

Lone Star Pony Express BBQ Cook-Off

Barbecue Cook-off Rules and Guidelines

CONTEST MEATS: Contest meats must be raw and in original packaging until inspected. The contest meats include: Beef briskets, whole chickens, and any meats or seafood products used in the open category.

General Barbecue Cook-Off Rules

1. Only ONE team per barbecue pit will be allowed. A team consists of the members designated on the registration form.
2. Multiple entries for each category meat from any one team will not be allowed.
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. After all meat is inspected and approved; it must not leave the contest area. The head judge and members from the contest committee will inspect all briskets and chickens from each team to be cooked during the competition. Each team must notify a committee member upon arrival. The meats will be inspected and turn-in trays will be distributed at that time.
6. All entries must be prepared in as sanitary a manner as possible.
7. All fires used to cook meat in this contest must be of wood or charcoal. No gas or electric cooking equipment will be allowed. Electrical powered accessories such as spits are not permitted.
8. 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.
9. There are two separate entry classes for this competition; Backyard Pit and Competition Pit. A backyard pit is classified as being mobile without the use of a trailer. A competition pit is classified as being immobile without the use of a trailer and is usually permanently attached to a trailer.

Cook/Team Responsibilities

1. Each team is responsible for the maintenance and cleanup of its cooking area.
2. Competing cooks are not allowed to judge and judges are not allowed to cook.
3. Judges will 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.

Judging Turn-In Requirements

1. No sauces, garnishes, or foil will be allowed in the turn-in tray for both chicken and brisket categories. Sauces may be used during the cooking process but cannot be applied for entry presentation or judging. Anything goes for the Open turn-in.

2. Each contestant should submit sufficient product as follows:

Dessert: Minimum 7 pieces/bites/slices. Or enough for 7 bites (cobblers, cakes, etc.)

Open: Minimum 7 pieces/bites/slices. Must include a meat or seafood product of some kind. Yes, bacon counts. No desserts or beverages allowed in this category. Garnishes, sauces, and foil ARE allowed for this category only.

Chicken: Two halves (one whole and one cut into bite size pieces). During the cooking process, the chicken(s) must be kept whole, butterflied, or split in two. No individual quarters are allowed during the cooking process.

Brisket: Minimum 7 slices (1/4" to 3/8" thick). May include the cap, flat, or combination of both.

3. A blind judging system will be used. Duplicate numbered tickets will be used in all judging categories. Blind judging consists of one-half of the double ticket attached to the **BOTTOM** of the turn-in tray. The second half of the ticket is placed **INSIDE** the turn-in tray which needs to be removed and kept until judging is finished and the winners are called. When the turn-in trays are handed out, each team's name and entry class will be recorded along with the ticket numbers provided. The team's information will be kept confidential. The head judge will use this information to determine the category winners by class and ultimately the grand champion.

4. 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.

5. If the first place team loses their half of the ticket, the second place team will be announced the winner. No exceptions.

6. If there is a tie for Grand Champion, the brisket 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 the last tie breaker.

***For question concerning these rules, please contact us at LoneStarPonyExpress@gmail.com.