



2026 PA Preferred® Junior Baking Contest Cookies, Brownies and Bars Sponsor: PA Preferred®

The goal of the PA Preferred® 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:

1. Open to any individual **amateur** baker (ages 8 through 18 at the time of the fair’s contest) who is a Pennsylvania resident. One entry per person.
2. **Entrants may NOT have won 1st place in this PA Preferred® Junior Baking contest at any other fair in 2026.**
3. Entry must be **six (6) individual sized portions** of the baked entry item (cookies, brownies or bars).
4. 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.*). Any decorations must just be edible.
5. At least two (2) PA Preferred® or locally produced ingredients must be used in the recipe. Some examples of qualifying ingredients include grains (*such as oats or flour*), butter, milk, eggs, fruits and/or vegetables.
6. **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 (*see attached example*). Contact RA-AGPAPreferred@pa.gov for any assistance with qualifying ingredients.
7. 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.*)
8. The PA Preferred® entry and its recipes will become the property of the Fair or PA Farm Show and will not be returned.
9. 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 preparation instructions. The name of each PA Preferred® ingredient or locally produced ingredient must be clearly listed with the words “PA Preferred” and then the name of the source that made/grew the product (*ex: PA Preferred Milk – Galliker’s brand; or PA Preferred Apples - Smith Farm Orchard*). Entrant’s name, age, address and phone number must be printed on the back side of all pages.
10. 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 = \$20 2nd = \$15 3rd = \$10

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

Premiums for the 2027 PA FARM SHOW competition
First Place - \$500.00 Second Place - \$250.00 Third Place - \$100.00
 Fourth Place – Rosette Ribbon Fifth Place – Rosette Ribbon

Recipe

Name of recipe: Ashlee's Apple Crisp Bars

Prep Time: _____ Bake Time: _____ Serves: _____

Ingredients

shortbread Crust

- 1/4 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter (PA Preferred, Lapp Valley Farm)



Apple Filling

- 4 cups apples, peeled, cored and thinly sliced (PA Preferred, Smith Farm Orchard)
- 2 Tablespoons flour
- 1/4 cup sugar



Crisp Topping

- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 3/4 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup chilled butter, cut into 1/2-inch cubes



Instructions

Shortbread Crust

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Line a 9x9 pan with parchment paper, leaving extra hanging over the ends, spray with cooking spray.
2. In a large mixing bowl, beat together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy, about 2-3 minutes. Add vanilla and mix until combined. Add flour and mix until combined and dough is crumbly.
3. Press dough evenly into bottom of prepared pan. Bake for 12-14 minutes, until dough is slightly puffed. Remove from oven and set aside, maintain oven temperature.

Apple Filling

4. In a large bowl, combine apples, flour and sugar. Mix until apples are thoroughly coated. Arrange apples on baked crust.

Crisp Topping

5. In a medium bowl, mix together first five ingredients. With a pastry blender or two knives, cut in butter until mixture is crumbly. Spread topping over apples in an even layer.
6. Bake uncovered at 350° F for 45 minutes, or until topping is golden and apple mixture is bubbly. Let cool, lift apple crisp using the extra parchment paper at the ends as handles, and cut into bars.