inside Characteristics	30 points
<i>(texture, even grain, evenly baked)</i>	
Overall Appearance	20 points
<i>(surface, shape, size, color)</i>	
Topping, Icing, Decoration	10 points
TOTAL	100 points

FAIR PRIZES: 1st = \$100 2nd = \$15 3rd = \$10

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