Community Crab Feast Planning Guide

Community guide | Summer 2026

Few Maryland traditions bring people together like a long table covered in brown paper. This guide helps neighborhood groups, congregations, and volunteer organizations plan a relaxed crab feast without last-minute scrambling.

Start with the basics

- **Pick a date.** Weekend afternoons from June through September tend to work well.
- **Find a shaded site.** Pavilions, community halls, and fire company grounds are all popular choices.
- **Set a headcount.** Early sign-ups make ordering much easier.
- **Name a lead.** One coordinator should keep the budget, the list, and the keys.

How much food to plan

Item	Amount per adult	Notes
Steamed crabs	4 to 6	Medium to large crabs, ordered ahead
Sweet corn	1 to 2 ears	Local corn is at its peak in late summer
Cole slaw or potato salad	1 cup	Keep chilled until serving
Watermelon	2 slices	A simple dessert for all ages
Water and lemonade	3 servings	Plan extra on hot days

Planning tip: Offer a fried chicken or vegetable option for guests who do not eat shellfish, and label every dish that contains common allergens.

Set up the tables

1. Cover each table with two layers of brown paper.
2. Set out wooden mallets, small knives, paper towels, and seasoning.
3. Place a bucket for shells at the end of every table.
4. Create a hand-washing station with soap, water, and towels.

Teach a first-timer to pick a crab

Pair newcomers with an experienced picker. Start by removing the claws and legs, lift the apron on the underside, remove the top shell, clear away the gills, and break the body in half. Patience is the secret ingredient. No one has ever finished a crab feast in a hurry.

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Clean up and wrap up

- [ ] Bag shells and trash in sturdy, sealed bags
- [ ] Roll up the brown paper from the edges toward the center
- [ ] Wash and return borrowed mallets and coolers
- [ ] Send a thank-you note to volunteers and suppliers
- [ ] Save notes for next year while the details are fresh

Questions about this fictional program can be sent to sample@example.com or 410-555-0142.

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