HSBBQ -Competition Rules – 2026-2027

High School BBQ, Inc. events are fun and competitive. To be fair to all of our competitors, we take the rules seriously. The following rules are to be strictly followed at every High School BBQ, Inc. event. All competitors, teachers, mentors, and attending adults should be familiar with all the rules.

1. Teams are made of high school students enrolled in high school grades 9th - 12th.
2. Teams are to have a teacher or HS staff member (with the high school email address) in charge of the team who also travels with them under their ISD rules, to all competitions.
3. Mentors must be approved by the high school or district, in accordance with their policies. Eligible mentors may include a teacher, a competition pitmaster, a parent, a graduated former team member, or another qualified individual.
4. Teams must have at least one Class ABC fire extinguisher on-site at each unexpired competition.
5. Alcohol is strictly prohibited at all times. This includes its use as an ingredient in any recipe or product.
6. Teams may not bring any meat to a competition that is the same type as the official competition meat. Approved meats for personal meals (e.g., lunch) include chicken legs, hamburger patties, hot dogs, and sausage.
7. Ingredient preparation may not occur after departing the home school.
8. No mixing, measuring, cutting, or any other form of preparation is permitted before 6:00 a.m. on Saturday.
9. Preparation in hotel rooms on Friday night is strictly prohibited. Any preparation conducted before 6:00 a.m. on Saturday will be considered a violation and may result in disqualification.
10. Coaches, mentors, and all other adults must remain outside the cooking area—no part of the body may cross into the designated space—once meat pick-up begins at 6:00 a.m. Adults must stay outside the cooking area until 3:10 p.m., after all teams have turned in their brisket. Violations of this rule may result in team disqualification.
11. This rule is intended to ensure that students work independently without assistance from coaches or mentors.

12. **Campers and recreational vehicles (RVs) are strictly prohibited on or near the competition site.** This restriction applies to all individuals, including school personnel, parents, mentors, family members, guests, and any persons who are not members of the High School BBQ, Inc. Board of Directors, Official Law Enforcement, or Official Emergency Management Units.
13. Box trailers specifically designed for catering and/or BBQ competitions are permitted at Regional and State competitions. However, all doors and windows must remain open at all times and are subject to inspection at any time by members of the High School BBQ, Inc. Board of Directors or their designated representatives.
14. Box trailers intended solely for transport must be moved to the designated vehicle parking area immediately after unloading. Such trailers may remain in the competition area only with prior approval from the High School BBQ, Inc. Board of Directors**.** If approval is granted, all doors must remain open at all times and the trailer will remain subject to inspection at any time by members of the High School BBQ, Inc. Board of Directors or their designated representatives.
15. There is to be no staying/sleeping on-site overnight at Regionals or State by HS students, teachers, mentors, or team parents/adults/siblings, etc**.**
16. ****AGAIN, RVS ARE <u>NEVER</u> ALLOWED****
    Note: These rules are for the safety of all students, teachers, mentors, board members, other attending youth, and adults.

COOKED ON SITE

1. All competition categories must be prepared, made, and cooked on-site during the competition by teams consisting of no fewer than one (1) and no more than five (5) students. Please refer to each category for specific rules and requirements.
2. Finished products may not be shared between teams. In addition, dessert and bean recipes must be different for each team representing the same school.
3. Gas or electric starters, as well as torches, may be used only to ignite the wood in the cooking pit. These devices may not be used at any time to cook, brown, or finish any meat products.
4. All meat products must be cooked exclusively over wood products from start to finish.

COOKING AREA

1. The cooking area will be approximately 20' x 20'. *The area will be roped off and only students will be allowed to be in this area while the competition is taking place which begins with the meat pick-up at 6 a.m. until last moment to turn in brisket occurs at 3:10 p.m.*
2. All adults must remain behind the tape, not breaking the plane, until *ALL TEAMS* HAVE TURNED IN THEIR BRISKET (3:10 pm).
3. ***No adults will be allowed in the cooking area after 6:00 am.*** If an adult, or any part of an adult (Do not break the plane--no reaching, pointing, etc.), enters the cooking area during the competition, the team may be disqualified from the competition. *The only exception to this rule will be in the case of an emergency.*

SANITARY CONDITIONS

1. Each team is responsible for maintaining its cooking area in a clean and sanitary condition at all times.
2. A High School BBQ, Inc. Board Member or designated representative may disqualify a team for unsanitary conditions or for submitting unsanitary entries.

