



2024 STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL BBQ COOK-OFF RULES & REGULATIONS Revised 12/28/23

1. The BBQ Cook-off will be held during the Strawberry Festival May 16, 17, 18 & 19, 2024 at the Pasadena Fairgrounds located at 7902 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena Texas 77507.
2. **NO FIREARMS ARE ALLOWED ON THE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL GROUNDS.**
3. Applications will be available online at strawberryfest.org. NOTE: An application for any year other than 2024 is invalid and unacceptable.
4. Space locations will be on a first-come, first-served basis.
5. The Pasadena Strawberry Festival (PSF) reserves the right to refuse to rent cook-off spaces to a cook team and/or the responsible head cook for 1 or more years if the Festival's Board has previously adjudged the team or head cook to be in violation of a state law, city ordinance, festival rule or other conduct deemed by the Board to be contrary to good order and discipline or the family nature of the festival's activities. The decision of the board will be final as to all judgements resulting in a refusal to rent. A cook team under a different name will be deemed to be the same cook team as was refused rental if it has the same head cook and/or if it has 2 or more assistant cooks as listed on the application for the year when the violation occurred.
6. Persons associated with the PSF as a committee member or as a director may be part of a cook team but can NOT be listed as the head cook.
7. Violation of any of the Rules or Regulations in this document are grounds for expulsion.
8. Competition spaces are not transferable without prior consent and approval from the BBQ Committee Director and/or VP.
9. A single team may occupy as many spaces as they want, however, only three (3) will be allowed as competition spaces.
10. One-half (1/2) of the entry fee must be paid upon registration. Payment, in full, must be received by April 1, 2024.
11. Teams must supply their own needed equipment and supplies.

12. Holes, dug pits or open flames in boxes are not permitted.
13. Metal pans must be provided by the cook teams and placed under the opening of the firebox to prevent damage to the blacktop or concrete surface or catching the grass on fire.
14. Drip pans must be placed under all grease drains to prevent damage to the blacktop or concrete surface and/or damaging the grass.
15. Exterior décor and interaction with the public must be appropriate for viewing by a public audience of all ages and may not consist of material having a political, religious, discriminatory or lewd nature. THIS IS A FAMILY-FRIENDLY FESTIVAL.
16. The PSF will not be responsible for theft or damage.
17. The PSF reserves the right to make any additional changes to the rules and regulations.
18. Decisions of the PSF judges are **FINAL**.
19. Those attending or participating in the BBQ contest are required to wear appropriate clothing and shoes.
20. Excessively loud music, horns, air horns, etc. are strictly prohibited.
21. **ALL BANDS/MUSIC MUST STOP PLAYING AT 11:00 PM EVERY NIGHT. THIS IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PASADENA FAIRGROUNDS ORDINANCE AND WILL BE CAUSE FOR DISQUALIFICATION.**
22. Should any contestant have any complaints regarding their Team Rep or any Team Rep committee member, they should immediately report their complaint to Cindi Nettles, General Chair of Team Rep or Oscar Garza, Director of the BBQ Cook-off.

ENTRY FEES

1. The entry fee is \$300 per 40' x 40' space. The only additional fee will be \$25 per RV per day. This entry fee includes competition entries for brisket, beef fajitas, chicken, pork spareribs and pinto beans.
2. Teams may purchase as many spaces as they want but only three (3) can be used as competition spaces.
3. Cook's Choice, Strawberry Dessert and Margaritas are optional categories. Teams may participate in these categories for \$25 per entry per team and are limited to 1 entry per team per space. Hospitality is free. **Deadline for entering optional categories is April 1, 2024. There will be NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline.**
4. Each space will be given five (5) cooker wristbands. **Festival tickets may be purchased for \$10 each, limited to 25 per team, prior to 5:00 pm on May 5, 2024. All General Admission tickets will be \$15 at the gate.**
5. NO ADMISSION WILL BE CHARGED TO:
 - a. Contestants with Cooker Wristbands

- b. All Strawberry Festival Committeemen wearing badges.
- c. Children under five (5) years of age.

