Annual Barbeque Cook-Off 2026

5K ADDED MONEY!!!

Date: October 16th and 17th, 2026
Deadline for entries is Sunday, October 11th

Location: TVE Fair Grounds
321 FM 563 Rd
Liberty, Texas 77575

Entry fee: $175 per team
Categories: Brisket, Chef's Dessert, Chef's Entree, Fajitas, Margaritas, Ribs, Showmanship

Category Buy-In: $25 per entry (limit 1 per team)

(Optional) Jackpot: 1" Ribeye - $40 90/10 SPLIT
(Optional) Jackpot: Chicken - $40 90/10 SPLIT

Prizes and Money: 4k added to the brisket and ribs grand.
1k for the overall winner.

Move-in Date: Thursday, October 15, 12:00 pm – 10:00 pm
Friday, October 16, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
****Please note that no one is allowed to move out of their 40x40 spot until Sunday morning.****
Tear down: Sunday, October 18, by 12 noon
Space size: 40 x 40

(Additional 40 x 40 spaces are available)
Port-O-Can: $75 each

Hand Sanitation Station: $75 each
(Limited availability)

Ice: Cash only

A Calcutta will be held 15 minutes after the final turn-in on Friday night.
Calcutta will be held 15 minutes after the last turn-in on Friday. Calcutta funds will be split 90/10 between the purchaser and TVE. Calcutta will be charged per spot. For example, if a team has 2 spots, the purchaser will be required to pay 2 times the amount.

- **THE 90/10 SPLIT WILL BE PAID 90% TO THE TEAM AND 10% TO TVE.**

Rules and Regulations:

1. NOTHING can be anchored to the ground. Use water barrels and similar items to anchor tents.
2. DRIVING IN THE COOKOFF AREA OUTSIDE OF MOVE-IN OR OPEN GATE TIMES WILL RESULT IN IMMEDIATE DISQUALIFICATION, YOUR GUEST INCLUDED. COOK TEAMS' RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE INFORMING EVERYONE IN THEIR AREA.
3. Trash: Each cooking team will be responsible for keeping their area clean. Trash receptacles will be placed throughout the team area for your use. Each team is responsible for emptying the trash receptacles when the garbage vehicle comes around to your area.
4. Tear down: Sunday. No team will be allowed to move out until Sunday morning, **NO EXCEPTIONS**. You may begin packing up and hauling items out by hand on Saturday, but no vehicles are allowed inside the cook-off area until Sunday morning. All teams MUST be completely moved out by 12:00 pm on Sunday. Each team is responsible for ensuring your area is clean upon leaving the cook-off. A cleanup fee may be charged if the area is not left clean. You will also need to sign off on your area when you move out.
5. Optional Jackpot includes: 1” Ribeye - $40 and Chicken - $40. The optional jackpot does not count toward overall points. Each team may enter. Jackpots will be determined by the number of entries and split 90/10 between TVE and the 1st-place winner in each category. The optional jackpot is unlimited.
6. Best Overall: Best Overall will be based strictly on points. The team with the highest points will win all Best Overall prizes.
7. Showmanship Award: There is no additional cost. Judging will begin Friday night from 6-12 pm. The theme is at the team's discretion. Showmanship will be judged on cleanliness, appearance, and friendliness.
8. Chief Cook’s Meeting: The chief cook’s meeting will be held on Friday at 6:00 pm in the Expo Hall. We will discuss all turn-in times for Friday and Saturday, as well as any other housekeeping issues. This meeting **MUST** be attended!!!
9. **Prizes: Prizes will be awarded for 1st through 3rd places in each category.**
10. **Money: Calcutta money will be paid out on Brisket and Ribs.**
11. Space size: One 40 x 40 space is included per entry. An additional 40 x 40 space is available for $175 per space, and payment must be made at the time of entry. All props (storefronts), tents, coverings, sleeping quarters, and equipment must be confined to the assigned areas. Teams should bring suitable shelter, as the weather may require it.
12. Travel Trailer/RV: A travel trailer or RV must fit within the area you purchased. It must be self-contained; no dumping of any waste on the ground.
13. Vehicles: NO VEHICLES (including motorcycles) are allowed in the 40X40 cook space during the cook-off. It is your responsibility to inform your guests of these rules!
14. Golf Car/ATV/Motorcycle: NO GOLF CARTS OR ATVs are allowed at the cook-off, except those used by the BBQ committee members for committee business.
15. All music and PA systems must be off during the following times: Friday-Sunday, 1:00 am-7:00 am. All gates on the grounds will be locked during these times.
16. Teams will supply all equipment and supplies. This includes, but is not limited to, cookers, generators, power plants, water, buckets to catch all pit runoff, fire extinguishers, and trash cans inside their space. There is no electricity or water in the BBQ spots; you must be self-contained.

