

2017 Spring Branch Education Foundation Barbecue Cook-Off Rules and Guidelines

(These rules are subject to change at the discretion of the Spring Branch Education Foundation)

Gate opens at 6 am

Judging Times

Open Turn-in – 2:00 pm

Pork Ribs Turn-in – 3:00 pm

Chicken Turn-in – 3:45 pm

Brisket Turn-in – 4:30 pm

Winners will be announced at 5:45 pm at the Main Stage

This is intended to inform cook-off teams of the rules and guidelines for the Spring Branch Education Foundation Young Leader's barbecue cook-offs. In an effort to standardize the method of cooking and judging these rules will be followed by all cook teams.

General Barbecue Cook-Off Rules

1. This is an amateur cooking contest and it is intended there be no further distinctions regarding entry classifications.
2. Only ONE team per barbecue pit will be allowed. Where cooking rigs contain two separate pits, two teams may cook (one team per pit). Multiple entries for contest meats from any one team will not be allowed. On specific needs contact Vincent Montalbano at 713-299-0151 or info@montalbanoauctions.com.
3. Barbecue, for the purpose of this contest, is defined as raw or uncured meat prepared over a wood or charcoal fire, basted or not, as the cook sees fit.
4. No pre-seasoning or pre-cooking of the meat is allowed until it has been inspected and approved for cook-off use. Any meat found not in compliance with this rule will be disqualified.
5. Once meat and chicken have been inspected, approved and tagged, they must not leave the contest area. The contest committee will tag up to three slabs of pork ribs (excludes baby-back ribs), two whole chickens, two briskets and an open creation of the team's choice. All entries must be prepared in as sanitary a manner as possible. All applicable local health department rules and regulations must be complied with. The health department inspector is regarded as a member of the contest committee.
6. All applicable local fire department rules and regulations must be complied with. The fire department inspector/fire marshal is regarded as a member of the contest committee.
7. All fires used to prepare meat in this contest must be of wood or charcoal. No gas or electric cooking equipment will be allowed. However, electrical powered accessories such as spits may be permitted after receiving contest committee approval.
8. Fires are not to be built on the ground. Holes or pits will not be allowed except when approved by the contest committee.

9. Absolutely no firearms or explosives will be allowed.
10. There will be no refund of entry fees for any reason and the decision(s) of the host contest committee head judge and judges are final.

Cook/Team Responsibilities

1. Each team is responsible for the maintenance and cleanup of its cooking area. The head cook will be responsible for the conduct and behavior of team members and guests. Any team leaving its space in such a condition that the space requires additional clean-up will be disqualified from participation at future sanctioned events.
2. Each cooking team will designate one person as head cook and one person as a primary assistant cook. There may be as many sub assistants as the head cook deems necessary.
3. Each team should be equipped with a readily available and visible working fire extinguisher. Minimum suggested is 5lb. ABC.
4. All amplified sound systems should be used in moderation throughout the cook-off. The excessive use of alcoholic beverages will be grounds for disqualification. Under NO circumstances are alcoholic beverages to be sold or offered in any form to the general public.
5. Competing cooks are not allowed to judge and judges are not allowed to cook. Judges must not be associated with any cooking team or team member in any way that would cast suspicion upon the integrity of the judging process. These rules are intended to be fair and equitable to each and every contestant.

If a cook or team member is needed to judge open entries, it will be left to the discretion of the head judge in charge of cook-off judging to determine who is eligible to judge.

Judging Turn-In Requirements

1. No sauces, garnishes or foil will be allowed in the judging container. Sauces may be used during the cooking process but cannot be applied for entry presentation or judging.
2. Each contestant should submit sufficient product, sliced to facilitate adequate judging of the entry by 5-10 judges.

At events with a large number of entries that may require a preliminary judging round, the contest committee will inform the cook at the head cook's meeting of the expected number of judges so that sufficient product can be turned in for the preliminary judging and the final judging round. If not enough product is provided, the judges will be instructed to do the best they can but not penalize the other contestants they are judging.

The chicken turn-in will be from one chicken and half will be sliced into bite-size pieces stacked around the remainder of the chicken. The chicken can be butterfly but will remain in one piece throughout the cooking process.

3. A blind judging system is based on a duplicate numbered ticket (e.g. theatre ticket) which will be utilized in all judging categories.

Blind judging consists of one-half of the double ticket being enclosed in a small envelope and being secured (usually by duct tape) to the BOTTOM of the turn-in container. The second half of the ticket is placed inside the judging container.

When receiving the judging containers, the head cook prints his name on his half of the ticket in the presence of contest committee personnel.

Any container that appears to have been deliberately marked or altered will be referred to the head judge who will rule on disqualification.

Damaged containers will be replaced by the head judge. Damaged containers and all tickets must be turned in to the head judge at this time in order to receive a new container.

4. All entries will be scored on a scale of 1 through 10 in each of the judging criteria, with 10 being the best.
5. Until announcements are made, the taped envelope should remain attached to the top four category winners' judging containers. At the time winners are announced, the taped envelope will be removed from the container (on stage) and opened by one contest official. A second official will announce the number. The head cook or team member must present the corresponding half of that ticket to the head judge who will confirm that the numbers match, and announce the head cook's name and team name.
6. There should be no tags remaining on meat after it has been cut and put into containers.
7. If there is a tie, the Rib score will be used to break the tie. If there is still a tie, the Chicken score will be used next as the tie breaker. The Open score will be used as last tie breaker.

Contacts:

For questions involving the determination of winners, please contact Vincent J. Montalbano at 713-299-0151 info@montalbanoauctions.com or Laura Stein at 713-882-1646 laura.elizabeth.stein@gmail.com