COOK-OFF TEAMS AND SPACES

1. A cook-off team may consist of one (1) head cook & four (4) assistant cooks.
2. Cook Teams with multiple spaces may have sub-teams i.e. Team #1, Team #2, Team #3.
3. Each sub-team must have its own space & pit. They must have a different name (Team #1, Team #2, etc.) and each team **MUST HAVE A DIFFERENT HEAD COOK.**
4. In order to support our main purpose, Scholarships for the kids, it is recommended that each team purchase five (5) cases of beverage (i.e. beer, water, soft drinks) **PER SPACE** from the PSF, i.e. 1 space = 5 cases, 2 spaces = 10 cases and 3 spaces = 15 cases.
5. **ALL ICE MUST BE PURCHASED FROM THE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL (ONCE YOU ARRIVE ON-SITE).**
6. Team names must not be offensive and are subject to approval by the PSF Cook-Off Director.
7. Head cook & team members may not cook on more than 1 team. Doing so will be cause for disqualification of both teams.
8. Props, trailers, motor homes, tents, covering or any other part of contestant's or team's equipment must not exceed the boundaries of the assigned space. One (1) cooking pit & (1) one self-contained motor home, or camper will be allowed per space. All RVs will be at a charge of \$25/ Per day (12:00am -12:00pm) RV spots are Limited. Payment due at signup.
9. Teams may not extend, under any circumstances, into any utility alleys created between, behind or beside team spaces. All power alleys and easements must be left clear and open at all times, including move-in.
10. It is the responsibility of each team to get their tent located correctly and a representative of the team must be present while the tent is being erected. If a tent is set up outside of the team's allocated space, the team bears all responsibility to ensure correction of tent placement.
11. **No hay, straw, shavings or similar combustible materials are allowed on the grounds.**
12. Teams wishing to utilize perimeter fencing within their allocated spaces will be allowed to do so if it is secure.

TENTS

1. Tent companies may be scheduled to set up between **8:00 am and 8:00 pm on Monday, May 13, and Tuesday May 14, 2024.**
2. Tent tear-down can begin on Monday, May 20, 2024 at 8:00 am.
3. No stakes will be allowed on any tent. **ALL TENTS MUST BE WATER BARRELED.**
4. Personal "pop up tents" will be allowed. These type tents must be secured by sandbags or concrete stanchions.
5. Tent stakes or other devices that damage the blacktop or concrete surface in any way are prohibited.
6. It is the responsibility of the cook-off team to abide by all tent requirements as noted on the attached City of Pasadena Fire Marshal's Office document.

ELECTRICITY & WATER

1. ALL spaces will have electricity available.
2. Water is provided for all spaces. Hoses must be provided by the cook teams.
3. All generators supplied by the cook teams must be diesel powered as per the Pasadena Fire Code.

TRASH

1. Trash receptacles will be placed throughout the contest area for contestant's use.
2. It is the contestant's responsibility to have their trash readily available to be emptied into the trash trailer when it arrives at their space. Plastic trash liners will be furnished after check-in.
3. No free liquids or glass should be put into trash bags, barrels or boxes.
4. No hot coals or heavy trash should be put in trash bags, barrels or boxes.
5. Each cook team is responsible for fully cleaning their entire cook space/spaces. PSF is not responsible to clean up of spaces. If the spaces are not clean at the end of the BBQ cook-off, the team will not be invited to participate in the 2025 BBQ Cook-off. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

PITS

1. Each participating team is restricted to one (1) competition pit per space (1 firebox).
2. Contestants are not allowed to share cooking equipment.
3. Fires must be wood or wood substances. No electric pits will be allowed.
4. Metal pans must be provided by the cook teams and placed under the opening of the firebox to prevent damage to the blacktop or concrete surface or catching the grass on fire.
5. Drip pans must be placed under all grease drains to prevent damage to the blacktop or concrete surface and/or damaging the grass.

