



JUDGES' HANDBOOK

Revised March 30, 2022

INTRODUCTION

WHO WE ARE?

The Florida BBQ Association (FBA) became a registered 501 c(7) non-profit corporation in the summer of 2000. It was founded by a small group of central Florida barbecue enthusiasts who endeavored to create a barbecue organization that placed greater emphasis on being "cook team" friendly. During the early formative years of the FBA many "cook team" rules and practices were adopted that live on to this day. No garnish is allowed in an FBA turn-in box - only pure barbecue. The lowest judge's score is not dropped so that every judge's assessment of an FBA turn-in box is given equal weight. The time between meat category turn-ins is one hour instead of 30-minutes. Now, over 20 years later, the FBA has become one of the most renowned barbecue organizations in America. In that time, we have gone from sanctioning only a few contests a year to upwards of 30 contests a year. Our membership is over 600 strong.

OBJECTIVE OF COURSE.

This outline is designed to train and certify judges to be qualified to judge Florida Bar-B-Que Association sanctioned contests. Certified Barbecue Judges are an integral part of our organization as the Cook Teams depend on you to give a fair assessment of the entries presented to you to judge. You must take this role seriously as the teams expend a lot of time and money to participate in a contest.

1. WHAT IS BARBECUE?

The definition of what constitutes barbecue is as varied as the ways to spell it. Barbecue is officially defined as:

“Barbecue meat, such as a product labeled beef barbecue or barbecue pork, shall be cooked by direct action of dry heat resulting from the burning of hard wood or hot coals thereof for a sufficient period of time to assume the usual characteristics of a barbecue article, which includes the formation of a brown crust on the surface and the rendering of surface fat. The product may be basted with a sauce during the cooking process. The weight of the cooked meat shall not exceed 70% of the weight of the fresh, uncooked meat. “

Some people use it to describe a social gathering and cooking outdoors. Others use it to describe grilling food. For our purpose here, we use it to describe meat, cooked, using wood smoke to add flavor. Barbecue is not grilling. Grilling is cooking over hot, direct heat. Barbecuing is cooking by using indirect heat or low- level direct heat at lower temperatures and longer cooking times.

There are two primary ways to barbecue meat:

- a. Low and Slow – Low temperature (225 degrees or so) for a long period of time.
- b. Hot and Fast – High temperature (275 degrees or more) for a shorter period of time.

2. WHAT IS AN FBA SANCTIONED CONTEST?

A sanctioned FBA contest is a barbecue cook-off that has agreed to use the FBA judging system cook-off rules and regulations. An FBA contest is a gathering of some of the finest barbecue cook teams who will try to produce their best barbecue product to be judged by FBA Certified Judges that day. An FBA contest is an opportunity for you, as an FBA certified judge, to enjoy sampling some of the best barbecue you have ever tasted.

3. TERMS TO KNOW.

a. Judging Area.

There will be a judge's staging area set up with table and chairs for you to check-in and you will judge the submitted entries. This area is for judges only, not friends and relatives, so please do not ask them to join you. The contest organizer may provide food and drinks in the judging area only for the judge and volunteers who work the contest. There may be some contests where there are no food or beverages.

b. Judges Tables and Seating.

The judging tables are set up in a tent or a building that is away from the cooking area.

There are always 6 judges at a table. You will be assigned to a table and you will always sit

at the same place throughout judging. If by chance you are assigned a table with a spouse, significant other or close friend, bring it to the attention of the FBA representative.

c. Judges Briefing.

The judges briefing will normally be held at 9:30 am. This will be a review of the FBA judging system and any new rules changes. Please pay attention even if you have heard it many times before since any new rules will be announced at this time. You must attend the judges briefing in order to judge that day.

d. Table Captain.

The Table Captain is usually an experienced judge. They are normally not judging, only controlling the actual procedure. In some cases, when there is a shortage of judges, the Table Captain will perform the duties of the Table Captain as well as judging.

e. Certification.

