



FORT BEND COUNTY FAIR 2025 CHAMPIONSHIP CULINARY & BBQ COOK-OFF

Chairman: Matthew Bryson

Co-Chairmen: Richard Graeber, Don Faldyn, Jared Graeber, Clifton Holik & Kris Abdi

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|-------------------------------------|---|---------|---------|
| Contest | September 19 & 20, 2025 | | |
| Entry & Payment Deadline | June 19, 2025 | 4:00 PM | |
| Head Cook's Meeting | August 6, 2025 | 6:30 PM | Bldg. B |
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| Team Entry Fee | \$250.00 includes: 40 x 40 space, port-a-can, and entry into 8 Categories \$500.00 includes: 40 x 80 space, 2 port-a-cans, and entry into 8 Categories | | |
| Insurance | \$90.00 Covers all spaces | | |
| Additional Port-a-Can | \$100.00 each | | |
| Handicap Port-a-Can | \$100.00 each | | |
| Hand Wash Station | \$100.00 each | | |
| 250 gal. Holding Tank | \$275.00 each | | |

The Fort Bend County Fair Association would like to welcome all BBQ Cook-off Teams to the Fort Bend County Championship BBQ Cook-Off. Your participation helps support the kids and the Fort Bend County Fair Scholarship Fund.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

All participants are subject to the Fort Bend County Fair Association General Rules and Regulations and the BBQ Cook-off General Rules and Regulations.

A. Entry

1. Entry form and entry fee payment are due in the Fair Office no later than **June 19, 2025**. This contest will be limited to space availability. The entire entry fee is required when the entry form is submitted, no partial payments will be accepted. ****Note:** Once the entry fee is paid to the FBCFA for the BBQ contest, the money will not be refunded under any condition. In the event of an Act of God and the contest cannot be held, your prepaid monies will be credited to entry into the next rescheduled/scheduled Fort Bend County Fair BBQ Contest.
2. The Head Cook's meeting will be held on **August 6, 2025, in Building B**, and **one (1) team member is required to attend and pick up the team's packet. If a team member does not attend the Head Cook's meeting, your spot will be released on a first-come, first-serve basis.**

B. Team Spaces

1. Each paid entry entitles the team to one Cook-Off space. Sites will be approximately 40' x 40' or as otherwise marked. The team's equipment and décor must fit within the assigned space. No parking outside of your designated area unless otherwise approved by the Chairman or a Director-in-Charge. Cook-Off layout is subject to change from year to year as Fairground improvement and Cook-Off enhancements proceed.
2. Additional spaces may be purchased and will be awarded if available. This additional space **will not** allow the team to enter the additional cooking category contest. If you would like any special considerations reviewed as part of your entry, please write them on your entry form. They will be evaluated and applied if possible. Maximum spaces allowed per team are four 40x40 or two 40x80.
3. Electricity or water is not supplied by the Fort Bend County Fair Association.
4. One (1) Port-A-Can will be supplied per 40' x 40' site. Due to being ordered well in advance of the event, any additional Port-A-Can requests must be purchased through the Fair Association no later than **June 19, 2025**. (see "Extra Port-A-Can" section of the Entry Form). Port-A-cans cannot be purchased after the Fair has started.
5. All tents must be secured **via water barrels only**. **No stake-style tents will be allowed on the grounds** for safety reasons since the Cook-Off area contains underground water, wastewater, and electrical conduits. Tents may not be taller than 15 feet in height.
6. Each team space must have perimeter fencing.