TURN IN TIMES

1. Turn-in times for each competition will be established by the High School BBQ, Inc. Board.
2. These times will be provided to teams in the Regional information email and will also be announced during the Cooks Meeting.
3. *The standard turn-in times will only be adjusted in the event of severe weather or other extenuating circumstances.* Standard turn-in times for competing are:

    - **Dessert – 9:00 am**
    - **Beans – 10:30 am**
    - **Chicken – 12:00 pm**
    - **Ribs – 1:30 pm**
    - **Brisket – 3:00 pm**

4. Teams are responsible for making sure they know the turn-in times for each competition they compete in.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MEAT TURN IN

- All meat will be furnished on the morning of the competition and will be prepared from scratch with the time constraints of the competition.
- THERE IS TO BE NO LIKE-MEAT BROUGHT TO A COMPETITION THAT COULD BE MISTAKEN FOR COMPETITION MEAT. THIS WILL RESULT IN DISQUALIFICAITON. (Examples of meat approved for lunches would be chicken legs, hamburger patties, hot dogs, and sausage)
- No pre-marinating, pre-soaking, or pre-spicing prior to the official start time is allowed.
- No meat will be allowed to leave the team's site area.

MEAT CATEGORIES:

Chicken

- Each team must submit one (1) half chicken, cut from a whole chicken and fully jointed, with the skin on and the meat side facing up. The wing tip may be left on or removed. The chicken must fit inside the turn-in tray with the lid fully closed.

Ribs

- Each team must submit seven (7) fully separated pork spareribs. The ribs must be arranged horizontally in the turn-in tray in an accordion-style pattern, starting from the hinge side of the container.

Brisket

- Each team must submit seven (7) full slices of brisket, with the ends attached. Each slice must be no thicker than 3/8 inch and no thinner than 1/4 inch. The brisket must be arranged horizontally in the turn-in tray in an accordion-style pattern, starting from the hinge side of the container.

MARKERS AND GARNISH FOR THE MEAT

- When preparing meat products for turn-in, *nothing may be added to the meat after it has been placed in the tray*.
- While at the Turn In table, if needed the team will be instructed to correct their turn-in, if sauce or juice is added to the meat the team will be given a paper towel to soak it up.
- All garnish is prohibited.
- No markings on the box, ticket, or foil is allowed. Foil cannot be folded, torn, etc.

Pinto Beans

- Beans will be started at the competition site from dry pinto beans.
- Each team must use only dry pinto beans but may add additional ingredients.
- After the Cooks Meeting, beans may be soaked in ***WATER ONLY*** overnight. *No additional ingredients may be added to the beans until 0600 Saturday morning*. Doing so may disqualify the team from the bean entry and/or from the competition.
- Once the beans are put into the turn-in cup, all additional ingredients must be smaller than the diameter of a dime or small marble.
- No markings on the cup, ticket, or foil is allowed.

Desserts:

- Must be prepared from scratch and cooked on-site ******NO BAKE ITEMS ARE NOT ALLOWED*****
- Using a torch, such as a Crème Brulé torch is NOT considered "Cooked on Site"
- Schools with multiple teams may not use the same recipe for each team. Each team must submit a different recipe.
- A team should wisely utilize the 2-2.5 hours allocated for this category. The time is from prep to plating, and students are encouraged to choose a recipe that showcases their talents.
- Must contain at least 5 individually purchased ingredients

- It must be made from scratch, except for the crust, which can be chosen from the approved item list (See list for approved items).
- No cake mixes, cookie mixes, or pre-made mixes/fillings will be allowed
- ***No puddings or custards of any type are allowed***
- No premade icings/pastry cremes/whipped toppings, or other toppings. These items must be made from scratch.
- Hand-made, on-site tortillas must be made from scratch
- Fresh fruit must be used.
- *C*anned/jarred, jellied, or frozen fruit may not be used. (For example, maraschino cherries are jarred fruit.)
- Dried fruits *(raisins, cranberries, etc.)* are allowed as a garnish
- Powdered/dehydrated fruit is not allowed
- Evaporated Milk is allowed
- Grated Coconut is allowed

Dessert Recipe

- An accurate recipe must be submitted with each entry. (If someone was to follow your recipe, they could do so and get the same flavors and the recipe must include its proper name, preparation & cooking times, ingredients & method (i.e., We cooked it on the pit; We used a propane oven...).

- Put the following in the UPPER RIGHT-HAND CORNER: Prep Time; Cook Time; How it was cooked (pit, propane oven, Dutch oven, etc.) and highlight the Name of the dessert and everything in the upper right corner with a YELLOW highlighter (See example below).