PORT-A-CAN & MOTOR HOME (RV) SERVICE

1. Service will be provided by TBD.
Contact:
2. It is the responsibility of the cook team and/or RV owners to contact _____ to reserve and pay for service prior to the contest.
3. The port-a-can should be placed in an area inside the cooking space that will be easily accessible for cleaning and it is the cook team's responsibility to arrange for their port-a-can to be cleaned.

COOK TEAMS RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Each cook team with air conditioning must furnish their own drain line and water overflow must be drained into the city drain system or a concealed container. It is the cook team's responsibility to ensure that this is done.
2. Under no circumstances will drain water be allowed to drain into adjoining cooking spaces.
3. The PSF can assist with unloading/loading AC units if equipment is available; however, PSF is not responsible for any damage which may be incurred.
4. The head cook is responsible for the conduct of their team and guests.
5. Each cook team must comply with all laws pertaining to the serving and consumption of alcoholic beverages.
6. Under no circumstances are alcoholic beverages to be distributed to the general public by anyone.
7. **NO ONE UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE SHALL BE SERVED OR ALLOWED TO CONSUME ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES WHILE ANYWHERE ON THE GROUNDS.**
8. Any cook team having inappropriate entertainment, contests, sales, raffles, etc. will be asked to leave the contest area and will be disqualified from the competition.

9. Cook teams with an enclosed area to which the public is not allowed must furnish their own security.
10. Each cook team must comply with all laws pertaining to the serving and consumption of alcoholic beverages.
11. All spaces must be left clean of all debris and trash. If it is not clean, the team will not be invited back to the 2025 cook-off. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
12. Tear-down may begin the morning of Sunday, May 19, however:
 - a. Each space number must always remain visible.
 - b. Vehicles will not be allowed into cook-off area prior to 9:00 a.m.
 - c. All vehicles **must be escorted out** during SF hours.

The following guidelines are recommended by the City of Pasadena Health Department. All teams are required to follow these guidelines.

1. A cover is required over all open food preparation area.
2. Three (3) containers of water must be utilized at all times, one gallon minimum each:
 - a. 1st container – Soap & water for washing unless sink and running water are available and useable.
 - b. 2nd container – Clean water for rinsing unless a sink & running water are available and useable.
 - c. 3rd container – 1 cup of bleach per gallon of water for sanitizing.
3. All food must be kept covered.
4. Keep cold food stored on ice or refrigerated at all times. Food must be maintained at 40°.
5. Heated food should be maintained at 140°.
6. Smoking tobacco is not permitted in food serving areas.

SAFETY

1. One (1) portable fire extinguisher 10# Type “K” or 1 10# ABC **per space and in view at all times.**
2. Each team that utilizes a diesel generator, electrical hook-up or propane tank shall have a 5# multipurpose ABC or BC fire extinguisher readily available. Any use of a fryer will require a Type “K” extinguisher in addition to the ABC extinguisher.
3. Fire extinguishers must be inspected and tagged within the year by a fire equipment company in the State of Texas or the team must have a new purchase receipt for the extinguisher. See attached Fire Marshall’s check list.

ANIMALS

1. **ONLY** registered Service Animals are allowed on the fairgrounds per the rules of the Pasadena Convention Center. Service animals **must be contained** either by being crated, caged or on a leash at all times. **No animal will be allowed to run loose.**
2. No animals of any kind will be permitted in designated food preparation areas or the Judging/Scoring area.

COOKS MEETING

1. **FRIDAY, MAY 3** at 6:30 in the Rodeo Arena. This meeting will include:
 - a. Explanation of the rules
 - b. Q&A session for clarification of rules, etc.
2. **THURSDAY, May 16**, at 9:00 am in the Rodeo Arena. This meeting will include:
 - a. Distribution of turn-in containers
 - b. Assignment of Cook's Choice and Margarita turn-in times.

