

CABOTFEST BBQ COOKOFF – RULES AND REGULATIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE COOKOFF

The CabotFest BBQ Cookoff is produced and sponsored by the Cabot Area Chamber of Commerce (the Promoter). It is held in conjunction with CabotFest, Cabot's annual festival. This is the 47th year of CabotFest with thousands coming from all over the state. This new event at CabotFest will draw hundreds to come see you cook and taste your BBQ. So have fun, do your best, and we thank you for coming to participate!

Once a team's entry fee is received, there are NO REFUNDS of any kind, in any amount, for any reason, in any time frame. Entries will be processed on a first paid basis. The Promoter is planning on participation of 20 teams.

Disqualification of teams for contest violations is at the discretion of the Promoter and the Promoter's representative. There are no appeals and no refunds. If you have a question, please ask before proceeding.

Lonoke County, Arkansas is a DRY county. DO NOT have labeled containers of alcohol of any kind in view at any time. Do not have ice chests or other containers with stored alcohol in any area accessible to the public. If alcohol is part of your cooking seasonings, it still must be in an unmarked container and out of view. Violations of this rule may result in immediate disqualification.

We cannot think of every little detail, but we will try to make your contest experience as enjoyable and fair as it can be. Without your participation, we would have no event. So, we want you to come back next year! Please contact the Event Coordinator if we can do anything at all to help you or answer any questions you may have.

For additional information about the cookoff – you can email the Cabot Chamber of Commerce at chamber@cabotcc.org

AWARDS

There will be 2 categories this year, and you can participate in one or both – but you must note on your registration the categories you choose to compete in.

Cash Awards:

Pork Butt – 1st - \$1,000 / 2nd - \$500 / 3rd - \$250

Pork ribs – 1st - \$500 / 2nd - \$250 / 3rd - \$100

People's Choice in each category - \$100

50/50 Money Split and People's Choice Tickets

Every cooking team has left over BBQ that they cook as they are preparing and after their turn ins. The 50/50 allows each team to recoup some of their money by giving samples of their BBQ to the public. There will be hundreds of people visiting CabotFest and the BBQ Cookoff. Some cook-offs ask that each team provide cooked BBQ to sell plates – WE WILL NOT BE DOING THAT.

THE PROMOTER will supply each participating team with paper serving cups / plastic forks / paper towels. The teams ONLY will have to provide the BBQ samples to pass out.

The BBQ Area will be fenced off with only one entrance / exit. The PROMOTER will sell tasting tickets to patrons, 10 tickets for \$10.00 (This number may change depending on number of participants). Along with those tickets, a single voting ticket will be given to the patron. **The PROMOTER will provide the participants with one pork butt for you to cook for our tasting tickets. People's choice will only be on the pork butts.**

The patron can vote for any ten BBQ teams they wish. They will trade one tasting ticket for one small sample of any BBQ that the team is cooking. The sample should be around two ounces (about two tablespoons of product, or one meat rib). Do not overfill their portion. The more samples you sell – the more money you make.

The patron will then return to the team they believe has the best BBQ and give their voting ticket to the team. The team will collect all voting tickets and turn them into the PROMOTER at the appointed time. The team with the most voting tickets wins the People's Choice Award. If the voting tickets are not turned in on time, the team will be disqualified from the People's Choice contest.

The team will receive \$0.50 for each tasting ticket it collects from patrons. They will be a different color from the People's Choice tickets. It is suggested that you have two separate containers at your table – CLEARLY LABELED – one for tasting tickets and one for voting tickets. You will be supplied large zip lock bags for your ticket turn ins.

Please keep your turn in tickets in a safe place – they are the only ways you will be able to be identified as a People's Choice award and participate in the 50/50 plan.

PARKING

Our cookoff is held in a downtown area, and cooking space is at a premium. Everyone would like their vehicles in the cooking area, but we just cannot accommodate everyone. **You must have permission to have any vehicles in the cooking area at any time.** Vehicles unnecessary to your cooking simply cannot be in the cooking area. Check with the event coordinator at check in to arrange parking your vehicles as close as possible to the cooking area. Please remember to be cautious and courteous – we are in busy traffic areas. Do not block driveways, fire hydrants, park in the street, in or on private property.

Absolutely NO RV's or Campers.

TRASH AND OTHER DISPOSAL ITEMS

You must provide your own trash bags and keep your area clean. We will provide regular trash pickup several times throughout the day, so please do not overfill the bags.

Trash Receptables will be provided to deposit grease, meats, and other greasy food remainders. Please place greasy foods in the proper containers. Other non-grease and non-meat food items can be deposited into regular trash receptables and dumpsters.