Name of Recipe: Berry Pizza

Prep Time: 2 hours
Cook Time: 20-25 min
Cooked: On the pit

Ingredients:

- 1 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon cream of tartar
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup butter, softened
- 1 ¼ cups white sugar, divided
- 1 large egg
- 1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- ½ cup **fresh** blueberries, or more to taste
- ½ cup sliced **fresh** strawberries, or more to taste
- ½ cup sliced **fresh** peaches, or more to taste
- ½ cup sliced **fresh** banana, or more to taste

1. Preheat the BBQ Pit to 350 degrees
2. To make the cookie crust, combine flour, cream of tartar, cinnamon, baking soda, and salt in a medium bowl and set aside.
3. In a large bowl, cream together butter and 3/4 cup sugar until smooth. Add the egg and beat well.
4. Stir the dry ingredients into the creamed mixture until just blended.
5. Press dough into an ungreased pizza pan to about the thickness of a thin-crust pizza.
6. Bake in the preheated pit until lightly browned, 10-15 minutes. Cool.
7. To make the filling, beat cream cheese with the remaining 1/2 cup of sugar and vanilla in a large bowl until light and fluffy. Evenly spread the mixture over the top of the cooled crust.
8. Cut the fresh fruit into slices
9. Arrange blueberries, strawberries, and banana on top of the filling and then put it back in the pit for about 5-10 minutes to warm the fruit and give it a slight smokey taste.

- Place the PRINTED **(not handwritten)** recipe in a Ziploc bag and bring it when you turn in your entry. *DO NOT WRITE* the team's name, school, or anything on the baggie or the recipe.
- Do not tape the Ziploc bag onto the dessert container.
- Decorative paper is not allowed. You may use the tinfoil provided if it is needed.
- Garnishing is allowed in this category. Topping items (such as cookie/candy crumbles which are placed on top of a dessert) may be used to garnish BUT DO NOT COUNT AS PART OF THE 5 INGREDIENTS

NO PRE-MADE DESSERTS ARE ALLOWED.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Pies
- Cakes
- Cupcakes
- Cookies
- Brownies

NO-BAKE DESSERTS ARE NOT ALLOWED. (All desserts are to be cooked on site)

- Using a torch, such as a creme brulee torch is NOT considered "Cooked on Site" and will be considered as a No-Bake Dessert.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS NOT ALLOWED ARE:

- Canned pie or fruit fillings
- Canned pastry fillings
- Canned or packaged whipped cream
- Puddings or custards ***(of any type)***
- Premade icings/pastry cremes/whipped toppings, etc.

- Chocolate, caramel, marshmallow cream, etc., drizzles may not be canned/jarred. (Example: Ice Cream/Dessert toppers)
- Canned fruit, fruit in a jar, frozen fruit, dehydrated fruit...
- Canned (pre-made) Crescent Rolls or Biscuits **These do not qualify as "pie crusts"**
- Pre-made Tortillas

APPROVED PACKAGED (PRE-MADE) ITEMS TO BE USED FOR CRUSTS:

- Pillsbury Pie Crusts (Other brands comparable to this are acceptable.)
    - The pie crust must be unrolled and hand-formed into a pie pan.
    - Piecrusts cannot be purchased pre-formed in a pie pan.
- Honey Maid Graham Crackers (Other brands comparable to this are acceptable.)
    - Graham crackers will be crushed to make a crust and hand-formed into a pie pan.
    - Graham cracker crust cannot be purchased pre-formed in a pie pan.
- Pepperidge Farm Puff Pastry Frozen Pastry Dough Sheets (Other brands comparable to this are acceptable.)
- Phyllo Dough Signature SELECT Pastry Sheets; Athens Phyllo Dough Sheets (NOT Phyllo shells of any type)
- Dynasty Egg Roll/Spring Roll Wrappers (Other brands comparable to this are acceptable.)

Bread Pudding Clarification:

- An authentic traditional Bread Pudding with fresh fruit will take nearly two hours to make from scratch. If it does not, then please choose a different recipe or make the bread on site.
- ***BREAD PUDDING IS NOT A PUDDING. ***
- Pudding refers to a type of dessert.
- Traditionally, the Brits use the word "pudding" for what Americans call "dessert".
- Traditionally, long ago, "puddings" referred to bland and rustic desserts that the lower-class citizens ate, and "Desserts" were sweeter and more decadent and were consumed by the upper-class citizens.

WOOD FIRE

- All fires for cooking meat must be wood or a wood product.
- ALL meat products are to be **cooked on wood products from start to finish**.
- You can use gas or electric starters or torches to start the wood, but you **may not use** them to cook, brown, or finish meat products.
- Once the meat has been placed in the pit, you may not restart your fire with gas or electric starters/torches.