17. Fire extinguishers are required at each cook site, per the City of Liberty Fire Department, with a minimum capacity of 10 lbs.
18. The chief cook will be responsible for all team members and guests, ensuring they conduct themselves in an orderly manner and adhere to the rules.
19. All members of the cooking team and guests will wear proper clothing at all times. Public nudity and lewdness are against the law in the City of Liberty, and law enforcement officers may issue tickets or make arrests.
20. This is a free event; teams may NOT charge the public to enter their space or drink. You may have sponsors for your team, but you can't charge admission to your space.
21. NO GLASS BOTTLES ALLOWED ON THE PREMISES. Excessive use of alcoholic beverages and underage drinking will be grounds for disqualification and removal.
22. All cooking teams and their associates agree to greet guests and provide professional service. They also agree to work positively with the BBQ Committee, TVE volunteers, and staff.
23. Cooking: All means of above-ground cooking will be allowed. All fires must be contained and not on the ground. Hot coals or ashes should not be disposed of in trash containers or on the grounds.
24. All meats and perishables must be on ice or in cold storage upon arrival and remain there until used.
25. Teams exhibit at their own risk. The TVE, BBQ Committee members, their members, or agents assume no liability and will not be held responsible for injury, theft, or damage of any kind.
26. No concealed weapons are allowed on the premises.
27. No pets are allowed on the premises, including inside your travel trailer or RV.
28. Once a team is accepted, it is committed to showing.
29. There are no rainout dates and no refunds. (This includes acts of God, e.g., hurricanes.)
30. The Committee Chairman reserves the right to issue additional regulations as situations warrant.
31. Decisions of the Committee Chairman and Judges are final.

For more information about the Barbeque Cook-off, contact:

TVE Office
(936) 336-7455
info@tvefair.com

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(832) 926-3568
tvebbq@outlook.com

Barbecue Cook-off Category Regulations

TVE FAIR & RODEO

Entry Rules:

****These rules apply to each division, unless otherwise specifically noted****

1. The chief cook may be asked to sample their entry.
2. Each team will be responsible for delivering its entry to the judging area on time, in the container provided by the BBQ Committee. Only the committee chairman can excuse a late turn-in.
3. Winners will be announced TBA on Saturday, October 17th.
4. Only Chef's Entrée and Chef's Dessert may contain garnish. All other entries will be disqualified.
5. Cooked-on sauce or natural gravy from the meat is acceptable.
6. All Calcutta money must be paid in cash.

Fajitas:

1. Fajitas will be judged on appearance, aroma, taste, and tenderness.
2. Fajitas will be **BEEF** only, no seafood.
3. No sauces or garnishes may be added after fajitas are placed in the judging container.
4. Must be in the container provided by the BBQ Committee.
5. 8 pieces for judging, no more, no less.
6. Team members may begin turning in fajita entries at 7:45 pm on Friday.
7. NO FAJITA ENTRY WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 8:00 PM. Judging begins at 8 pm.

Margaritas:

1. Margaritas will be judged on visual appearance and taste.
2. Margaritas may be frozen or served on the rocks.
3. May include anything that fits in the provided cup, without additional support to keep the cup upright.
4. Must be in the container provided by the BBQ Committee.
5. Team members may begin turning in their margarita entries at 8:45 pm on Friday.
6. NO MARGARITA ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 9:00 PM. Judging begins at 9 pm.

Barbecue Cook-off Category Regulations

Chef's Entree:

1. Chef's Entree will be judged on appearance, aroma, and taste.
2. Chef's Entree will be the entrée that the cooking team chooses to prepare.
3. NO DESSERTS are allowed in this category.
4. Judges will cut as they taste.
5. Entry MUST BE prepared at the cook-off in your 40 X 40 area.
6. All items inside the provided container must be edible. No non-food garnishes. No non-food containers inside the container provided by the BBQ Committee. No toothpicks, skewers, plastic bowls, etc.
7. Entry must be in the container provided by the BBQ Committee.
8. 8 Pieces for judging, no more, no less.
9. Team members can begin turning in their entries at 11:45 am on Saturday.
10. NO CHEF'S ENTRÉE ENTRY WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 12:00 pm; judging begins at 12 pm.

Chef's Dessert:

1. Chef's Dessert will be judged on appearance, aroma, and taste.
2. Chef's Dessert will be the dessert the cooking team chooses to prepare.
3. NO MEAT is allowed in this category.
4. Desserts cannot be store-bought.
5. Desserts cannot require refrigeration.
6. Judges will cut as they taste.
7. Entry MUST BE prepared at the cook-off in your 40 X 40 area.
8. All items inside the provided container must be edible. No non-food garnishes. No non-food containers inside the container provided by the BBQ Committee. No toothpicks, skewers, plastic bowls, etc.
9. Entry must be in the container provided by the BBQ Committee.
10. 8 pieces for judging, no more, no less.
11. Team members can begin turning in their entries at 12:45 pm on Saturday.
12. NO CHEF'S DESSERT ENTRY WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 1:00 pm; judging begins at 1 pm.