CHECK IN

1. **Tuesday, May 14, 8:00 am** – All equipment 26' and over may start moving in (cooking trailers, RVs, etc.)
2. **Tuesday, May 14, 3:00 pm** – All other equipment may start moving in.
3. **All vehicles must be out of the cook-off area by 1:00 pm on Thursday, May 16, 2024.**

VEHICLES & EQUIPMENT

1. Gates to thru traffic will be locked at 1:00 pm on Thursday, May 16.
2. No vehicle will be allowed to enter or leave the contest area after 1:00 on Thursday, May 16. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
3. Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES will contestants block any aisle after set-up period ends at 1:00 pm on Thursday, May 16.
4. Vehicles not removed from cook-off area by 1:00 on Thursday, May 16, will be subject to removal by a wrecker at the contestant's expense.
5. Under no circumstances will any contestant or member of the public be allowed to bring onto the grounds any of the following: golf carts, motor vehicles, carts, bicycles, roller skates, hoverboards, skateboards, scooters, Segways, remote-controlled toys, drones, motorized coolers or any other type of transportation, EXCEPT for wheelchairs for handicapped individuals. Use of any of the above-mentioned items would justify a cook team's disqualification.

BEER & ICE

1. In order to support our main purpose, Scholarships for the kids, it is recommended that each team purchase 5 cases of beverage (i.e. beer, water, soft drinks) **PER SPACE** from the Strawberry Festival, i.e. 1 space = 5 cases; 2 spaces = 10 cases and 3 spaces = 15 cases.
2. **ALL ICE MUST BE PURCHASED FROM THE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL (ONCE YOU ARRIVE ON-SITE).**
3. Under no circumstances will outside BEER, ICE or COLD DRINK VENDORS be allowed into the contest area.
4. AT NO TIME, will cookers be allowed to re-stock beer or ice from outside the cookoff.

BANDS/PERFORMERS

1. Bands/performers must be pre-registered with PSF. Any cook team having a band/performer (or musical equipment) that requires entry into the cooking area after **1:00 pm on Thursday, May 16**, must submit a Band Registration Form to the PSF office by **5:00 on Friday, May 3, 2024**.
2. **BANDS/PERFORMERS/MUSIC MUST END ALL PERFORMANCES BY 11 pm EVERY NIGHT. THIS IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PASADENA FAIRGROUND ORDINANCE AND WILL BE CAUSE FOR DISQUALIFICATION.**

GENERAL CONTEST JUDGING RULES

1. There will be a \$500 cash award, along with a trophy, for the 1st place Brisket and for 1st place Pork Ribs.
2. A cook team's entry fee entitles contestants to enter the Beef Fajitas, Pork Spareribs, Brisket, Pinto Beans, chicken and Hospitality contests. You are allowed **one (1)** entry per category per space. Teams that have multiple spaces can purchase an "optional category" turn-in for Cook's Choice, Margaritas and Dessert for **\$25.00 per category per space before April 1, 2024. Entries will be limited to three (3) spaces.**
3. Judging will be held in the NE corner of the Convention Center unless otherwise noted.
4. Beef Fajitas, Pinto Beans, Chicken and Pork Spareribs turn-in times will begin **FIFTEEN (15) MINUTES PRIOR** to the scheduled judging time. It is the team's responsibility to ensure the entries are delivered to the judging area in a timely manner.
5. Competition Brisket must be inspected by a Team Rep **PRIOR** to cutting. A Team Rep will observe the cutting and packaging of the brisket. A **team member**, with the brisket cut, will then be taken, by golf cart, to the convention center for delivery to be judged.
6. **All golf carts used for pick-up must report to the Team Rep area fifteen (15) minutes prior to 1:00 on Saturday, May 18, 2024.**