C. Team Members

1. A Cook-Off Team consists of a Head Cook and four (4) assistants with a **unique** team name. Team names may not be like Acme Team #1 and Acme Team #2. Team names may not be offensive and are subject to approval by the Fort Bend County Fair Board of Directors. Team name changes must be submitted in writing to the BBQ Committee for approval.
2. Head Cook and Team Members may not cook on more than one team; disqualification is subject for doing so. Each team must have unique members and must be in good standing with FBCFA. The Head Cook of the team is responsible for the operation of the team space and all actions within or outside the assigned space(s) by the members or guests within the assigned space(s). The Head Cook of the team must be physically present and available to the contest management if called upon.
3. **Teams will be provided with five (5) season passes for team members to use when entering the admissions gate.** Other parties attending your area are required to purchase Fort Bend County Fair gate entry tickets to enter the Cook-Off for Friday & Saturday. Season passes are available at the Fort Bend County Fair Office, or online at www.fortbendcountyfair.com

D. Insurance

1. The Fort Bend County Fair Association (FBCFA) will not be responsible for accidents, theft, or damage to persons and/or equipment. A \$1,000,000 Liability Insurance Policy is required by all teams and must be purchased through the FBCFA Insurance Carrier. The insurance policy will provide each team with the minimum insurance requirements for participation in this year's contest. The coverage provided is not an Accident, Group Medical, or Workers Compensation policy for team members. Certificates of Insurance coverage for teams from any other source will not be accepted.

2. Team must fill out and return the insurance policy application with the contest entry form in order to be entered. Charges for the policy are listed on the insurance forms. The single fee charged for this year will cover the team's spot(s).

E. Alcoholic Beverages

1. Due to the current Texas On-Premises Beer and Wine licensing of the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds. Beer and Wine **cannot** be brought into the fenced perimeter. Hard liquor is permitted and should be brought in during the setup times. Beer and Wine **MUST** be purchased from the FBCFA. Contact the Fair Office for more information. Beer and ice delivery end at 6:00pm. Beer orders must have at least 5 cases for delivery. **Beer and ice sales end at 9:00pm.**
2. **Pre-order alcohol must be paid in full and are due by August 14, 2025.** It is recommended that you place your preliminary orders in advance of the Fair so that sufficient stock is on hand. Pre-sale beer orders will be delivered only on Thursday.

F. Set-Up Times

1. During the listed set-up times, only cooking equipment and drop-off will be allowed inside the gates. Each team will receive two hang tags. Any vehicle, including bands and DJ's, entering the grounds must display the hang tag. If the hang tag is not readily visible on the vehicle, it will be removed immediately. Parking outside of your designated area is prohibited. Any vehicle parked in the BBQ area after designated setup times will be towed away at the owner's expense. Convenient parking spaces will be available for team members outside the Cook-Off area. **All teams** must submit the Rental Company List to the Fair by **August 14, 2025.** (ie. Tent, camper, generators, etc.)
2. No vehicles other than travel trailers and motor homes may be left inside your cooking area. Any other vehicle to be used in a site must have prior approval by Committee Chairman or Director-in-Charge as cooking site decorations. Once the gate closes there will not be any vehicle traffic allowed in or out (i.e., bands, DJs, or teams).

G. Early Setup

Tuesday: 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. – Drive through gates close at 8:30pm

Tents, pits, and travel trailers **must** be brought in and set up during the early set-up. *****No Bands or other entertainment are allowed.*****

Wednesday: 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. – Drive through gates close at 8:30pm

Tents, pits, and travel trailers **must** be brought in and set up during the early set-up. *****No Bands or other entertainment are allowed.*****

H. General Setup – No tent companies will be allowed to setup.

Thursday: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. – Drive through gates close at 4:30pm

General Admission Ticket Booths will open at 6:00 p.m. Event gates close at midnight.
Sponsor Night: 6:00 p.m. to midnight.

Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – Drive through gates close at 11:30am

General Admission ticket booths will open at 1:00 p.m. Event gates close at midnight.

Saturday: 7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. – Drive through gates close at 8:00am

General Admission ticket booths will open at 9:00 a.m. Event gates close at midnight.

I. Equipment

1. The FBCFA will provide the space ONLY. Contestants must supply ALL necessary equipment and supplies. Props, trailers, tents, generators, coverings, and/or any other part of a team's equipment must not extend outside the boundaries of the assigned space unless approved by Committee Chairman or a Director-in-Charge. Any fuel kept on site must be in an approved DOT container and must be placed greater than 20 feet away from any fire or heat source. FBCFA is not responsible for damage while moving items with a forklift or any other machinery.
2. Water is conveniently available to some sites and less conveniently available to others. If Fair water spigots are to be used, RV-type potable water hoses or other potable water-type containers must be used. Backflow preventers must be used at your connection. **Gray water discharge is strictly prohibited.**
3. Competition grills/smokers must be in the team's assigned space and sharing of grills is not permitted. Cords and/or hoses are not allowed to cross any aisles and leaking hoses will be removed. Each team must have a First Aid kit.