Ribs: (calcutta payout)

1. Ribs will be judged on appearance, aroma, taste, and tenderness.
2. NO BABY BACK RIBS ALLOWED
3. Ribs must be turned in, cut individually (bone-in), and placed in the tray, top up, with the bone parallel to the hinge. St. Louis cut is acceptable.
4. No garnishing after the ribs have been placed in the judging container.
5. Must be in the container provided by the BBQ Committee.
6. 8 pieces for judging, no more, no less.
7. Team members may begin turning in the Rib entry at 2:45 pm on Saturday.
8. NO RIB ENTRY WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 3:00 pm; judging begins at 3 pm.

Barbecue Cook-off Category Regulations

Brisket:(calcutta payout)

1. Brisket will be judged on appearance, aroma, taste, and tenderness.
2. Place the brisket on a tray, parallel to the hinge, and cut it less than ½ inch thick.
3. No sauces or garnishes are to be added after the brisket is placed in the judging container.
4. Must be in the container provided by the BBQ Committee.
5. 8 pieces for judging, no more, no less.
6. Team members may begin turning in brisket entries at 3:45 pm on Saturday.
7. NO BRISKET ENTRY WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 4:00 pm; judging begins at 4 pm.

Optional Jackpot – Ribeye $40 90/10 split:

1. Ribeye will be judged on appearance, aroma, taste, and tenderness.
2. Ribeye must be 1 inch thick and cooked to medium.
3. No sauces or garnishes may be added after the ribeye is placed in the judging container.
4. Judges will cut as they taste.
5. Must be in the container provided by the BBQ Committee.
6. Team members may begin turning in the Ribeye entry at 10:45 am on Saturday.
7. NO RIBEYE ENTRY WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 11:00 am; judging will begin at 11:00 am.

Optional Jackpot - Chicken $40 90/10 split:

1. Chicken will be judged on appearance, aroma, taste, and tenderness.
2. No sauces or garnishes may be added after the chicken is placed in the judging container.
3. A whole ½-chicken, fully jointed and including the breast, wing, thigh, and drumstick, must be presented, along with eight (8) bite-sized pieces of white or dark meat for judging.
4. The 8 bite-sized pieces MUST come from another fully jointed ½-chicken.
5. There must be no grill marks on the meat.
6. Chicken must be in the container provided by the BBQ Committee.
7. Team members may begin turning in chicken entries at 1:45 pm on Saturday.
8. NO CHICKEN ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 2:00 pm; judging begins at 2 pm.
9. Any entry with visible blood will not be judged.

***** Chief cooks will have 1 hour after the chief cook meeting to acknowledge any errors in the boxes received for the cook-off entries. The Chairman must be consulted after this time.**

***** ONE (1) warning will be issued for any rule violation. Upon the 2nd instance, immediate disqualification and forfeiture of prizes will occur. CHAIRMAN HAS THE FINAL SAY.**

TVE and the BBQ Committee reserve the right to reject any entry or remove any contestant or team found to be violating the rules and regulations, or whose conduct is deemed unfavorable to the event or its guests. Removal from the grounds or misconduct under the regulations may result in disqualification from all awards and prizes won. It is the Chief Cook's responsibility to inform all guests of the rules and ensure they are followed; otherwise, it may result in immediate disqualification. All music and PA systems must shut down at 1 am NO Exceptions.

Barbecue Cook-off
Category Regulations

Trinity Valley Exposition Fair & Rodeo
Barbeque Cook-Off
Schedule of Turn-in Times
October 16 - 17, 2026

Friday, October 16, 2026

6:00 pm – Chief Cooks' Meeting
7:45 - 8:00 pm – Fajita turn-in
8:45 - 9:00 pm – Margarita turn-in
9:15 pm – Calcutta

Saturday, October 17, 2026

10:45 - 11:00 am –Jackpot Ribeye turn in
11:45 - 12:00 pm – Chef's Entree turn-in
12:45 - 1:00 pm – Chef's Dessert turn-in
1:45 - 2:00 pm – Chicken turn-in
2:45 - 3:00 pm - Rib turn-in
3:45 - 4:00 pm – Brisket turn-in

- AWARDS PRESENTATION SATURDAY, TIME TBD.
- ANY MISCONDUCT WITH THE REGULATIONS COULD RESULT IN IMMEDIATE DISQUALIFICATION.
- THE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN HAS THE FINAL SAY.

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