PIT OR SMOKER

- Any commercial-made, homemade or shop-made pit may be used. All pits must use only wood or wood products.
- *Pellet smokers and guru-style fans are NOT allowed for TX HSBBQ competitions.*
- ***Teams may NOT share a pit/smoker.*** A school may have two pits/smokers on one trailer, however, there must be a separation of areas for the two teams using the pits/smokers to work. No combined workspace is allowed.

JUDGING FORMAT

- A taped ticket will be affixed to the top of each tray.
- Once in the judging area, each tray will be assigned a box number and to a table. · Entries will be judged by at least five judges who are 18 years of age or older.
- All entries will be judged on their appearance, taste, and texture.
- Single-Round Judging – The scores will be used to determine category placement. Once all five competition categories (dessert, beans, chicken, ribs, and brisket) are scored, the computer program will add the scores together to determine overall placement.
- Damaged trays may be returned to an TX HSBBQ Board Member or representative for replacement *ONLY if the original ticket is attached*.
- If the ticket is lost, the ticket will not be replaced and the team will receive a score of zero for that category.

DOUBLE BLIND JUDGING

- All entries will be submitted in identical containers which have been assembled and brought to the site by TX HSBBQ. The container for dessert, chicken, ribs, and brisket is an approximately 9” x 9” hinged Styrofoam tray.
- Each team will be provided with a piece of foil for each turn-in by TX HSBBQ and may not be substituted with any other foil. The foil supplied is to be placed in the bottom of each tray. You may choose not to put foil ONLY in the dessert tray. However, all meat categories must have foil in the bottom of each tray.
- A Styrofoam cup and lid will be provided by TX HSBBQ for the beans.

TIE BREAKER

- Brisket will be the first tiebreaker. If there is a tie in points, the team that finishes higher in the brisket category will be placed higher. If there are still ties then the ribs will be the next tiebreaker; then chicken; then beans; then dessert.

TURN-IN WINDOW

- There will be an additional 10 minutes before and 10 minutes after the turn-in time. This allows each team time to have their product checked in and correct any mistakes before the window closes.
- If a team misses the window, the product will not be accepted and will not be judged.

CONDUCT

- All teams, teachers, mentors, and spectators will be expected to conduct themselves in a friendly, courteous, and professional manner.
- Any team, teacher, mentor, or spectator who does not conduct themselves professionally may receive one warning and then be disqualified and possibly expelled from future competitions. This includes disrespecting or speaking ill of other teams, students, mentors, teachers, TX HSBBQ board members, TX HSBBQ representatives, volunteers, judges, or anyone on site.
- TX HSBBQ business will be discussed exclusively between TX HSBBQ board members, teachers, and students. Parents are considered spectators, and any questions, concerns, or team-related matters will be treated as TX HSBBQ business. This includes, but is not

limited to, whether a team is competing in an event, competition locations, rules, judging inquiries, and "no pass, no play" eligibility requirements. Aggressive, accusatory, or confrontational statements intended to create tension or provoke conflict with TX HSBBQ members, their representatives, or any HS teacher, by a spectator, is considered inappropriate.

- Spectators affiliated with a team who engage in inappropriate or negative behavior toward TX HSBBQ Board Members or their representatives may receive a warning, and the spectator could be required to leave the competition area. If the spectator refuses to comply, the team's teacher will be notified that continued noncompliance may result in disqualification of the team from the competition.
- Cheating, of any kind, will result in disqualification from a category or the competition. A team may lose its State qualification and must re-earn the opportunity to attend State. The HS's principal will be notified of why the team was disqualified and the TX HSBBQ Board's decision for the infraction.
- Adults who do not follow the rules can also disqualify the team, or the adult may be removed from the competition and asked to stay off-site until the awards are over.
- The outcome of the decision by the TX HSBBQ Board is final.
- This is a teaching environment; all adults are expected to be positive role models to the youth they are mentoring and to model professional behavior at all times.

TX HSBBQ STATE CHAMPIONSHIP ONLY

- *Coaches, mentors, and all other **adults will not be allowed within 20 feet** of the cooking area* after the meat pick-up has begun at 6:00 a.m. and must remain away from the cooking area until 3:10 pm when ***ALL TEAMS*** HAVE TURNED IN THEIR BRISKET. *Violators of this rule could disqualify their team.* The purpose of this rule is to allow students to work independently of their coaches/mentors.
- Students who do not keep their lanyards around their necks could cause the team to be disqualified. LANYARDS ARE REQUIRED AT ALL TIMES ONCE A TEAM HAS CHECKED IN.
- All teams are responsible for their site. Trash must be picked up and placed in the dumpsters, and the area (asphalt, gravel, etc.) must be free of trash and ashes PRIOR to the awards.
- Board members or their representatives will police the area to ensure everything is clean before the awards ceremony. Awards will not take place until the grounds are clean.