7. PSF utilizes a “Blind Judging” system that is based on a duplicate numbered ticket which will be utilized in all judging categories except Cook’s Choice and Margaritas, which will be judged in the Cook Teams spaces.
 - a. Blind judging consists of ½ of a double ticket being enclosed in a small envelope and being secured by duct tape to the bottom of the turn-in container.
 - b. The 2nd half of the ticket is placed inside the container. This ticket should be retained by the contestant.
8. Any container that appears to have been deliberately marked or altered will be referred to the General Chairman of the Judging and Scoring Committee who will rule on disqualification.
9. If a container gets damaged, tell your Team Rep or bring it to the Team Rep Tent so that it can be replaced.
10. All entries will be scored on a scale of 1 to 10 in each of the judging criteria with 10 being the highest score possible. In case of a tie, the computer will be used to break the tie.
11. In addition to the categories listed above, a trophy will also be awarded for Hospitality.
12. Sauces, garnishes or foil are not allowed in the judging container and will be grounds for disqualification.

THURSDAY NIGHT EVENTS

STRAWBERRY DESSERTS

1. Entry fee is \$25 per team and is NON-REFUNDABLE and must be paid prior to April 1, 2024.
2. Judging will begin at 7:00 pm on Thursday, May 16.
3. Judging will be done in the Convention Center.
4. Desserts should be enough for six (6) judges and must be prepared on-site.
5. Desserts **MUST** include strawberries.
6. Trophies will be awarded to 1st thru 3rd places. Placement #1 thru #5 will be posted.

FRIDAY EVENTS

HOSPITALITY

1. Judging will occur in the team's cook-space.
2. Nudity and lewdness will not be allowed or tolerated. Violation of this rule by any contestant will result in immediate disqualification of that team.
3. Teams of judges must be able to enter each participating team space to judge the space and will be anonymous.

BEEF FAJITAS

1. Judging will begin at 4:00 pm on Friday, May 17.
2. Entries must be turned in to the Judging Area in the Convention Center.
3. One (1) beef fajita entry per cook team. Beef fajitas must be cooked on-site.
4. The turn-in container should be filled with beef fajita meat.
5. Sauces, garnishes or foil are not allowed in the judging container and will be grounds for disqualification.
6. Trophies will be awarded for 1st thru 3rd places. Placement #1 thru #10 will be posted.

PINTO BEAN RULES

1. Judging will begin at 5:30 on Friday, May 17.
2. Entries must be turned in to the Judging Area in the Convention Center.
3. One (1) pinto bean entry per cook team.
4. Beans **must** be PINTO beans and must be cooked on-site.
5. Nothing bigger than the bean is allowed in the judging cup.
6. One container will be provided per entry, fill it to the top.
7. Trophies will be awarded for places 1st thru 3rd. Placements #1 thru #10 will be posted.

COOK'S CHOICE

1. Entry fee is \$25 per team and is NON-REFUNDABLE and must be paid prior to April 1, 2024.
2. Judging will begin at 6:00 pm on Friday, May 17. Exact times will be assigned to cook teams.
3. Judging will be done in the team spaces with 15 minutes allowed for judging and scoring.
4. In the event of inclement weather, judging will be moved to an appropriate location.
5. Participants should prepare enough for four (4) judges.
6. All entries must be prepared on-site.
7. Trophies will be awarded for 1st thru 3rd places. Placement #1 thru #10 will be posted.

SATURDAY EVENTS

MARGARITAS

1. Entry fee is \$25 per team and is NON-REFUNDABLE and must be paid prior to April 1, 2024.
2. Judging will begin at 10:00 am on Saturday, May 18. Exact times will be assigned to cook teams. Each entry will be allowed 15 minutes to sample and score.
3. Judging will be done in team spaces.
4. In the event of inclement weather, judging will be moved to an appropriate location.
5. **A 4-oz cup will be provided for margarita judging.**
6. Teams should prepare enough for four (4) judges.
7. Fire is not allowed as a special effect.
8. All margaritas **must** be prepared on-site.
9. Trophies will be awarded for 1st thru 3rd places. Placement #1 thru #10 will be posted.

