

SLBS RULES

1. **ST. LOUIS BBQ Society (SLBS) INTERPRETATION of RULES** - The interpretation of the SLBS rules and regulations are at the discretion of the appointed SLBS Contest Event Ambassador present at the contest and his or her decisions are final. The SLBS Contest Event Ambassador may not cook in any category in that contest.
2. **CONTESTANT** - A contestant is defined as any individual, group, restaurant, etc. hereinafter referred to as a "team", which will prepare and/or cook an entry or entries, for the purpose of being judged according to SLBS rules and regulations, at an SLBS sanctioned contest. Each team will be comprised of a Pit Master and as many team members as you wish, with one assigned spokesperson. A Pit Master and/or team members may cook only for their designated team at any contest where they are participating. No team shall enter more than one turn-in box per meat category in a contest. All teams must have at least one event ambassador present at the specified Team Meeting held prior to each contest. In the event this is not possible, teams shall contact either the SLBS Contest Event Ambassador or one of the SLBS coordinators present at that contest, informing them of their absence. Cook teams absent from the Team Meeting accept all responsibility for understanding these rules and any changes to them that may have occurred. Violation of these rules may result in disqualification from the contest.
3. **BACKYARD TEAM** - The purpose of defining Backyard/Amateur Cook Team is to ensure a level playing field in the cooking competition.

Professional teams may not compete in Backyard competitions. If a Pro team participates in a Backyard contest, that team will be removed and all teams in that contest will move up accordingly.

The definition for the composition of a Backyard/Amateur Cook Team is as follows: (1.) Any member of the team who has not entered in and competed in more than three (3) SLBS/KCBS/MBN sanctioned "Pro Division" BBQ competitions in the past.

4. **CONTESTANT'S SITE** - Each team will be assigned a designated cooking site. All equipment must stay within the designated boundaries. If additional space is required, teams should contact a contest organizer and make satisfactory arrangements. Each team is responsible for maintaining a clean, safe and orderly cooking space, before, during and after the competition. After the event, all fires must be put out and smokers, grills, pits and all equipment removed from your space. Teams are not allowed to share assigned cooking spaces.

5. EQUIPMENT AND COOKING FUEL- Each team is responsible for providing their pit and/or pits, tents, tables, and other equipment that may be needed. Teams may cook on any grill they choose, such as propane, wood or charcoal. Electric heat sources are not allowed. Propane and electric starters are allowed. Fires shall consist of wood, pellets, or charcoal. No lighter fluids of any kind are allowed. Teams using such items are subject to disqualification. All open fire pits must be approved by the local fire marshal. Teams must maintain a five (5) foot safety clearance away from all smokers, grills, and /or approved open fires. No team may share a cooker or grill with any other team. For safety reasons, all teams are required to have a fire extinguisher on site at all times.
6. MEAT INSPECTION - All competition meats must be inspected by the official SLBS Ambassador/designee during the times established by contest organizers, but not prior to the day before judging. All meat must be maintained at a maximum temperature of 40 degrees F prior to inspection. All inspected competition meat should be raw with no prior pre-seasoning, injecting, marinating or cooking. Cooking shall not begin until all competition meats have been inspected by the official meat inspector. Once competition meats have been inspected, they shall not leave the contest site. Prior to cooking, all meat that is resting in preparation for cooking must be covered and maintained at 40^o. Competition meats not meeting these qualifications will result in disqualification. When a contestant organizer supplies the meats there will be no pre-inspection required.
7. MEAT CATEGORIES - The following categories are sanctioned by the SLBS:
 - a. Chicken: Includes Cornish Game Hen and Kosher Chicken. The team may cook chicken whole, halved, or individual pieces.
 - b. Pork Ribs: Ribs must include bones. Country style ribs, chopped, pulled, or sliced rib meat loose in the box are prohibited.
 - c. Pork is defined as Boston Butt, Boston Roast, Picnic and/or Whole Shoulder, weighing a minimum of six (6) pounds prior to trimming. Pork shall be cooked whole (bone-in or bone out), however, once cooked (defined by the USDA as reaching an internal temperature of 145^o), 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 these.
 - d. Beef Brisket: May be whole beef brisket, flat or point. Corned beef is prohibited.

