

Today, 4 November, the final of the “Best School Cafeteria” competition held at the Tallinn Food Fair was won by the Vääna Manor School, which was represented by Jaanika Rist and Katrin Noodapera. The best school cafeteria cooks were also acknowledged by Evelin Ilves, who said that if a good cook is not the most important person in a school, she is definitely one of the most beloved.

The cooks from the seven schools that participated in the final had to prepare three dishes in two hours and 20 minutes – a typical school lunch of soup and dessert, which is actually served at the school, and an innovative fish and vegetable dish of their choice. The winning Vääna Manor School cooks prepared a fresh cabbage and minced meat soup, *kama* cream and Baltic herring pancake with vegetables.

Evelin Ilves presented a special award to Mari Kunder and Merli Vares from the Valga Basic School for the best fish and vegetable dish, and gave them copies of her cookbook *Gifts of Taste*. The best school cafeteria cook will also receive an invitation to the Independence Day reception in Tartu.

The panel of judges comprising food experts evaluated the cook’s professionalism, fulfilment of hygiene requirements, food preparation processes, the appearance, taste and serving temperature of the dishes, and the ingredients that were used. In the case of the fish and vegetable dish, innovativeness, possible popularity among the students, and the possibility of actually preparing the dish in a school cafeteria were also taken into account.

A total of 22 schools registered for the competition this year. In addition to the victorious Vääna Manor School, the final also included the Häädemeeste School, Kose-Uuemõisa Kindergarten and School, Martna Basic School, Tabasalu Upper Secondary School, Tallinn Mahtra Upper Secondary School and Valga Basic School. Commendations were also given to the Ahtme School, Antsla Upper Secondary School, Ardu School, Haabersti Russian Upper Secondary School, Kammeri School, Kehra Upper Secondary School, Keila-Joa Sanatorium Boarding School, Kiigemetsa School, Kohila Upper Secondary School, Loksa Upper Secondary School, Lüllemäe Basic School, Melliste Primary School and Kindergarten, Paikuse Basic School, Tartu Herbert Masingu School and Tõstamaa Secondary School.

Evelin Ilves acknowledged the best school cooks

Friday, 04 November 2011 16:58

This year, the Institute for Health Development chose the best school cafeteria for the sixth time.

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