

2026 GALVESTON COUNTY FAIR & RODEO, INC.
49th Annual BBQ Cook-off
Superintendent: Brad Dillon (409) 770-7493
Chairman: Dan Moore (281) 723-2819

LOCATION: Galveston County Fairgrounds, Jack Brooks Road, Hwy 6

ENTRY FEE: ALL EVENTS - \$325.00 per team, per spot NON-REFUNDABLE
 Brisket is Mandatory with your choice of other entries. One entry each per spot
ENTRIES MUST BE PAID BY MARCH 23, 2026, OR SPOT(S) WILL BE FORFIETED

CHECK-IN: Thursday, April 23, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.
 Friday, April 24, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.

JUDGING: SPLIT THE POT Mystery Meat DIVISION --- Thursday, April 23, 2026
 SPLIT THE POT Beef Fajita DIVISION --- Friday, April 24, 2026
 CHICKEN DIVISION --- Friday, April 24, 2026
 PORK SPARE RIB DIVISION --- Saturday, April 25, 2026
 BEEF BRISKET DIVISION --- Saturday, April 25, 2026

AWARDS: AWARDS & PRIZE MONEY WILL BE PRESENTED AS FOLLOWS:

6th thru 10th Place in Chicken, Ribs & Brisket will receive Triple Crown points

1st through 5th Place teams in each Division will receive Awards & Prize Money as follows:

	<u>Brisket</u>	<u>Ribs</u>	<u>Chicken</u>
1st Place	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 1,800.00
2nd Place	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 1,400.00
3rd Place	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
4th Place	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 850.00	\$ 850.00
5th Place	\$ 800.00	\$ 650.00	\$ 650.00

The Grand Champion Cooking Team will receive \$1,250.00 and an Award
 The Reserve Grand Champion Cooking Team will receive \$750.00 and an Award

CHIEF COOK'S MEETING: SUNDAY,
April 12, 2026, 1:00 P.M.
ATTENDANCE MANDATORY

THE SPOT YOU HAVE THIS YEAR WILL BE YOURS (CHIEF COOK) AS LONG AS YOU PAY FOR YOUR SPOT(S) BY THE DEADLINE FOR THE COOK-OFF.
SPOTS NOT PAID BY MARCH 23, 2026, WILL BE GIVEN TO PEOPLE ON THE WAITING LIST.

PRIORITY RULES

1. ANY UNAUTHORIZED REPRODUCTION OF ANY OFFICIAL FORMS, PARKING PASSES, ENTRY FORMS, ATTACHMENTS, ETC. WILL BE GROUNDS FOR IMMEDIATE DISQUALIFICATION AND PERMANENT DISBARMENT FROM ALL COOK-OFFS RUN BY THE TRIPLE CROWN COOK-OFF COMMITTEE.
2. DO NOT DUMP GRAY WATER ON THE GROUND. All Gray water must be collected in a holding tank, dumped into a storm drain or dumped outside the fence. Do not dump gray water into any open ditch. Crawfish water must be dumped in the provided totes.
3. Port-o-cans must be placed so that they are easily **VISIBLE AND ACCESSIBLE** from a road / alley way for servicing. If your port-o-can has not been serviced, you must notify the cook-off committee by 8:00 am each day. Failure to do so may result in no service.
4. A Cook-off team **MUST** cook in the paid Cook-off spot(s) for 2 consecutive years, otherwise the team forfeits the spot(s) back to GCF&R. You may only request a lease agreement every 3rd year. Any and all lease agreements must be authorized in writing signed by a Committee Chairperson. If you no longer wish to cook, you cannot give your spots to another team. They become property of GCF&R. No exceptions.
5. No containers can be given to another team. Giving or receiving additional containers between teams is grounds for immediate disqualification of **BOTH TEAMS** for all events run by the GCF&R Triple Crown Cookoff Committee.
6. Teams who win prize money **MUST** collect their prize money **FROM THE FAIR OFFICE** beginning the Tuesday after close of the Fair and must be collected no later than **May 28, 2026**. Any uncollected prize money will be forfeited back to the Galveston County Fair & Rodeo after that time. **ALL PRIZE MONEY WILL BE DISTRIBUTED BY THE FAIR OFFICE.**