J. Types of Cooking Devices Restricted

1. Open fires, fire holes, dug pits, electric or gas grills (except for beans and chili) and automatic temperature-controlled devices (ATCD) will not be permitted for competition cooking. Any ATCD must be registered by contacting the Fair Office by September 11, 2025.
2. Fire barrels should have restrictive covers to arrest flames and are only acceptable if sufficient space is available away from tents or other flammable objects. Fire Barrels must not cause damage to asphalt or ground surfaces.

K. Fire Extinguishers – Minimum Requirements

1. One (2A10BC) type extinguisher is required in each 40' x 40' space and at least one 40BC type extinguisher is required in each cooking area within each space. Where teams plan to use deep fat frying equipment using vegetable or animal oils and fats, it is required that at least one 2.5-gallon (6L) type K portable fire extinguisher be present.
2. All extinguishers must have a current date tag. Committee personnel will randomly inspect extinguishers. A team found without minimum extinguishers will be stopped from further cooking for their protection.
***Note: The Fire Marshal or Local Fire Department will be inspecting for adequate extinguishers.

L. Mobility

1. No public or private golf carts, ATVs, UTVs, or other motorized vehicles will be allowed inside the Fort Bend County Fair areas except for authorized Fair vehicles.
2. Motorized wheelchairs and mobility scooters are allowed.

M. Conduct

1. Head Cooks are responsible for the conduct of their team members and guests.
2. Teams may **not** charge door admission to their spaces during or before the contest. Teams wishing to operate their spaces as "Invitation Only" must secure their spaces with an appropriate number of uniformed officers/agents licensed by the State of Texas. **Security officers do not get into the Cook-Off area for free.** They must purchase a ticket or have been supplied a ticket by the team.

3. Fair Directors, Cook-Off Chairmen, and BBQ Committee personnel (with committee-related business) are always permitted in all spaces with proper identification. Please advise your security personnel. Teams are **NOT** required to provide general access (non-business access) or food/other refreshments to committee members or staff.
4. Animals are NOT permitted in the Cook-Off area except for certified service animals.
5. At no time may a person under the age of 21 be served or consume alcohol. The Fair prohibits minors consuming alcohol, even in the presence of a legal guardian.
6. If a team member(s) is involved in any altercation that requires law enforcement to be called, the team will be disqualified from the competition.
7. Bands and team gathering/socializing will be allowed Thursday night through the rest of the contest. Speakers must face inward to team space.
****ALL MUSIC AND OTHER LOUD NOISE MUST CEASE BY 12:00 a.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. ****
8. Cookers will be allowed to spend the night starting Wednesday in their allocated spaces. Only cooks listed on the entry form will be allowed in after hours. Walking around the cook-off area or other parts of the grounds after gate hours or in others spaces is strictly prohibited and will be monitored by grounds security.
9. Hauling items over fences and/or ladders against or over fences is not permitted. If found, the team will be disqualified.
10. Teams are prohibited to conduct raffles or drawings outside of team space.
11. Teams shall not display any political signage visible to the general public.
12. The Fort Bend County Fair logo is not to be used in any way without the written consent from the Fair Office.
13. If multiple teams combine to make a single area, conduct rules shall apply to all teams as one.
14. Usage of drones are strictly prohibited. Any person caught will be escorted off grounds and the associated team will be disqualified.

N. Judging

1. The Cook-Off will be divided into 8 categories plus one optional category:
Culinary Judging: Pinto Beans, Beef Chili, Gumbo, and Beef Stew
BBQ Judging: Beef Fajitas, Beef Brisket, Chicken and Pork Ribs
BBQ Sauce Jackpot Judging: (*Optional \$10.00 additional Jackpot fee per team.*)
2. All measures will be taken to ensure that judges will not know whose entry is being judged. *Judging fairness is our utmost concern.* Final judging for these categories will immediately follow preliminary judging.