In order to remain on the FBA roster of active judges, you must keep your FBA membership current.

f. Cook Team.

A cook team is a person or group of people who have paid an entry fee to cook in an FBA sanctioned barbecue contest. There is always a head cook who knows all their secret recipes and techniques for producing a prize-winning product. The head cook is required to be an FBA member with a current membership. The cook team has their own cookers, team members and cooks the meat from scratch on site at the contest and then selects the best of what they have cooked for you to judge.

g. Turn-In Times.

The cook teams will turn in their meat entries according to the following schedule:

Chicken	11:00 am
Ribs	12:00 pm
Pork	1:00 pm
Brisket	2:00 pm

Teams will be allowed to turn in an entry from 5 minutes before the scheduled turn-in time until 5 minutes after the scheduled turn-in time. Any entry turned in 1 second after the scheduled turn-in time will be disqualified.

4. THE MASTER JUDGE PROGRAM.

The FBA Master Judge Program is designed to recognize those judges who have satisfied the following requirements:

- a. Judge a minimum of 20 FBA sanctioned contests.
- b. Table captain a minimum of 5 times in addition to the judging requirement.
- c. Must be a member of the FBA and must sustain that membership.
- d. Must cook with, or as a cook team, at least once at an FBA sanctioned contest. It is suggested that this cook be accomplished on or before your 10th contest.

5. HOW DO YOU JUDGE?

Just what makes good barbecue and how do you determine it? A harder question is, what makes an entry a 10 and another an 8.5? No one can teach you these things. The only way to learn what is bad, good, or better is by judging often. What we can teach you is the FBA method of scoring and give you something to think about while that first piece of mouthwatering BBQ is sitting on your plate.

a. **Non-comparative judging.**

The FBA judging system is based upon the principle that you will not compare one sample to another to arrive at a score. Each sample presented by each team will be judged unto itself. You can have more than one of any score, i.e., three 9s or five 10s. Generally, your first impression is the best impression. When you put down a score, you cannot go back and change that score because the next one is better or worse than the previous sample. You will develop knowledge of what good or bad barbecue is over a period of time and it will be this knowledge and your own taste buds that will influence your scoring. The scoring process is very subjective.

b. **Taste and Tenderness.**

- 1) **Taste.** Taste should be pleasing and represent the meat that it is because each meat has its own distinctive flavor; brisket should taste like beef, etc. The spices, rubs or sauces used should be flavor balanced so that it only complements as opposed to overwhelms the meat presented. If there is any overpowering flavor of spices or sauce, then score accordingly.
- 2) **Tenderness.** Tenderness is determined by how the meat feels in your mouth, which is called "mouth feel". Is the meat hard to chew or is it soft and mushy or does it have what you consider a pleasant feel? Focus on the sample at hand and whether it has a pleasant eating experience.

6. JUDGING PROCEDURE.

The cook teams will bring the entry to the check-in table and it will have their name on the top of the box. The name is then changed to a secret number that is only known to the FBA representatives. The FBA system of judging is a double-blind system. The cook teams do not know what judge is judging them and the judges do not know what cook team they are judging.

Your scorecard will have a label on it with your name, table number and judging number and the category being judged. Please ensure that your card reflects the category you are actually judging

(Chicken, Ribs, etc.). The Table Captain will bring the boxes to the table, which in most cases will be 5 or 6 entries. The Table Captain will call off the entry numbers for you to enter them on your scorecard. Enter them in the order that they are called out. The Table Captain will ask a judge to read back the numbers to ensure that all judges have recorded the correct numbers.

a. PRESENTATION.

The first box is then opened and checked by the Table Captain for violations and then shown to the table for presentation. The cook team should put the entry in the box in a manner that is appealing to the eye. The entry may be presented as whole pieces, sliced, chunked, pulled and/or chopped. All are acceptable except for ribs which must contain bone-in ribs only.

Some cook teams will lay the ribs flat and some will turn them on the side. Some will do it both ways in the box so you can see how they were cooked and they want you to see the pinkness which is the smoke ring. Remember, we do not consider the smoke ring when judging as it can be artificially induced.

