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HOW TO ORGANIZE A COMPETITIVE EATING CONTEST

Competitive Eating Contests can be a great fundraiser. Like any fundraising event, it takes time and thought into a plan to execute a safe event that produces a profit!

Set a budget. Think about the number of participants and spectators. Compare the cost of the items you need to purchase. These can be purchased at discount wholesale clubs. Don't forget to budget for decorations, cleaning supplies, prizes and the like. If you are renting a location, make sure you know all the costs and those costs are in writing.

Decide on your location. This can be at your facility, on campus, a local park or a building you rent. Make sure there is enough room for everyone. Have a back-up plan if you are having it outside; Mother Nature doesn't always cooperate. Remember to have enough parking and restroom facilities for everyone in attendance. Do not forget your guests that have special needs and try to make it as easy for them as possible.

Create a registration process. Create a system so participants can register. Include on the registration the name, email, phone, address, age, organization, cost and deadline to register, rules and prizes for the competition.

Decide on the number of guests you will be having. That will depend on your location. If you are organizing the competitive eating contest to be a fundraiser, selling tickets in advance is an excellent way to know the number of those attending. Do not sell more tickets than your location (and local laws) will allow.

HMFP has a great resource on fundraising and ticket sales. LINK: https://www.holmesmurphy.com/fraternal/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/06/Fundraisers-Ticket-Sale-Recommended-Procedures-Final.pdf

Online Ticket Options:

Eventbrite: https://www.eventbrite.com/

Eventzilla: https://www.eventzilla.net/us/home

Event Smart: https://eventsmart.com/

Decide on the rules in advance. Make sure the competitors understand these rules before the competition starts. Let the spectators in on these rules as well. Decide if you will have a time limit. You can instead set a specific number of food items that must be eaten. Whoever eats them the fastest wins. This will help keep your food costs down. You can even have different rules for different age groups competing. Keep safety first.



The International Federation of Competitive Eating (IFOCE) was formed in 1997 to unify the many eating competitions held around the world. IFOCE safety rules require that competitive eaters be at least 18 years old, and they strongly discourage any kind of training or practice at home, insisting that competitive eating is only safe in a controlled environment. IFOCE competitions are judged by the amount eaten within a set period of time, traditionally 10 or 12 minutes.

The food to be eaten is either weighed, like cabbage, or cut into uniform pieces, in the case of a <u>pizza</u>-eating contest, for example. No one is allowed to start eating until an official gives the signal. Competitors can eat the food however they want, either breaking it into pieces or just shoving it in. They can dip the food into a liquid (usually water) to make it softer. If the food has different parts, the parts do not have to be eaten together. For example, hot dogs can be eaten separately from their buns. When time expires, any food that is already in the contestant's mouth counts as eaten as long as he or she eventually swallows it.

What happens if someone vomits? International Federation of Competitive Eating (IFOCE) rules are very clear, though they are very delicate about the terms that they use to describe someone throwing up. Anyone who suffers "a Roman incident" is disqualified if the result of that incident touches the plate or table. Once time has expired, competitors can rid themselves of the massive amount of food they've just eaten however they like.

Designate specific people to do certain jobs during the contest. There should be one person assigned to each contestant to count the number of food items each person eats. Designate someone to give the contestants more food items, if they are needed. One "supplier" to every two or three contestants should be sufficient. Of course, have a "bucket person" assigned to no more than three contestants in case of vomiting. Be sure to have at least one person trained in CPR and first aid or have emergency medical technician on site, in case of choking or any other medical problems. This person will have to be given the authority to stop the contestant or the contest if he deems it necessary for safety reasons. Also, assign people on hand who will take photos or tape the contest.

Try to be prepared for everything and anything. You can't foresee every possible problem, but think like an alarmist to be sure your bases are covered. If the unthinkable happens, remain calm and collected. Handle problems quickly and quietly so your guests do not panic. Do not hesitate to call 911 if a medial situation arises.