GENERAL RULES

7. There will be a Chief Cooks meeting on Sunday, April 12, 2026, 1:00 p.m. at the Galveston County Fairgrounds. Armbands and vehicle passes will be distributed at this time. Attendance by at least 1 team member is **MANDATORY**. **Failure to attend this meeting will result in a \$25 handling fee per SPOT.**
8. A team will consist of a Chief Cook and up to four (4) assistants. All Team Members must be 21 or older.
9. **No more than 285 Turn-ins** will be made available for the contest. Additional entries may be purchased up to 4 entries total per team name on a first come first served basis. All additional turn-ins must be paid for at the Chief Cooks Meeting. **EXTRA TURN-INS DO NOT INCLUDE EXTRA ARMBANDS OR VEHICLE PASSES.**
10. Arm Bands will be given to the Chief Cook and assistants (maximum of 5 arm bands) at the Chief Cooks meeting. These will be good for BBQ weekend only. Do not pass the arm bands, as this will be grounds for immediate disqualification.
11. Extra BBQ cook-off armbands will be available for purchase. This will allow the wearer entry to the fair on BBQ Cookoff Weekend.
12. **All persons without COOKER armbands will be required to leave the fairgrounds at 1:00 a.m. each day.** All persons with **COOKER** armbands are to be in their own spots.

13. The Cook-off Committee will provide one (1) approximate 30 x 30-foot space for each cook-off spot, area permitting, for the cook-off. Props, trailers, motor homes, tents (including stakes), coverings, or any other equipment must not exceed the boundaries of the space provided. Spaces are not always back to back or perfectly square. Map is not drawn to scale.
14. If food distribution companies need to deliver to your spot, they must deliver between the hours of 8 AM and 9 AM on Thursday April 23 or Friday April 24 ONLY. Chief Cook must be present for their deliveries. All trucks must be out of the cook-off area before 9:30 AM.
15. Beer and ice may be brought in until check-in closes on Friday. After that time, these items must be purchased from the Galveston County Fair & Rodeo, Inc
16. All Teams having Private Security must read and complete Attachment "A" of the rules.
17. All teams renting a tent must read and complete Attachment "B" of the rules. No tents will be set in any cook-off spot without the Chief Cook or representative being physically onsite during the tent placement to assure proper location.
18. Teams with 4 or more spots will be allowed to move onto the fairgrounds on Wednesday of BBQ weekend. All vehicles must be removed by gate closing time as the gates will be locked. No further vehicle traffic will be allowed after gates are closed.
19. Cook-off teams will be given 2 vehicle passes per spot. This pass must be displayed (hanging) from the rear view mirror of the vehicle. **Any vehicle without a pass is subject to being towed from the cook-off area. If you lose your pass, you can obtain a replacement for \$50.00 and a signed affidavit for a replacement pass.**
20. On Thursday, all teams on the West side (spots 1-110) of the cook-off area will be required to enter the cook-off through the commercial exhibit gate (West gate). If you are in these spots please line up on the Concrete Road on the West side of the fairgrounds and the follow the designated map.
21. **No vehicles will be allowed to park in the designated Vendor/Sponsor and Committee Reserved parking areas at any time.** This area is located directly outside the West Cook-off Gate. All vehicles parked in these areas are subject to tow without notice.
22. Any Cook-off Team requiring assistance with unloading, moving, or placing equipment (i.e., air conditioners, generators, refrigeration units, trailers, etc.) must request assistance by signing up on the Equipment Movement list located at the Cook-off Committee Building. Equipment will be moved on a first come, first serve basis only per the placement on the list.
23. All teams parking campers (travel trailers) outside of YOUR cook-off spot must park them in the designated camper parking area only. Contact the fair office to reserve your spot.
24. All vehicles on the cook-off grounds, after the gates close on any day, must remain within their own cook-off spot and cannot be moved until gates reopen.
25. The Cook-Off Committee reserves the right to alter the move-in and drive-in rules at its own discretion.
26. Each team will be provided a sign that must be posted in the cook spot which will list the spot number(s), team name, and chief cook. The sign must be posted on the outside space perimeter where the sign can be clearly seen from the walkway in front of the team's space.

COMPETITION

27. An official cook-off clock will be at the Cook-Off Committee Office.

28. Judging

- a) All categories will be in a single (1) phase.
- b) Entries will be judged on 3 criteria (Appearance (15%), Taste (50%), and Tenderness (35%))
- c) A table with a minimum of 5 judges will score the equally allocated samples.
- d) For each entry, the lowest judge's score will be dropped with the remaining judge's scores being used for category placement.

