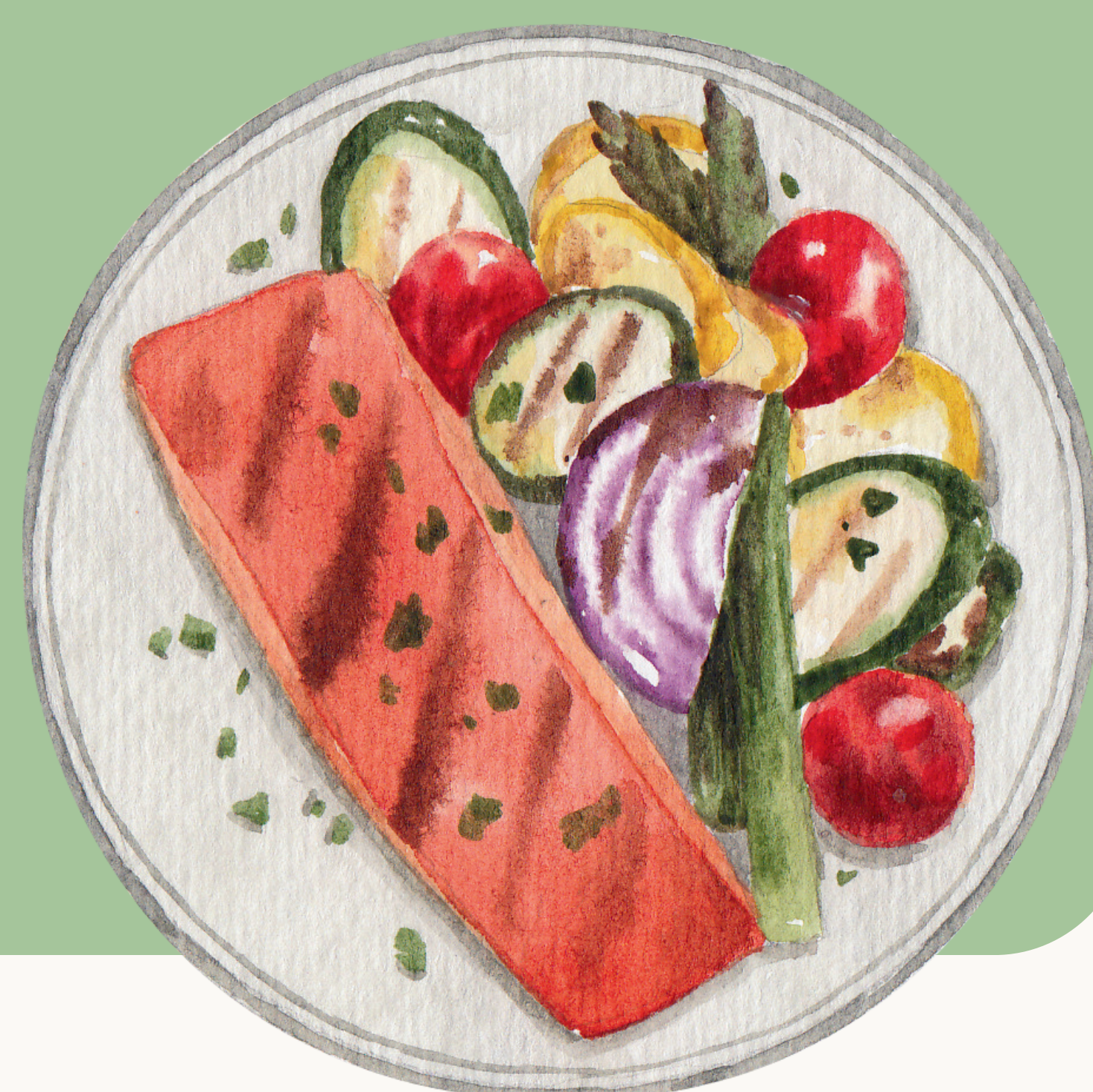


# Cooking LIKE A CHEF



## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Childhood obesity is a growing concern across the country. In South Carolina the obesity rate in children ages 10-17 is 20.8%. Diet and Exercise are recommended to reduce weight issues and associated health risks. To mitigate the overweight problem in SC and to elevate cooking and healthy food choice for youth, the Healthy Living Committee offers Cooking Like a Chef (CLC). CLC is an annual event that provides hands-on experience for youth to increase their culinary knowledge and skills with the help of food professionals. In 2024, CLC summit hosted 34 high school youth from 14 SC counties and 23 4-H agents/volunteers.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

To educate youth on culinary nutrition, build confidence in cooking skills, to promote a collaborative network of students and agents, and to encourage positive culinary nutrition messaging in schools, worksites, and communities of the participating youth. While CLC is a one-day event, the goal is for the youth in attendance to take their knowledge learned and share it within their home counties as a summer camp.

## TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience for the annual summit is senior aged 4-H members. The target audience for the week long camp lead by the summit attendees is youth aged 10-14 years old.

## DELIVERY MODE

An annual summit that agents, food professionals, and senior aged 4-H members participate in to gain confidence in cooking skills and in making healthy ingredient and food choices. The summit is divided into two parts. During the first part, 4-H members rotate through 5 menu stations with the guidance of food professionals. During the second part, 4-H members are divided into 4-person teams to participate in a cooking challenge. The activity provides a chance for the team to practice preparing a meal in one hour and coaching is provided. The teams are invited to attend a statewide team cooking challenge a few weeks after the summit at which time a state winner is decided. Pre and post questionnaires consisting of yes and no questions are administered to gauge participants culinary knowledge before and after the summit. Focus groups are conducted one month following the summit to collect feedback on what they enjoyed and what they would like to see modified.

## OUTCOMES

The 2024 pre questionnaire average score was 71%. The post questionnaire score increased to 87%. The post questionnaires indicated that participants were more mindful of fat intake and more confident with culinary skills after the summit. The focus groups indicated that participants loved the collaboration and autonomy allowed at the summit. Participants also requested more time for rest and reflection in upcoming summits.

## CONCLUSION

The feedback from the 2024 summit is being used to inform the planning of the 2025 summit. Cooking Like a Chef curriculum within the annual summit and the cooking camps have impacted the 4-H participants and provided continued practical application of cooking and nutrition for youth in SC. The goal is to reduce the percentage of youth 10-17 years old that struggle with weight as well as to enhance the confidence in cooking and in food choices for this audience.