3. Culinary judging will take place on Friday night and Culinary awards will be distributed on Friday night at the Texas Stage after final scores are determined. **An optional Culinary Jackpot is available for EACH culinary category. The cost is \$10 per category. Participation in the Jackpot is voluntary. The Culinary Jackpot Prizes will also be awarded during the awards presentation.** Optional Culinary Jackpots are determined by the team with the highest placing in that category that has entered the Jackpot contest. Jackpots are 100% payout and the winner takes all. Teams wishing to enter the Jackpots must pay for their entries at the Head Cook's meeting the morning of the event.
4. Judging of BBQ Sauce will be held at 11:00 a.m. Saturday at BBQ Committee Booth. Judges will be randomly selected from the teams that enter this optional contest. BBQ Sauce **Cash Jackpot will be awarded during the final award presentation.**
5. BBQ judging will take place on Saturday afternoon. Final judging for these categories will immediately follow preliminary judging. BBQ Awards will be distributed on Saturday at the Texas Stage after final scores are determined.

O. Contest Entries

1. No garnishes or condiments within containers will be accepted.
2. No markings, tin foil, competition tags, or other identifiable devices will be accepted inside or outside containers submitted for judging.
3. Only containers supplied by the Fort Bend County Fair Cook-Off Committee will be accepted for judging. If your container becomes damaged, another can be obtained as long as the container ticket and container are returned to the Cook-Off committee.
4. For the BBQ portion of the Cook-Off, teams are allowed to cook up to two (2) briskets, two (2) chickens, and three (3) slabs of ribs.

****A representative from each team is REQUIRED to attend the MANDATORY Head Cook's meeting at 10:00 a.m. both Friday and Saturday morning at the Committee Booth. There will be short announcements, comments, and the passing out of the containers during this time. ****

P. Preparations

1. Precooked and/or pre-seasoned meat and entries will not be allowed. Pre-trimmed brisket is allowed. All entries, including culinary, must be inspected by a member of the Cook-Off committee **before preparation** and remain on-site after inspection.
2. **Food Source Sheet:** You must list the store where perishable foods were purchased. It is required by the City of Rosenberg Health Department and Fort Bend County Health Department for products cooked during the contest. These will be collected by Cook-Off committee members during meat tagging.
3. **Meat Tagging:** All entry meat, except for fajitas, for Saturday's contest shall be tagged **before** seasoning or cooking by the Cook-Off Committee. Contestants may cook separate pieces of the same type of meat (e.g., three slabs of ribs, two whole chickens or four halves, and two briskets). If a contestant elects to cook two briskets, two chickens or four halves, and three slabs of ribs, all pieces **must** be tagged by the Cook-Off Committee. All entries must be cut from the tagged meat in the presence of the Cook-Off Committee. Tags must be removed if an entry is being turned in or the entry will be disqualified. Teams are responsible to removing the tags. ****We suggest wrapping meat tags in foil PRIOR to cooking which helps make the tags easier to read after cooking****

4. **Meat Tagging Times:** Competition entries will be inspected and tagged by the cook-off committee Thursday from 11:00am – 2:00pm. Meat tagging will be located in Committee Booth, Building D. Teams **MUST** have all culinary and BBQ meats during this time or it will not be accepted or tagged.

Q. Turn in Schedule

1. Culinary Cook-Off Friday and Turn in Times

Head Cook’s Meeting (10:00 a.m.)

Pinto Beans (3:45 – 4:00 p.m.) – *No rice, noodles, or other garnishes. Nothing larger than the bean itself.*

Beef Chili (3:45 – 4:00 p.m.) – *No beans, rice, noodles, or other garnishes.*

Gumbo (4:45 – 5:15 p.m.) – *No rice or other garnishes.*

Beef Stew (4:45 – 5:15 p.m.) – *No garnishes.*

2. BBQ Cook-Off Saturday and Turn in Times

Head Cook’s meeting (10:00 a.m.)

