



Senior Nutrition Program Activity Guide: Recipe Sharing

This activity is a terrific way to address two key components of well-being: nutrition and socialization. Sharing recipes not only fosters connection between program participants, but it's also an effective way for older adults to share about their cultures, honor family traditions, or to simply be creative!

Coordination

- Assign a leader/coordinator to plan and manage the activity.
- Decide on key details, like recipe format and how you will share recipes (see Activity Options below).
- Promote the opportunity and collect contact information of those interested in taking part.
- Provide detailed information to participants.
- Collect, organize, and share the recipes collected.

Activity Options

Tailor your approach to this activity based on your unique program and participants. Think about things like access to technology and program resources available for coordination and promotion.

Formats

- **Recipe cards.** Collecting recipes in writing requires the lowest level of effort for program staff. While it may be less engaging than other options, it is still a fun way to connect, take part in a group effort, and produce a sharable collection or cookbook. Written recipes can be collected by mail, email, or even by phone if someone can write down what is said.
- **Video recipes (virtual cooking).** This is a very engaging way for participants to share recipes—by following them and making the dish on video. Or, simpler, talking about the recipe—a story behind it or what makes it special. There are a few ways to coordinate sharing on video.

Video Sharing Options

- A participant uses their own technology (e.g., smartphone) to record and then sends the video to the coordinator.
- The coordinator sets up an online video meeting (e.g., Zoom) with a participant and records the session.
- A program team member records the participant cooking or sharing in a space where social distancing, PPE, and any other local safety guidance can be followed. In warmer weather, an outdoor location may work well.

Themes

Consider a common theme to help participants pick a recipe to share. Healthy desserts, favorite (but not secret) family recipes, foods that reflect cultural heritage, and even light-hearted options like silly snacks can help to provide inspiration and focus for the activity.

Sharing

Recipe collections (written or video), can be shared online—with permission of the participants—via the program's website, social media accounts, or email. Be sure to have a release signed by anyone whose photo or video will be shared. Also, remember to caption videos for accessibility.

Share your collection with partners and local media, too. You can simultaneously recognize the contributions of participants and promote your program's impact.

As a nice finishing touch, if recipe cards can be printed and bound, send a copy to each participant.