7. MEAT TEMPERATURES - All meat must be maintained at a maximum temperature of 40 degrees F before inspection. All meats must be cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 160 degrees F. After cooking; meat must be held at 140 degrees F or above. Cooked meat must be cooled within two (2) hours when temperatures are from 140°F to 70°F. Cooked meat must be cooled within four (4) hours when temperatures are from 70' to 41°F or less. Meat that is cooked, properly cooled, and later reheated for hot holding and serving shall be reheated, so all parts of the meat reach a temperature of at least 160°F for a minimum of 15 seconds.
8. TURN IN TIMES - Official turn-in times will be announced at the Pit Master's meeting and will typically be on the application form or the confirmation notice. An entry will be judged only at the time established by the SLBS contest organizer. The allowable turn-in times will be six (6) minutes before to six (6) minutes after the announced/posted time with no tolerance. If a team is in the turn in line before the time clock is turned over, they may turn in their entry. Any others after that must be disqualified. The identifying team number must be on the top of each container at time of turn-in. On one day events, the typical turn-in time will start at 2:00 and will continue every half hour until completion of each category. Times are subject to change based on the event.
9. JUDGING - Showmanship and cooking are separate entities and will be judged as such.
 - a Each entry will be judged on APPEARANCE/PRESENTATION, TASTE/FLAVOR, and TENDERNESS/TEXTURE. Entries will be submitted in an approved SLBS container, provided by the contest organizer, with the identifying team number on top.
 - b Each contestant must submit at least six (6) separate and identifiable (visual) portions of meat in each container. Chicken, pork, and brisket may be submitted chopped, pulled, sliced or diced, or any combination thereof, as long as there is enough for six (6) judges. Judges may not cut, slice, or shake apart to separate pieces. If there is not enough meat for each judge to sample, the shorted judge(s) will score a one (1) on all criteria, and judges having samples will change the Appearance score to reflect a one (1) with notification and approval from the judging event ambassador.
 - c Garnishes are optional but highly recommended. If used, it is limited to chopped, sliced or whole leaves of fresh green lettuce, curly parsley, flat leaf parsley, curly green leaf kale and/or cilantro. No other kale of any color, lettuce cores, endive, red-tipped lettuce and/or vegetable, or vegetation are not allowed.

d Sauce is optional and should be applied directly to meats and not pooled or puddled in the container. No side sauce containers may be submitted with a team's entry.

e Any other types of garnishes or sauce violations used will result in disqualification in the category; and the team will be given a score of one (1) in all criteria, by all six judges.

f Containers shall not be marked in any way which could make the container unique or identifiable. Aluminum foil, toothpicks, skewers, foreign materials and/or stuffing are prohibited in containers.

g If the product is turned in and is disqualified, it receives a one (1) in all criteria. If a product is turned in and then disqualified for reasons i.e.: late turn-in, no bone in ribs, raw chicken, etc., it is not judged and receives a one (1) in all criteria. The event ambassador will discuss the disqualifications with the teams immediately upon discovery.

h The judging for two-day events typically starts at noon on Saturday and continues every half hour until completion of all categories. This may vary at any competition.

10. SCORING - Each entry will be scored by six (6) SLBS certified judges in the areas of APPEARANCE / PRESENTATION, TASTE / FLAVOR, and TENDERNESS / TEXTURE.

Scores may range from a high of 9.0 to a low of 1.0 in each category. Any entry that is disqualified as per section 12, will receive a score of 1 for all three categories, from all six judges at that table. Any score given a 5 or below must be accompanied by a comment card.

11. CLEANLINESS AND SAFETY RULES - All federal, state and local food safety rules and regulations must be adhered to at all times. All teams are expected to maintain their cook sites in an orderly and clean manner, using good sanitary practices during all food preparation, cooking, and judging processes. For events sanctioned within the St Louis County, please refer to the St Louis County Temporary Health Permit regulations.

a Sanitizing of work areas should be implemented with the use of bleach, and water rinse station (one cap/gallon water.) Each contestant will provide a separate container for washing, rinsing and sanitizing utensils, and other items used in preparation of meats.

b A fire extinguisher is required at check-in time and must be accessible in each team's cooking space and near all cooking devices at all times.

- c Proper cooking temperatures must be maintained at all times.
 - 1 A first aid kit is not required to be provided by contestants, but we highly recommend you provide your own first aid and safety kit; except at the election of the contest organizer.
- d Shirt and shoes must be worn at all times.
- e No use of tobacco products is allowed while handling meat.
- f Teams are responsible for cleanup of their site once the competition has ended.