Brisket is going to come to you sliced most of the time. However, it may be chopped, chunks and it can be presented pulled. Which is the right way? All are correct. The way the cook team presented it to you is the way they want you to judge it.

After looking at the entry, all judges will score the entry for presentation.

- 1) Does it look good enough that you instantly want to eat it?
- 2) Did the cook team take time to neatly present the entry or did they just toss it in the box?
- 3) Is the entry neatly sliced, chunked, chopped or pulled?
- 4) Is there any grease floating in the box?
- 5) Are there 8 portions in the box?

b. TASTE AND TENDERNESS.

The FBA requires a minimum of 8 portions of meat in each box. In the case of pulled or chopped meat only, there must be enough to provide 8 samples. The box is then passed around for you to take a sample. Each judge will use a clean fork to remove their sample. One fork will be used for all samples in a given category and will then be discarded. The fork should be wiped with a paper towel before taking the next sample in a category. New forks will be used for each category. Please select a sample that is easy to remove without disturbing or damaging the other samples. REMEMBER, AT NO TIME WILL FORKS BE USED FOR EATING THE SAMPLE. Please only take one sample and then judge it for taste and tenderness.

What if the sample is cold? Temperature should not affect taste or tenderness. Score SUBJECTIVELY. Once everyone at the table has scored the first entry the other entries will be handled in the same manner.

1) Chicken.

Chicken can be cooked with skin on or skin off. Sample the entry as presented. If it is presented with the skin on, leave the skin in place. Removing it will significantly alter the flavor and tenderness that the Pit Master intended. Take a bite, there is no need to dissect it. The skin should bite through easily and the rest of the skin should still be in place. The chicken meat should release easily from the sample and should have a tender and pleasant mouth feel as well. If it is chewy, rubbery, or mushy/too soft, it is either undercooked or overcooked. Tenderness should be based on mouth feel and the chewing experience.

Pink around the chicken bones? Most of the time this will occur in the legs and thighs. You take a bite of it and then you see the redness. Is it done? If the juices run clear, it will be done. The characteristic of smoked chicken is to have this redness around the bone.

2) Ribs.

Your bite should be from the middle of the rib and deep enough that your teeth gently come in contact with the bone. Avoid biting the bone but bite to the bone. The meat should release cleanly and easily from the bone, and there should be a relatively clean outline of where your bite was removed from the rest of the meat. The rest of the rib meat should still be attached to the bone. We like to think the meat should have a slight tug to it when you take a clean bite from the bone. If it falls off the bone or if other meat pulls off with bite it may be some level of overcooked.

3) Pork.

Pork should be tender but mushy is not desirable. If medallions (round slices cut from the "money muscle") are presented, take a bite to check for tenderness. There should be no tugging required. Medallions, chunks, pulled or sliced should have some body and maintain its integrity but at the same time be easy to chew.

If 'bark' is presented, and it is optional, there is a different guideline for tenderness. Bark is the dark crust on the exterior of the pork butt. It is acceptable for bark to be considerably chewier than the interior meat. Understand what it is and how different it is from the interior meat. No entry should be judged down because the

bark is chewy and has a concentration of flavor. On the other hand, if you are unable to chew it and the flavor is bitter or too extreme, judge it accordingly.

4) Brisket.

Brisket is typically presented as slices, burnt ends, pulled and chunked. You should be able to gently pick up the slice from the box and it should stay together as one piece. It should be limp and hang mostly straight down when held by one end. A simple pull test can be an indicator for slice tenderness. Hold an end of the slice in each hand and gently pull until the slice parts. If it separates before you pull, it is likely, too tender (over cooked). If it takes a more tugging, it is likely a little too tough or (under cooked). The level of effort will determine the level of doneness.

What is brisket supposed to taste like? It has a flavor all unto itself. Some cooks marinate it or inject it. Remember, brisket should taste like beef.