Please do not place ashes and coals into any other receptacle except specifically designated for ashes and coals.

YOUR AREA

Cooking areas will be approximately 10x20 feet. Please respect these dimensions. There is no electricity. If you choose to bring a generator, we ask that it is quiet enough to conduct the event. You are responsible for all the items needed to compete – equipment / tables / supplies. Contestants must adhere to all electrical, fire and other codes. A fire extinguisher shall be near all cooking devices.

The cooking area is for BBQ pits and equipment only. No cars, trucks, RV's, ATV's, golf carts, etc., will be allowed in the cooking area. You may erect free standing tents or other such shelters within your area.

Teams may erect pop-up covers, tent covers, and/or enclose their space in any reasonable manner.

If you are keeping your booth manned – please respect others in the area.

There are no holdovers – you must have your booth cleaned up and moved out by 10:00pm on Friday night.

YOUR TEAM

Official team members are limited to FIVE, one head cook and four assistants.

The Head Cook is responsible for the conduct of his team and guests. Head cook and team members may only cook for the team they are registered for.

JUDGING

The Promoter will have their own set of rules for the Judges to follow.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

The Cabot Area Chamber of Commerce, CabotFest, members, officials, sponsors, or any other organization or persons associated with the event are not responsible for injury, theft, or damage.

The cookoff will take place rain or shine. There is no refund because of the weather.

NO pets or other animals are allowed in the cookoff area, except service animals.

Contest meat may not be seasoned, marinated, or pre-cooked in any manner before arrival on Friday, Oct 10, 2025. If the committee has not inspected your meat before cooking – you will be disqualified. You can officially check in and have your meat inspected at 5:00am the morning of competition. Competition meat shall not leave the event site for any reason.

No food or drinks whatsoever may be sold or given away by the contestants to the public during the event. Only BBQ samples may be given out to the public in return for the tasting ticket.

General disqualification or failure to leave your cook off area clean will result in forfeiture of prize money or funds of any kind.

ALL FIRE PITS SHALL BE OF WOOD, WOOD PELLETS, OR CHARCOAL. Gas and electric heat sources shall not be permitted for cooking or holding. Propane or electric is permitted as fire starters, provided the competition meat is not in/on the cooking device. Electrical accessories such as spits, augers, or forced drafts are permitted. No open pits or holes are permitted, except the election of the contest organizer. Fires shall not be built on the ground.

Parboiling, Sous-vide, and / or deep-frying competition meat is not allowed. If any of the banned processes are discovered before the team turns in, the team will receive zeros or disqualified.

Meat shall not be sculptured, branded, presented in a way to make it identifiable.

Garnish is allowed for presentation. Meat shall be presented in containers provided.

Sauce is optional. If used, it shall be applied directly to the meat and not be pooled or puddled in the container. No side sauce containers will be permitted in the turn-in container. Chunky sauce will be allowed if applied directly to the meat.

Meat Categories:

- Ribs – must be pork
- Pork Butt is defined as a Boston Butt, a cut of meat from the upper part of the pig’s shoulder, above the picnic shoulder. It should weigh a minimum of 4 lbs. at the time of inspection. After trimming, pork shall be cooked whole (bone in or bone out), however, once cooked, it may be separated and returned to the cooker at the cook’s discretion. It may be turned in chopped, pulled, chunked, sliced or a combination of any of those.

Each contestant will be given TWO CONTAINERS and will submit at least ten (10) portions of meat in the approved containers (5 in each container) This number will be adjusted with more entries. Judges cannot separate into portions. If there is not enough meat for each judge to sample, the shorted judge will submit a zero score for that missed portion.

JUDGING SCHEDULE and WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Turn in Times Oct 10th, 2025

- Pork Ribs – 6:00pm
- Pork Butt – 7:00pm
- People’s Choice Tickets turned in – 7:30pm
- WINNERS ANNOUNCED 8:00pm

Sample Tickets will be sold from 6:00pm to 7:30pm

SIGNATURE REQUIRED FOR ACCEPTANCE

Waiver of Liability: In consideration of your accepting this entry, I the undersigned, intending to be legally bound, hereby, for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators, waive and release any and all rights and claims for damages I may have against the Cabot Chamber of Commerce or CabotFest, City of Cabot, Lonoke County, their agents, successors, and assigns for any and all injuries suffered by me in this event. Further, I hereby grant full permission of the event and its agents authorized by them to use any photographs, videos, motion pictures, recordings, or any other record of this event for legitimate purposes. I agree to abide by the rules and regulations of this event. By signing this you acknowledge that you have read and understand the rules and regulations.

Signature of Chief Cook (must be over 18)

Date

RELEASE MUST BE SIGNED OR ENTRY WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED