

# LABOR DAY ASSOCIATION BACKYARD COOK-OFF CONTEST RULES



1. Please read the following rules carefully and completely. These rules are designed to be fair and equal for all cooking teams. Labor Day Association and the Backyard Cook Off Committee personnel reserve the right to amend these rules and regulations as situation warrants. Intent to circumvent these rules or amendments will not be tolerated.
2. Teams shall consist of up to 4 “official” members. One team member must be designated and identified as the Chief Cook or Team Captain. Teams are welcome to have additional members and guest to help and assist throughout the competition however, for the purpose of team responsibility, decisions, award presentations, and other publicity the four official team members will be considered the team.
3. MANDATORY Chief Cook/Team Captains Meeting will be at 8:00 AM (Location TBD) to go over the rules, event schedule and any last-minute Q & A. Award ceremony time and place will be announced.
4. Cooking teams are responsible jointly and severally for its head cook, team captain, its team members, and its guests and their actions. Causes for disqualification & eviction of a team, its members, and/or guest are but not limited to:
  - Public intoxication.
  - Serving alcoholic beverages to the public.
  - Use of illegal controlled substances.
  - Foul, abusive, or unacceptable language or any language causing a disturbance.
  - Excessive noise, such as radio, CD players. This includes generators not fitted with factory mufflers in working order.
  - Fighting and/or disorderly conduct.
  - Theft, dishonesty, cheating, use of prohibited meats or any act involving moral turpitude.

The event organizers have the final and sole decision in violations, disqualifications, or expulsion of any team, member, or guest.

5. Cleanliness of all team members, cooks and the cooking area is mandatory. Proper hand washing (Soap and Water) and the use of disposable food safe gloves shall be always used when handling food products, raw or cooked. Gloves should be changed often, especially when working with different products and when handling ready to eat foods after handling raw foods.
6. Each team is responsible for cleaning up its area after the competition. Clean up must be thorough. DO NOT leave any broken parts, grills, chairs, or canopies etc. Violation could result in denial of entry to future contests.
7. Clothing, including, but not limited to, shirts and shoes must be worn in all food preparation areas, while handling any food.
8. Sanitizing of the work area should be implemented with the use of a bleach/water rinse. (One cap of bleach/gallon of water)
9. Absolutely NO tobacco products will be used in the cooking areas.
10. Pets and/or animals are not allowed in the cooking area. This includes during the preparation, handling, cooking, and turn in or in the turn in area.

11. Contestants must adhere to all electrical, fire and other codes. A fire extinguisher shall be near all cooking devices. Cooker/Smoker may be wood, wood pellets, charcoal, gas or electric. 110 volts available upon request.
12. Each team is responsible for providing its own cooking equipment and team members. Chief cook/captains and team members are only allowed to cook for one team and there will not be any sharing of cooker or smokers.
13. Each team will be assigned a cooking space. Pits, cookers, props, trailers, motor homes, vehicles, tents, and any other equipment (including generators) shall not exceed the boundaries of the team's assigned cooking space unless arranged in advanced with the contest organizer. All cooking is to be done inside the assigned space. Set-up for cooking equipment may begin no earlier than 5:00 pm on the day before the competition unless approved by the event organizer.
14. No offensive signs, posters, gestures etc. allowed in the cooking area. Signs or insignia with team names, sponsors, supporters. messages, etc.. are allowed and encouraged.
15. No open pits or fires allowed to be built on the ground.
16. Meats judged for the Backyard Cook-Off competition are **Chicken, Ribs, and Pork** and must start out raw at check in. Prior to cooking, meat must be maintained at 40 F or less.
17. All competition meats shall be inspected by the official Meat Inspector during the times established by the contest organizer but not before the day before judging. Once the competition meat has been inspected, it shall not leave the contest site. Cooking shall not begin until the competition meat has been inspected by the Official Meat Inspector.
18. After cooking, all meat: must be held at 140 F or above or cooked meat shall be cooled as follows, within 2 hours from 140 F to 70 F and within 4 hours from 70 F to 41 F or less. Meat that is cooked, properly cooled, and later reheated for holding and judging shall be reheated so that all parts of the food reach a temperature of at least 165 F for a minimum of 15 seconds.
19. Prior preparation, such as trimming, marinating, and seasoning is permitted if the meat is returned to a properly sealed container. Parboiling, sous-vibe, and / or deep-frying competition meat is not allowed. If any of the banned processes are discovered before the team turns in, the team will receive zeros. If discovered after turn-in, the team will receive a One (1) in all criteria for that entry.
20. All meats must be cooked on site and will be judged on appearance, taste, and tenderness. Meat shall "not" be sculptured, branded, or presented in a way that makes it identifiable. Meat may be shaped in various ways to make it uniform and sized properly to fit inside the competition turn-in box. Rosettes of meat slices are not allowed. Violations of this rule will be scored a one (1) on all criteria by all six judges.
21. Each Team must submit at least six (6) portions of meat for each category that they are competing in. The turn in meat must be in the approved container only.

- Chicken: Chicken may be sliced, chopped, pulled or in pieces upon turn in. Skin is optional for chicken. Judges may not cut, slice, or shake apart to separate pieces. NO CORNISH GAME HENS or KOSHER CHICKEN. (Suggested serving sizes 2-3 oz. per serving)
- Ribs: Ribs must include the bone and be cut apart. Judges may not cut, slice, or shake apart to separate pieces. Country-style ribs are prohibited. (Suggested serving size 2-3 oz per serving)
- Pork: Pork may be chopped, pulled, chunked, sliced, or upon turn in. Pork entries can include but is not limited to, pork butts, picnic butts, pork belly, bacon, pork chops, pork loins, pork steaks, etc. Pork Ribs and sausage are prohibited. (Suggested serving size 2-3 oz. per serving)

\*If there is not enough meat for each of the 6 judges to sample, the shorted judge(s) will score a (1) on all criteria except appearance.

23. The allowable turn-in times will be five (5) minutes before to five (5) minutes after the posted time (10-minute window) with no tolerance. The contest rep will not accept a late turn-in for any category and the effected Team will receive a 0 (zero) for that meat in all criteria's. Entries will only be accepted during designated turn in time for their specific category. If you turn in the wrong meat for a turn in time it will result in a score of zero for that category.

**Entry turn in times will follow local Central Daylight Time (CDT) Cell Phone time and are as follows:**

Chicken: 2:00 PM (1:55 – 2:05 window)

Ribs: 2:30 PM (2:25 – 2:35 window)

Pork: 3:00 PM (2:55 – 3:05 window)

\*Times are subject to change or modified prior to the end of the Captains meeting

24. Entries will be submitted in the contest provided containers only! The container shall not be marked in any way to make it unique or identifiable. Aluminum foil, toothpicks, skewers, foreign material, and/or stuffing are prohibited in the container. Marked entries or containers with the above listed material will receive a one (1) in all criteria from all judges and be disqualified. If the contest containers (box) provided are in any way marked, broken, or identifiable teams must contact a contest representative to get a replacement container (box).
25. Garnish is optional. If used it is limited to chopped, sliced, shredded, or whole leaves of fresh green lettuce, curly parsley, flat-leaf parsley, curly green kale, and/or cilantro, etc.. PROHIBITED GARNISHES ARE lettuce cores, kale stems and other vegetation, including but not limited to endive, red-tipped lettuce. Prohibited garnish shall receive a penalty score of one (1) on appearance.
26. Sauce is optional. If sauce is used it shall be applied directly to the meat and not be pooled or puddled in the container. Side sauce containers will not be permitted, and chunky sauce will not be allowed. Sauce violations are subject to score penalties by the judges. (Remember this is a meat competition, not a sauce competition.)
27. Once a team's entry fee is received, there will be NO REFUNDS of any kind, in any amount, for any reason, in any time frame. Only refund will be if the Labor Day Association cancels the event.
28. Trophies and prize money will be awarded to 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> places in each category and Grand Champion. Cumulative points from all 3 meat categories will determine the Grand Champion.
29. All decisions made in reference to these rules, their enforcement and/or modifications are at the sole discretion of the Labor Day Association and their event coordinators.

***BRING THE FAMILY AND COME OUT AND ENJOY THE ANNUAL LABOR DAY CELEBRATION***

***FREE UNLIMITED CARNIVAL RIDES & LASER TAG, RUMAGE SALE, TTPAI ¼ SCALE TRACTOR PULL (FRIDAY NIGHT), SCRAPPER RACE (SATURDAY NIGHT), CAR SHOW & DEMO DERBY (SUNDAY NIGHT) AND MUCH MORE!***

***HAVE A GREAT DAY, HAVE FUN, and ENJOY THE LABOR DAY WEEKEND.***

Backyard Cook Event Coordinators

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## JUDGING PROCEDURES:

1. Keep an open mind; it is your opinion and your judgement. Judging can be very subjective. Keep it fair for all contestants.
2. Entries will be submitted only in an approved container provided by the Labor Day Association.
3. Judging will be blind, and judges may not fraternize with teams on turn-in day until the conclusion of judging.
4. Absolutely no communication between judges during the scoring process.
5. Judging will be done by a team of 6 persons at each judging table, who are at least 16 years of age. Labor Day Association reps will determine the optimum number of table of judges needed to properly judge the contest. Only Judges, contest reps. and necessary support staff will be allowed in the judging area during the judging process. No other activities are permitted in the judging area during the judging process.
6. Contest rep will mix the entries up so that one table is not scoring the same team consecutively.
7. Each judge will put the team # they are scoring at the top of the score sheet and circle the meat to be judged.
8. Each judge will first score the container for appearance of the meat. The turn-in containers will then be passed around the table and each judge will take a sample of the meat from the container. Judges shall not lick their fingers while taking the samples. Paper towels, non-scented whips, or damp washcloths are preferred.
9. The judge will then score each entry for taste and tenderness, before moving on to the next entry.
10. The scoring system is from 9 to 2 and can be scored in  $\frac{1}{2}$  (one-half) increments between 9 and 2 (8.5, 7.5, 6.5 etc.) but not to exceed 9 points in any one of the three judging criteria (appearance, taste, or tenderness).
11. Scoring criteria is as follows: 9 excellent, 8 very good, 7 above average, 6 average, 5 below average, 4 poor, 3 bad, and 2 inedible.
12. Judges are to mark the scoring card selections or comments for any score less than a 9 excellent.
13. A score of one (1) is a penalty or disqualification and requires approval by the Contest Rep.
14. Grounds for penalty or disqualification:
  - In appearance, prohibited garnish, pooled sauce, containers of sauce, or sculptured meat.
  - Marked container, foreign objects, or incorrect meat in the container.
15. All judges not receiving a sample will give a one (1) in all criteria except appearance.
16. The weighting factors for the points system are:

Appearance is 0.5714 times judge's score.

Tastes is 2.2858 times judge's score.

Tenderness is 1.1428 times judge's score.

**The lowest score of the six judges will be dropped when totaling the entered score. The above scoring system will determine the category winners.**

17. The results will be tallied. If there is a tie in one of the categories, it will be broken by the computer as follows: the scores will be compared (counting the top five score of judges) for the highest cumulative scores in taste, then tenderness, and then appearance.
18. Total points per entry will determine the champion within each meat category.
19. Cumulative points for the meat categories will determine Grand Champion.