Burnt ends are optional. Some teams only cook the point because they feel they cannot get a good burnt end on the flat. If burnt ends are presented, they should be a tender, smoky and meaty bite size piece of the brisket. There is no size standard for burnt ends. Burnt ends come from the fattier part of the brisket and will be very juicy. They will be tender and offer little to no resistance when chewing. "Melt in your mouth" is desirable as opposed to mushy or tough. However, if you feel unpleasant chunks or globs of un-melted fat in your mouth after chewing, those can be undesirable and should be judged accordingly.

5) Sauce.

To sauce or not to sauce? Many Cook teams do not put any sauce on their entry. For those that do, determine if all you can taste is sauce. Does it overpower the taste of the meat? This is a meat contest not a sauce contest. Sauce should work with and enhance the flavor of the meat. Judge the entry as it is presented to you with or without sauce. Sauce cups in the turn-in boxes are not allowed and will result in a disqualification.

After all entries have been scored, the Table Captain will collect the scorecards and turn them over to the FBA representative. You are welcome to keep the leftovers from your plate. Do not bag the leftovers until the table has been cleared by the Rep in case there is a question about one of your scores.

In case of leftovers, the priority is for them is to go the organizer for the volunteers. If the organizer does not want the leftovers, they may be distributed among the table judges by the Table Captain after the table has been cleared by the Rep.

7. PROBLEMS AND PITFALLS TO AVOID.

- a. How much should you eat? If you are really, really hungry you may eat as much of the sample that you want. Limit yourself as to how much you consume while judging. If you eat one ounce of everything you could eat as much as 2 pounds of meat. You can always eat more when you are finished judging.
- b. Drink only water provided during the judging process. Consuming alcohol in between categories or during the judging process is strictly prohibited and you will be removed that day if observed.
- c. Do not discuss the samples with the other judges at your table while there are scorecards on the table. Once the scorecards are picked up and the table has been cleared by the Rep, you are encouraged to quietly discuss the entries you have just eaten, keeping in mind that tables around you may not have finished judging.
- d. **DO NOT** visit the cook teams after the judges meeting or between judging. You will be disqualified as a judge. The teams are getting ready for their next entry and do not have time to socialize with you. You are welcome to visit the cook teams after the judging process has been completed.
- e. Do not discuss your scores with any cook team.
- f. Taking pictures during the judging process, that is, from the time the Table Captain brings their tray to the serving table to the time the scoring cards are turned in to the Table Captain, is **NOT ALLOWED**. Do not take any picture of the table showing the table number.
- g. You are **NOT ALLOWED** to copy your scores on a separate piece of paper or enter them in a smart phone or remove them from the judging area in any manner.
- h. We all learn from each other but, remember, it is YOUR score and YOUR average that we want you to use in judging FBA sanctioned events. We become better judges by broadening our experiences, not just listening to other judges.
- i. If a judge has an immediate family member that is on a team which is competing at a contest, they will not be allowed to judge at that contest. The Judge does have the option to judge in another classification/category such as pro or backyard as long as it is not the classification/category that their family member is competing in. A family member consists of immediate family such as father, mother, son or daughter, brother or sister and or grandparents.

8. THE FBA SCORING SYSTEM.

The highest score you can give is a 10 and the lowest is a 5. You may score in half point increments such as 8, 8.5, 9, 9.5 etc. If an entry is undercooked or overcooked, you would score down. If you think the entry is good you will give it a higher score. You may not change your score once you have recorded it and moved on to the next judging criteria. The only time a score can be changed is by the FBA representative disqualifying that entry. If for some reason you get the score in the

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wrong box, notify the Table Captain and you will be instructed to cross it out. Do not erase the improperly placed score and insert it in the proper box. You may not change that score.