29. Frying of any meat sample is not allowed.

30. **EXACTLY 8 samples** must be placed in the container (no more, no less can be included or the sample will be disqualified)

31. BBQ CHICKEN DIVISION –

- a) Bone-in Chicken Thighs
- b) No slits or cuts allowed.
- c) If your chicken is undercooked, it will be disqualified.

32. PORK SPARE RIB DIVISION –

- a) Pork Spareribs Only
- b) No baby back ribs, country style ribs or boneless ribs.

33. BEEF BRISKET DIVISION –

- a) Beef Brisket Only.
- b) Full slices are required, no half slices, pieces or burnt ends allowed. End Blocking is allowed if it is evident that it is still a full slice.

34. Garnish, foil or non-food items will not be allowed in any division.

35. Samples turned in with unsanitary inclusions will be disqualified (hair, bugs, plastic, dirt, etc.).

36. All entries must be seasoned, marinated, and cooked on the Fair grounds. There will be no scheduled meat inspection, but all meat is subject to inspection by the Cook-off Committee at any time.

37. Fires must be of wood or wood substances. Wood burning pits and Pellet Smokers are allowed. Contestants must take all precautions necessary to prevent fire hazards. All fires must be contained in a suitable manner. Contestants may be disqualified if precautionary measures are not followed, or unsafe conditions exist.

38. Each team will be required to have a minimum of one 5 lb. ABC or a 2.5-gallon water extinguisher, in current date, within 20ft of all pits. If your team does not have the required fire extinguisher by 8:00pm Friday, you will be subject to disqualification. If you will be using a deep fryer, the Fire Marshall requires the team to have a "K" type extinguisher.

39. A grease pan is required beneath all pits. All pits may be inspected by the Cook-off Committee at any time.

CONDUCT

40. The Chief Cook will be responsible for the conduct of the team and guests.
41. All personal alcoholic beverages must remain in the cook-off area. **NO SINGLE SERVE GLASS CONTAINERS ARE ALLOWED IN THE PARK. ANYONE GIVING ALCOHOL TO MINORS (UNDER 21) WILL BE PROSECUTED. YOU MAY BE HELD CRIMINALLY OR CIVILLY LIABLE FOR OVERSERVING ALCOHOL TO YOUR TEAM MEMBERS AND/OR GUESTS.** Failure to comply with these regulations will result in disqualification from all future GCF&R Triple Crown Cookoff Committee Events.
42. No food or beverages may be sold to the general public.
43. It is the responsibility of each team to see that the contest area is kept clean, and the area is cleaned and policed after the contest. **Any space left in disarray or with loose or bundled trash (this includes hay) will disqualify the team from future participation.** If any oil product is used, do not dispose of the substance within the cook-off area. Cook-off Teams are responsible for providing their own trash cans and bags. **There will be a \$100 fee PER SPOT assessed to your entry fee for next year for any NON-BIODEGRADABLE MATERIAL LEFT BEHIND.**
44. Protests of any team, equipment, or sample (any division) must be turned into the Cook-off Committee no later than one (1) hour after judging of that division with the \$100.00 non-refundable fee.
45. ONLY Properly Identified Service dogs are allowed on the fairgrounds.
46. Firearms are prohibited on the Galveston County Fairgrounds by cook-off team members during the Cook-off Event. Anyone found possessing Firearms will be DISQUALIFIED from this year's event and banned from all future GCF&R Triple Crown Cookoff Committee Events.
47. Participants will not be permitted to bring any wheeled transportation, i.e. Golf Carts, Four Wheelers, Bicycles. into the contest area at any time.
48. All sound system speakers must be turned into your cook-off spot and not turned outward. All loud music must be turned down at 1:00 a.m. each night.
49. Drones are not allowed anywhere on the fairgrounds
50. Galveston County Fair & Rodeo, Inc. is not responsible for theft, damage, or accidents.
51. The Cook-off Committee Members can inspect any cook-off area at any time, with or without cause, to determine rule compliance. Violation(s) of the rules will result in disqualification from all future GCF&R Triple Crown Cookoff Committee Events.
52. **ALL DECISIONS OF THE COOK-OFF COMMITTEE AND THE JUDGES ARE FINAL.**