

## 2023 Ribfest – Rules

1. Each team will be comprised of a Pit Master and as many team members as you wish, with one assigned spokesperson. The Pit Master must be a member in good standing with the St. Louis BBQ Society. 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. All teams must have at least one event ambassador present at the specified Team Meeting held prior to the Contest (scheduled for 7am). 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.
2. **Open Series** – the purpose of Open Series Sanctioning is giving person/team the opportunity to compete.
3. **Cooking Site** – Each team will be assigned a designated cooking site. Each team MUST cook the distributed ribs at their assigned location. The size will be determined based on the size you requested on the application. The City of Staunton will try the best to make the requested size available. If additional space is required, teams should contact the City of Staunton and make satisfactory arrangements. Vehicles are not to be left by site. Vehicles must be moved once set-up is completed. 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.
4. **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 reason, all teams are required to have a fire extinguisher on site at all times.
5. **Meat Inspection** – All competitors will be supplied TWO racks of ribs, provided by Bill's IGA. All meat must be maintained at a maximum temperature of 40 degrees F prior to distribution of ribs. Once ribs have been distributed, they shall not leave the team site. Prior to cooking, all meat that is resting in preparation for cooking must be covered and maintained at 40 degree F. Competition ribs not meeting these qualifications will result in disqualification.

Prepared Ribs MUST be bone-in. Country style, chopped, pulled or sliced rib meat loose in the box are prohibited.

6. **Meat Temperatures** – All meat must be maintained at a maximum temperature of 40 degrees F before and during preparation. 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 degrees to 70 degrees 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 degrees F for a minimum of 15 seconds.
  
7. **Turn in times** – Official turn-in times will be 2:30pm. This time will also, be announced at the Pit Master's meeting and is placed on the application form. An entry will be judged only at the time established by the SLBS and The City of Staunton. The allowable turn-in times will be five (5) minutes before to five (5) 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 will be on the top of each container at time of turn-in.
  
8. **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 City of Staunton, 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. 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, 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 allowed to be submitted with a team's entry.
  - e. Any other types of garnishes or sauce violations used will result in disqualification; 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, etc., it is not judged and receives a one (1) in all criteria. The even ambassador will discuss the disqualifications with the teams immediately upon discovery.

9. **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. Any entry that is disqualified as per section 11, 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.
10. **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.
- A. Sanitizing of work areas should be implemented with the use of bleach and water rinse stations (provided by The City of Staunton). Each contestant will provide a separate container for washing, rinsing and sanitizing utensils and other items used in preparation of meat.
  - B. A fire extinguisher is required at check-in and must be accessible in each teams cooking space and near all cooking devices at all times
  - C. Proper cooking temperatures must be maintained at all times
  - D. A first-aid kit is not required, but highly recommended
  - E. Proper dress attire must be completed of shirt, shoes and shorts/pants at all times
  - F. No use of tobacco products is allowed while handling meat
  - G. Teams are responsible for cleanup of their site during and after the competition
11. **Disqualification** – Any entry of a team, team members, and/or guests, can be disqualified or evicted by a SLBS Event Ambassador and/or The City of Staunton mayor and/or Police. 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 public or minors
  - c. Use of illegal controlled substances including cooking with such 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 meat 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, The City of Staunton 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 member 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.

## 12. 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 on top left to bottom right, making sure the judges have correctly recorded the numbers on the 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 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 placement.
  - 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.
13. Winners – The winners will be determined by adding all scores together, and the team with the most points will be 1<sup>st</sup> place, the team with the next highest total will be 2<sup>nd</sup> place, etc.