10	EXCELLENT
9.5	VERY GOOD
9	GOOD
8.5	ABOVE AVERAGE
8	SLIGHTLY ABOVE AVERAGE
7.5	AVERAGE
7	SLIGHTLY BELOW AVERAGE
6.5	BELOW AVERAGE
6	POOR
5.5	VERY POOR
5	INEDIBLE

If you have a bad piece of meat and don't want to swallow it, discreetly remove it from your mouth and dispose of it quietly in a paper towel. You **MUST** enter a comment on the back of your score card and notify your Table Captain immediately as to the reason why you consider the sample inedible.

Disqualification of an entry will be scored a 2 (two). The FBA representative is the only person who can tell you to give this score. If you have already scored the entry and it is deemed a disqualification, at the direction of the FBA representative you will cross out what you have scored and enter a 2 (two). You will then turn over your scorecard and put the entry number on the back along with a comment.

A few of the most common disqualification factors are:

- a. Under cooked chicken.
- b. Foreign objects in the turn-in box. Anything other than the correct meat category product can DQ the entry. This includes any type garnish, multiple human hairs, sculpting the meat entry, brush bristles, toothpicks, bits of tin foil, Q-tips and material fibers.
- c. Failure to have a minimum of 8 portions in the box.
- d. A cook team using their own boxes instead of what was provide to them.

Comments for the cook teams are encouraged and appreciated by the cook teams and **are required for any score of 7 or less**. You will remain anonymous when you make them. Comments may be made for both good and bad BBQ. To make a comment, simply check the comment box on the right side of the scorecard aligned with the chosen entry. Turn the card over and put the box number and your comment on the back. Please make your comments polite and useful. "The worst BBQ I ever ate" doesn't help the cook team improve. "This entry was way overcooked and

too salty” does help them. Additionally, If you have a sample that you score high in presentation and tenderness but score it lower in taste because it may be too spicy or salty, let the cook teams know why you scored it lower. Keep your comments brief as the Reps are limited as to how much

they can enter in the scoring program. Remember, the cook teams put a lot of time, effort, and money into that one bite of meat that you judge. You owe it to them to do your best.

9. JUDGING CREDIT.

Judging credit shall be given for category judging, table captain duties, table captain mentoring and turn-in assistance if needed by the FBA representative.

- 1) Category judging shall include any certified judge that is selected for a designated contest. That judge shall complete all four categories of meat to receive credit unless an approved removal is made by the FBA representative. If a removal is necessary the FBA representative will designate a replacement to complete the meat categories. Judging credit shall be given to the original judge if at least two categories are completed. The replacement judge will receive full credit.
- 2) Table captain duties are assigned by the FBA Representative using certified judges that have completed 10 contests. If necessary, the FBA Representative may select a judge with less than 10 contests to fill a position if a judge with more than 10 contests is not available.
- 3) Table captain mentors are senior judges that are masters and qualified to guide new table captains.
- 4) Certified judges may receive judging credit working as turn-in assistants if approved and deemed necessary by the FBA representative. This category is provided to increase the quality of the turn-in process and provide a more qualified group to assist the FBA Representatives not to exceed three credits for master judge qualification. Master judges may be selected when needed without a maximum number.
- 5) Judging credit shall be given to certified judges that perform double duty working as both a judge and table captain. That double credit will be posted on the judges list as two credits.

10. HOW DO I GET STARTED?

All the contests, after they have been approved by the BOD are listed on the FBA website which is www.FBABBQ.com and under the EVENTS heading. Scroll down to the contest that you are interested in and you may register for that contest when you see “Registration is Open”. You may register one guest who resides at your residence.

Judge sign up is normally open for a 30-day period starting 90-120 days prior to the contest. It does not matter what order you sign up in as long as it is within the window. After the sign up has

closed, all names on the list are randomized by computer. This list is sent to the Lead Rep for the contest. The Lead Rep confirms the first 28 judges (usually from the first 28 names on the list but exceptions can be made for special situations such as needing one event for Master Judge or 50 contest pin). Confirmed judges will be notified and given a few days to confirm availability with the

Lead Rep. Failure to confirm will result in your name being removed from the list and replaced by the next person on the list. The list of confirmed judges will be posted on the FBA's Facebook Members Only page. The list of non-confirmed judges will also be posted in the order they appeared on the randomized list. If judges need to be replaced or judges need to be added, they will normally be taken in order from the non-confirmed list.

