

**2024 Menard County Fair**  
**County Market – Backyard BBQ Cook-off**  
**July 20, 2024**  
**2pm-6pm**  
**Superintendent: Kim Ishmael**

**Rules & Regulations**

- There will be three categories for the cook-off: Baby-Back or St. Louis Style ribs, chicken wings, and a dessert. All cooking & contests will be held in the Budweiser Beer Tent.
  - Turn-in time for Wings – 4:00pm
  - Turn-in time for Ribs – 4:30pm
  - Turn-in time for Dessert – 5:00pm
  
- Teams must enter at least one of the meat categories to participate. Teams must enter both meat categories to compete for grand overall and reserve grand overall. **Entry fee for each meat category will be \$40. Entry fee for dessert will be \$20.** Teams must supply their own meat/ingredients for each category.
  
- All meats must be USDA Inspected/Certified. Home butchered/processed meats are not allowed.
  
- Teams must supply all required equipment. Including any sanitary items that are required. We will have ice available for purchase.
  
- All teams must check-in with the contest superintendents on the day of the show, register a team name, and declare which categories they are participating in.
  
- Each team will be provided with a minimum of a 15'x15' space. Due to past requests, trailers will be allowed but vehicles MUST be unhooked and parked outside of the beer tent area. There is a

limited amount of space, therefore trailers will be allowed on a **first come, first serve basis only**. **We cannot guarantee that all trailers will fit in the allotted space**. **Pop-up tents are MUCH preferred**.

- The following methods of cooking will be allowed: wood, wood pellet, charcoal, electric. Ground fires are not allowed. If you want to use any electric equipment, **you MUST bring your own generator**. Please bring at least 40' of cord so that the generator is far enough from your cook area. We do not have enough electric supply to cover every team, so we will not be providing any electrical hookups.
- Teams may arrive and begin setting up no earlier than 9:00am. Registration and team meetings with contest superintendents will be from 10:00am to 10:30am. **ALL team members must be present**. **Cooking time begins at 10:30am**. Judging will begin at 4:00pm.
- 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> will be awarded for each **category** – points will be awarded for each place, and the team with the highest points overall will be chosen as the grand overall winner. 1<sup>st</sup> place = 4 points, 2<sup>nd</sup> place = 3 points, 3<sup>rd</sup> place = 2 points. All category placing will be added for a cumulative score to determine grand overall placing. Plaques will also be given to each winner.
- The following prizes will be awarded for each **meat** category: 1<sup>st</sup> - \$300 & plaque, 2<sup>nd</sup> - \$200 & plaque, 3<sup>rd</sup> - \$100 & plaque. **Dessert:** 1<sup>st</sup> - \$50 & plaque, 2<sup>nd</sup> - plaque, 3<sup>rd</sup> – plaque. Grand Champion Overall - \$300, Reserve Grand Champion Overall – \$200
- Each team will consist of a Chief Cook and up to 4 Assistant Cooks (4 assistants are not required, but 4 is the maximum allowed)

- Each team is required to prepare the following amounts of meat per category: Ribs - minimum of 3 racks, at least 10 ribs per rack; minimum of 10lbs. of wings (raw). Teams may cook more of any category; these are the minimum required to participate.
- A total of six judges will be present for scoring. A minimum of two judges from the Menard County Fair Board & Staff and a minimum of two judges will be Menard County elected officials.
- Each team will receive turn-in boxes for each category they participate in.
- Garnish is required in the box. You may use kale, parsley, and green leaf lettuce.
- Each box shall have 6 ribs bones, 6 chicken wings and 6 dessert items. You may put more in the box if you want.
- Each meat will be graded on the following categories: Appearance, Taste, Tenderness. Each grade will be from 1-5. 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.
- Each judge will first score all the samples for appearance of the meat. The turn-in containers will then be passed around the table and each judge will place a sample from each of the containers in the appropriate spot on the judging plate. Judges shall not lick their fingers while taking these samples; paper towels, non-scented wipes or damp washcloths will be provided. The judge will then score each individual entry for taste and tenderness before moving on to the next entry.
- Sauce is optional. If used, it shall be applied directly to the meat and not be pooled or puddled in the container. No side sauce containers will be permitted in the turn-in container. Chunky sauce will be allowed. Chunks are to be no larger than a fine dice,

approximately 1/8 inch cubed. Sauce violations shall receive a penalty score of ZERO (0) on Appearance.

- Entries will be submitted for judging in an approved, numbered container, provided by the contest superintendents. The number must be on top of the container at turn-in. The container shall not be marked in any way as to make it unique or identifiable.
- Samples shall be made available to fairgoers. Fairgoers will have to purchase an armband from the fair to receive samples. This will be explained at team meeting.
- The following cleanliness and safety rules will apply:
  - No use of any tobacco products while handling meat,
  - Cleanliness of the cook, assistant cooks, cooking device(s) and the team's assigned cooking space is required; Shirt and shoes are required to be worn.
  - Sanitizing of work area should be implemented with the use of a bleach/water rinse (one cap/gallon of water).
  - Each contestant will provide a separate container for washing, rinsing and sanitizing of utensils.
  - Prior to cooking, meat must be maintained at 40° F or less; 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 hot holding and serving shall be reheated so that all parts of the food reach a temperature of at least 165° F for a minimum of 15 seconds.
  - NO PETS are allowed in the beer tent, cooking areas, etc. No exceptions to this rule.
- Teams are allowed to bring their own alcoholic beverages; however, they are **NOT allowed** to distribute them to other patrons/non-team members. ***A plain cup must be used to***

***consume all alcoholic beverages. THIS APPLIES ONLY TO THE COOKS, NO ONE ELSE CAN BYOB.***

- There will be no refund of entry fees except at the discretion of the contest superintendents.
- Menard County Fair, Inc. leaves its superintendents and Board of Directors full discretion to interpret and make the final decision on all rules regarding this contest. The fair reserves the right to alter or change any printed rule as deemed necessary.