



2024 Competition Rules

1. All contestants are equal, there are no professional or amateur classifications. A contestant is one who is engaged in the cooking of the meat in a contest.
2. Each team will consist of a chief cook and as many assistants as the team deems necessary. Chief cooks and assistant cooks may only cook for their designated team at the contest. Each team will provide a pit(s) to be used only by that team (teams may not share pits.) All seasoning and cooking will be done within the confines of the teams' assigned cooking space. The team's chief cook may not enter more than one team in the competition.
3. At least one team member should be trained and certified as an Illinois Food Handler **if the team is participating in the tastings for visitors.**
4. No cooking shall begin until meat has been inspected by the competition's meat inspector the morning of the event, not the prior day. Once inspected it may not leave the site. Barbecue is defined as uncured meat/fowl prepared on wood or charcoal fire, basted or not, as cook desires. All meat must start out raw, any meat found to be partially cooked will be disqualified. No manufactured or injected products are allowed, no parboiling or deep frying allowed.
5. The Coles County Health Department requires that the following conditions are met:
 - a. After cooking , meat must be maintained at 140 degrees F or above
6. Contestants must provide all needed equipment and supplies, including: lettuce, parsley or some kind of green for presentation to the judges, power cords, fire extinguisher, and cooking and serving utensils.
7. Electricity will be provided on a first-registered basis. Contestants must adhere to all electrical, fire, and other codes, whether city, county, state, or federal and be prepared for inspection from the Charleston Fire Department. First Aid will not be provided, in case of emergency call 911.
8. Equipment shall not exceed the team's designated 10'x20' space. Fires must be of wood, pellets, or charcoal (no ground fires, or open pits, or holes.) No electric or gas grills allowed. Electric accessories such as spits, augurs, or forced drafts are permitted.
9. It is the responsibility of the contestant to see that the team's assigned cooking space is clean and orderly following the contest. All fires must be put out and all equipment moved from the site. It is imperative that cleanup be thorough.
10. Entry is \$100 regardless of the number of categories competing in, no refunds for any reason.
11. Uncle Abe's BBQ Showdown committee will provide teams with:
 - a. Clam shells for presentation to judges

- b. Serving cups for tastings given to visitors
 - c. 8ft tables if requested
12. Teams may choose to participate in providing 1 ounce sample tastings for visitors, but are not required to do so. Those participating in visitor tastings must secure a temporary food permit from the Coles County Health Department (unless already registered with the Health Department.) Committee volunteers will sell the tickets/coupons for \$1 and teams will be reimbursed for the number of tickets/coupons served by their team.
13. The following cleanliness and safety rules apply to all:
- a. Disposable gloves worn while preparing and serving samples and judges' portions
 - b. No use of tobacco while handling or cooking food**
 - c. Cleanliness of the cook, assistant cooks, cooking devices and the team's assigned cooking space is required
 - d. Shirt and shoes are required to be worn
 - e. Rules and regulations of the Safe Food Handling requirements should be followed
14. **Cause for disqualification and eviction of a team, its members, or guests.** Cooking teams are responsible jointly and separately for its head cook, its team members and its guests. Causes include:
- a. Consuming alcoholic beverages or public intoxication with a disturbance
 - b. Use of illegal controlled substances
 - c. Foul, abusive, or unacceptable language or any language causing a disturbance
 - d. Excessive noise, including but not limited to that generated from speakers, such as radios, phones, public address systems or amplifying equipment, will not be allowed, before, during, or after the competition.
 - e. Fighting and/or disorderly conduct.
 - f. Theft, dishonesty, cheating, or any act involving moral turpitude.
15. Blind judging only. Entries will be submitted in an approved container provided by the contest organizer, if the container becomes damaged teams may elect to receive a new container which will be numbered by the judge. Entries will be judged by a judging team of three (3) judges. Entries are scored in areas of APPEARANCE, TENDERNESS/TEXTURE, and TASTE. The scoring system is from 10 (excellent) to 1 (bad). All numbers between one and ten may be used to score any entry. The winner will have the highest cumulative score. In the event of a tie, a fourth judge will score the tied entries and have final judgment.
16. Judging times will be posted and sufficient time will be given between rounds. Advanced calling for an item is not required. Therefore, if chicken is scheduled for 1:00pm plan to submit it then. An entry will be judged only at the time posted by the contest organizer. The allowable turn in time will be five (5) minutes before and one (1) minute after the posted time with no exceptions.
17. *subsequent rules may be added the day of competition, and organizers will notify registrants immediately of additional rules and regulations.