BBQ Sauce (11:00 a.m. after Head Cook’s meeting) – *no garnishes.*

Beef Fajitas (12:45 – 1:00 p.m.) – *Shall have twelve slices for judges. No other garnishes.*

Chicken (2:15 – 2:30 p.m.) – *Shall contain an **un-sliced half chicken** for presentation and 12 slices of cook’s choice for sampling with no other garnishes. Chicken may or may not have wing tips.*

Pork Ribs (3:45 – 4:00 p.m.) – *Twelve Ribs shall be sliced and placed in the container with no other garnishes. St. Louis style is acceptable. Baby back ribs are not allowed.*

Beef Brisket (5:15 – 5:30 p.m.) – *Shall have twelve slices for judges and show smoke ring and skill of the team. No other garnishes.*

R. Trophies & Awards

1. Trophies will be awarded to the Top Ten (10) places in each category. The BBQ Grand Champion team will receive five (5) FBCF BBQ Buckles.
2. Culinary awards will be distributed on Friday with the presentation of the Jackpot Prizes. ****Awards begin at approximately 7:00 p.m. ****
3. BBQ awards will be distributed on Saturday night with the presentation for Showmanship. ****Awards begin at approximately 7:00 p.m. ****
4. BBQ Sauce cash jackpot (*optional*) will be awarded Saturday during the final awards presentation. The cash prize will be based on the number of entries (*each entry is \$10*).
5. BBQ Grand Champion and BBQ Reserve Champion teams are chosen from the highest overall score in the BBQ categories: Beef Fajitas, Beef Brisket, Chicken, and Pork Ribs. In case of a tie between the BBQ Grand and Reserve Champion winners, overall places earned in the culinary categories will be used to break the tie. If a tie still exists, the highest score in the beef brisket category will be used as a tiebreaker, then ribs, then chicken, and then fajitas.

Cash prizes will be awarded as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| First Place Fajitas | \$250 |
| First Place Chicken | \$500 |
| First Place Ribs | \$750 |
| First Place Brisket | \$1000 |
| BBQ Reserve Grand Champion | \$1500 |
| BBQ Grand Champion Team | \$2500 |

6. The Fort Bend County Grand Champion BBQ Team will automatically be awarded one space and one set of contest entries into next year's Fort Bend County Fair BBQ Cook-Off contest. Said space and contest entries are non-transferable and may only be used by the Grand Champion Team.

S. Personal Entertainment

1. **Bands do not get into the Cook-Off area for free.** They must purchase a ticket or have been supplied a ticket by the purchasing team. **Bands, DJs, and teams are not allowed to drive into the Cook-Off once the gates are closed, NO EXCEPTIONS.**
2. If the Cook-Off committee receives complaints that the music gets too loud, you will be asked to turn it down and you must comply. Excessive noise will be determined by Security Deputies, the Safety Committee, and/or the Committee Chairman or Co-Chairman of the event.
3. Pyrotechnics of any kind is strictly prohibited. All other types of tent entertainment e.g., mechanical rides, bounce houses, aerial identification etc. are not allowed.

T. Cook-off Site Tear Down

Teams will not be allowed to start dismantling before 12:00 a.m. on Sunday and no vehicles will be allowed in or out of the Cook-Off area before gates are unlocked Sunday morning at 8:00 a.m. Teams must remove all contents that were brought. **All tear-downs, including tents and campers, must be completed by 5:00 p.m. Sunday or it will become the property of the FBCFA. Each team will be responsible for cleanup within their assigned space in a timely manner or a clean-up fee may be assessed.**

U. No shows

Teams that are unable to participate must notify the Fair Office in writing or the spot(s) will be forfeited for the next year.

V. Late Fees

A \$250 late fee may be assessed for incomplete forms, payment or entry paperwork, including deposits for the following year. Late entries are not guaranteed and will be reviewed case by case depending on availability.

W. Executive Decisions

All dates and times are subject to change. Cook-Off Contest Director and Chairman reserve the right to make additional rules, regulations, and amendments as situations warrant. **Decisions of the FBCFA Board of Directors are final.**