12. DISQUALIFICATION - Any entry of a team, team members, and/or guests, can be disqualified or evicted by a SLBS Event Ambassador, Event Coordinator and/or Police only. A team's Pit Master is responsible for all team members and guests within their site. Cause for disqualification based on, but not limited to, the following reasons:

- a Excessive use of alcoholic beverages or public intoxication with disturbance.
- b Serving alcoholic beverages to the general public or minors.
- c Use of illegal controlled substances including cooking with illegal controlled substances.
- d Foul, abusive or unacceptable language or any language causing a disturbance.
- e Excessive noise by a person(s) and /or equipment.
- f Fighting and/or disorderly conduct.
- g Theft, dishonesty, cheating, use of prohibited meats and /or any acts involving moral turpitude.
- h Violation of any SLBS Cook's rules.

Excessive or continued complaints from teams on any of the above rule infractions shall be considered grounds for immediate disqualification from the contest and by the SLBS Event Ambassador, Event Organizer and Security. In addition, any violation of the above rules shall be reported to the SLBS Board of Directors who may, in addition to the above disqualification, impose additional penalties upon said team, pit master, and its members, including, but not limited to, disqualification of said team/persons from competing in SLBS events for a period of time not to exceed five years. All complaints of disturbance or violations of quiet time shall be reported to the Event Ambassador and the SLBS Board of Directors.

13. JUDGING PROCEDURE

- a The table captain brings all boxes to the judging table. They will announce each number of the box to be judged in order on the tray from top left to bottom right, making sure the judges have correctly recorded the numbers on their score sheets and food mat. The table captain will then start with the first box, then they will announce the number of the box that it is being judged for appearance and show each judge the box waiting for the judge to acknowledge they are done. This procedure will be repeated for each box.
 - b Then the table captain will start with the first box and announce the number and hold the box for the judge to take a sample and place it on their food mat in the proper square. This procedure will be repeated for each box. Judges will begin sampling once all entries are on their placemat.
 - c After all the entries have been scored, the table captain will collect the score sheets and review each one to be sure that all scores are legible, the judge has put their name on the score sheet with the other information and that all the numbers are fully legible. Each table captain will turn the score sheets over to the SLBS event ambassador or scoring official.
14. WINNERS - The winners in each meat category will be determined by adding all scores together, and the team with the most points will be 1st place, the team with the next highest total will be 2nd place, etc. The GRAND CHAMPION will be the team with the highest point total, and the RESERVE CHAMPION will be the team with the second highest total points. To qualify for either grand or reserve champion, teams must submit entries in all four sanctioned categories. If there are ties in any category, (consisting of only the top ten (10) places) grand, or reserve champion the following criteria is to be used to break the tie:

1. The highest dropped score
2. The highest taste score
3. The highest tenderness score
4. The highest appearance score
5. A flip of a coin

15. Chef's Choice and Dessert Categories Entries must be able to be carried by one person and have a foot print of no larger than 26" X 26". Contest organizers are not responsible for and do not guarantee to be able to return serving dishes, cutting tools and presentation trays that are submitted for judging. Entries must have enough food for 6 individual judges. However, the entry does not have to be proportioned into 6 pieces (i.e. a cake or pie may be turned in whole). If serving an entry whole, you may provide a plain/generic cutting tool to help the judges divide the entry. The event organizer will provide the judges with utensils. Teams may include generic utensils on their turn-in trays. Alcohol is allowed as a cooking ingredient incorporated into your entry. A liquid serving of alcoholic beverages may not be turned in to accompany your entry. Fuel source rules remain constant with the other categories. All entries for chef's choice and dessert must be cooked on site at the contest and may not be precooked or prepared off site.

16. BEHAVIOR - Every team, including members and guests, are expected and required to exhibit proper and courteous behavior at all times. A quiet time will be in effect from 11:00 PM on the night before the contest judging, remaining in effect until sunrise on the following day. No alcoholic beverages will be distributed and sold to the General Public. Teams will be informed of all local laws and will adhere to same. Failure to abide by these rules of behavior may result in expulsion from the contest and repeat offenders will be barred from competing in SLBS sanctioned contests.