

Murphysboro Barbecue Cook-Off

MBN Official Rules and Regulations

1. There will be three categories in the contest — whole hog, pork shoulder and pork ribs (spare or loin). Meat for the contest may be fresh or frozen. Meat may not be pre-cooked, sauced, spiced, injected, marinated, cured in any way, or otherwise pre-treated prior to official meat inspection. Meat must be maintained at a temperature below 40 degrees Fahrenheit prior to cooking, and at or above 140 degrees after cooking. Teams may cook with any type of wood or charcoal. Other Flammables (propane, compressed or liquid gas, etc.) may be used within the cooker ONLY to START the INITIAL fire. No type of flammable may be used within the cooker once the meat has been placed there. Flammables may be used outside and away from the cooker to make additional coals. Local fire and safety laws may prevent the use of any type of gas anywhere on the grounds at any time, if so, these laws shall prevail. Electrical devices may be used within the cooker as long as they do not directly generate heat. Approved devices include rotisseries, fans and delivery systems for approved fuels (e.g. Treager grills). Electric smokers, holding ovens or any other devices with heat producing electric coils are not allowed.
 - A. A whole hog entry is defined by the Sanctioned Contest Network as an entire hog, who dressed weight is 85 pounds or more prior to removal of the head, feet and skin, and which must be cooked as one complete unit on one grill surface. No portion or portions of the whole hog may be separated prior to or during the cooking process.
 - B. a pork shoulder entry is defined by the Sanctioned Contest Network as the portion containing the arm bone, shank bone, and a portion of the blade bone. The pork ham considered to be a shoulder entry contains the hind leg bone. Boston butts or picnic shoulders are not valid entries.
 - C. A pork rib entry is defined by the Sanctioned Contest Network as the portion containing the ribs and further classified as a spare rib or loin rib portion. Country style ribs are not a valid entry.
2. Each contestant competing shall supply all of his own meat, cooking ingredients, cooking devices, utensils and tables. The only thing provided to the contestant is a regulation cooking area and necessary sanitary facilities. All contestants must adhere to all electricity, fire and other codes by the city, county, state or federal codes. Since this is an outdoor event, and we do not have control over the weather, it is suggested that you bring suitable shelter as the weather may require.
3. NO vehicular movement will be allowed within the contest area after 6:30 p.m. on Friday, September 25, and Saturday, September 26, unless approved in advance by the Cook-Off Committee Chairmen. Vehicles will be allowed to remain in the cooking area so long as it is wholly within your assigned area.
4. Each contestant may have as many assistants as are necessary for such chores as digging pits, hauling wood, josting the whole pigs and encouraging the cook. During contest judging, only the chief cook and four assistants will be allowed in the cooking area (those listed on the entry form). Any assistant that handles food in any way must comply with paragraph five of these rules.
5. Each contestant must comply with all applicable rules and regulations of the Jackson County Health Department including, but not limited to the following:
 - A. Meat must be at 40 degrees or less before cooking. Your coolers with ice will keep it cold enough.
 - B. After cooking the meat must be maintained at 140 degrees or above on a covered container. The cook and all food-handling assistants must wear hats.
 - C. You cannot smoke cigarettes around food while it is cooking. Our judges frown upon cigarette ashes in the meat.
 - D. Cleanliness of the cook, assistants and one contestant's area is required.
 - E. NO LIVE ANIMALS ARE ALLOWED IN THE COOKING AREA. This is grounds for disqualification, and no fees, including clean up, will be returned to the contestant.
6. Each contestant must check in at the registration area. At that time, cooking area assignments will be made and meat will be inspected. Cooking may begin anytime after the meat inspection. Judging begins at 10:00 am Saturday, September 26, 2009.
7. Each contestant must cook enough barbecue to give out samples to at least 11 hungry judges. If you run out of barbecue before the judging is completed, you will be disqualified.
8. Judging of the barbecue entries will involve individual judges visiting the teams and scoring the meat on secret ballots as provided by the Memphis Barbecue Network in May. There will be blind judging. The three categories will be judged separately with the times staggered. A final round of judging will involve the finalist in each category to determine the final rankings.
9. Contestant may enter one or all three categories. Category(ies) must be stated in advance on the entry form and cannot be changed.
10. APPLICANTS SUBMITTED ARE NOT GUARANTEED ENTRANCE TO THE COOK-OFF. ONLY 40 TEAMS WILL BE ACCEPTED. APPLICANTS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL SEPTEMBER 8, 2009 AT THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:
Murphysboro Barbecue Cook-Off
P. O. Box 382
Murphysboro, IL 62966
Phone: (618) 684-8902
11. A meeting for the chief cook or team representative will be held at 4:30 pm September 24, 2009 in the rib room. The rules and regulations and other necessary information will be discussed.
12. It is the responsibility of each contestant to see that the contest area is kept clean and that the area is cleaned and policed following the contest. ALL FIRES MUST BE EXTINGUISHED, pits filled in with soil only, concrete blocks hauled away (not buried in pit) and all equipment moved from the site. A TEAM MAY BE DISQUALIFIED FOR NOT KEEPING COOKING AREA CLEAN.
13. THE CHIEF COOK will be held responsible for the conduct of his team and guests. Excessive use of alcoholic beverages will be grounds for disqualification.
14. Contestants MAY NOT SELL FOOD. But remember, each contestant must cook enough to give samples to judges, and if you run out of barbecue before the judging is completed, you will be disqualified.
15. Open fires will be allowed for the purpose of making coals for cooking. Please keep the fires as low as possible and protect the unwary from stumbling into them.
16. The Murphysboro Barbecue Cook-Off Committee reserve the right to make additional regulations as the situation warrants.
17. The decisions of the Barbecue Committee Chairmen and judges are final.
18. Violation of rules and regulations of the contest may result in disqualification, expulsion from grounds, and/or disqualification from future participation.
19. Be sure to READ and KEEP the rules and regulations for the Murphysboro Barbecue Championships.
20. If you have any questions, need to make advance arrangements, or if you have been accepted and then for any reason cannot attend, please call Mike Mills or Becky Streuter at (618) 684-8902.