CHICKEN

1. Judging will begin at 11:00 am on Saturday, May 18.
2. Entries must be turned in to the Judging Area in the Convention Center.

3. Judging container must contain ½ chicken, fully jointed which includes breast, wing, thigh & drumstick **plus** additional cut-up pieces of both white and dark meat for judging.
4. **NO CORNISH GAME HENS** will be allowed and are grounds for disqualification.
5. Sauces, garnishes or foil will not be allowed in the judging container and will be grounds for disqualification.
6. All chicken entries **must** be cooked on-site.
7. Trophies will be awarded for 1st thru 3rd places. Placement #1 thru #10 will be posted.

PORK SPARERIBS

1. Judging will begin at 12:30 pm on Saturday, May 18.
2. Entries must be turned in to the Judging Area in the Convention Center.
3. Turn-ins will consist of pork spareribs only with knuckles removed.
4. Turn-in container should be full, at least 8 ribs should be provided.
5. Sauces, garnishes or foil will not be allowed in the judging container and will be grounds for disqualification.
6. All pork sparerib entries **must** be cooked on-site.
7. A cash award of \$500 will be awarded for the 1st place ribs. Trophies will be awarded 1st thru 3rd places. Placement #1 thru #10 will be posted.

BRISKET INSPECTION AND TAGGING

1. Brisket inspection and tagging **WILL BEGIN** at 10:00 am on Friday, May 17. Only brisket in their original vacuum-sealed packaging will be tagged.
2. No contest brisket will be allowed on pits before being tagged on Friday, May 17.
3. Each team will be allowed to tag two (2) briskets per cook space. Only one brisket per space will be allowed for competition entry.
4. Pre-cooked, salted, seasoned or marinated meat is not allowed prior to being tagged.
5. Fires must be wood or wood substances, no electric or gas fires are allowed.

BRISKET PICK-UP AND JUDGING

1. Brisket tag verification will begin at 1:00 pm on Saturday, May 18. Judging will begin as soon as all entries are turned in, approximately 2:00 pm.
2. Contestants will have fifteen (15) minutes in which to provide their Team Rep with their brisket entry for tag verification and to slice the brisket in the presence of the Team Rep

and present it for judging entry. The Head Cook or a team member will be transported via golf cart driven by a PSF representative to make their turn-in at the Convention Center.

3. Only the cut from one (1) tagged brisket will be allowed for competition entry. There are no exceptions to this rule.
4. The turn-in container should be completely filled. This is double elimination judging so make sure you have enough brisket for two (2) judging tables.
5. Sauces may be used during the cooking process but cannot be applied for entry presentation or judging.
6. Sauces, garnishes or foil will not be allowed in the judging container and will be grounds for disqualification.
7. All brisket entries **must** be cooked on-site.
8. A cash award of \$500 will be awarded for the 1st place brisket. Trophies will be awarded 1st thru 5th places. Placement #1 thru #10 will be posted.

AWARDS

1. Awards will be held at 5:00 pm on Saturday, May 18, at the Bud Light outside stage.
2. Only one (1) person from each winning team should report to the verification table with the winning ticket.
3. Group photos will be taken. Please have your team together and ready to take a photo immediately after each award presentation.

TEAR-DOWN AND EXIT

1. Tear-down may begin Sunday morning at 9:00 am.
2. Vehicles may start entering at 9:00 a.m. Sunday for loading and exit through the BBQ Gate.
3. All space numbers must be visible at all times during tear-down.
4. ALL COOK SPACES **MUST BE LEFT CLEAN** OR THE TEAM WILL NOT BE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2025 COOK-OFF.
5. As a safety precaution to the cook-off teams and PSF personnel, **ALL** cook-off traffic **MUST** exit via the BBQ Gate. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this.

We are looking forward to another fun and successful Pasadena Strawberry Festival BBQ Cook-off!!

As always, we greatly appreciate your support and thank you for your participation!