Twenty-eight judges are the optimum number for any contest (four tables of six judges plus a table captain) but the minimum number is 24 judges. As more teams sign up, more tables of judges are added. These will normally be taken in order from the list of non-confirmed judges and you will be notified of your selection by email.

Almost all FBA sanctioned contests now use electronic sign up rather than application to the individual event organizer.

Another way to get to judge, if not confirmed, is to show up at the contest and take the place of a judge who may be a "No Show". If you don't get in to judge, you can volunteer with the Reps and they will try to find a job for you.

Lastly, if you are confirmed to judge and are not able to make the contest, please call or email the lead Rep. Their numbers are on the listing of the contest. Not confirming a "No Show" will get your name on a list given to future event organizers.

11. APPENDIX

a. Table Captain Instructions.

- 1) Table Captains are responsible for their tables and that they are set up properly, initially and between the categories, with pencils, plates, paper towels, crackers, water for each judge and anything else that is supplied by the organizer.
- 2) Table Captains are the liaison between the judges and the Reps.
- 3) If you feel unable to carry a tray to the table, ask a Rep for help.
- 4) If a judge has a question and you can't answer it, you should call for a Rep.
- 5) Before each category the Table Captain passes out the judge's scorecards.
- 6) Ask the judges to keep the tops on their water bottles and keep the bottles flat on the table.

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- 7) Remind the judges that the scoring consists of whole numbers and half numbers and to not put a zero after a whole number.
- 8) Ask the judges to refrain from taking any pictures during the judging process.
- 9) Judges are NOT allowed to copy their scores on a separate piece of paper, enter them in a smart phone or remove their scores from the judging area in any form.
- 10) If at any time during the scoring one of your judges sees anything that could be a rules violation, call for a Rep.

b. Table Captain's duties.

- 1) When Table Captains are called, go to the turn in area and find the tray for your table
- 2) Verify that the numbers on the boxes and the routing sheet match and no number has previously been used on the routing sheet.
- 3) Take the tray to your serving table.
- 4) Check the first box and verify at least 8 portions and no rules violations.
- 5) Read all the box numbers to your judges and have verification from one of the judges.
- 6) Announce "Judging for presentation only" and have the first judge verify box number.
- 7) Show the box to each judge until they nod or say OK.
- 8) Ask if all judges have finished scoring
- 9) After all judges have scored, announce "Judging for taste and tenderness".
- 10) Serve each judge and yourself last. Never pass the box around a second time.
- 11) Place box back on the tray and pull the label halfway up and bend back.
- 12) After each judge has scored, repeat steps 5 - 11 with the rest of boxes, starting with the next judge.
- 13) After all boxes are scored, collect the completed score cards and verify all are properly completed, if any 7's, comments on back of card and check if all scores are within 1 - 1 1/2 points of each other. Make sure that there is no zero after a whole number.
- 14) If a judge scores a 5 (Inedible) for an entry or an outlier score, please contact the Rep immediately for discussion with the judge.
- 15) Ask the judges to leave their plates in place until a Rep approves the scorecards. When approved the judges can then dispose of their leftovers or place them in their storage bags if they have an iced cooler to preserve the meat safely.
- 16) Turn in the scoring cards to a Rep and receive approval of the scorecards.
- 17) Take your tray with boxes to the grazing table.
- 18) After the table has been cleared by the Rep, start a discussion of best samples, scores and reasons for any low scores.
- 19) Set up your table for the next category.
- 20) Repeat the entire process for the next three categories. After all scoring is completed assist cleaning up your table.
- 21) If a judge is scoring overall too high or too low, you may take the judge aside and ask them why they gave those scores.

12. JUDGE'S NOTES.



MASTER JUDGE PROGRAM COOK TEAM GUIDELINES

ATTN: HEAD COOK AND MASTER JUDGE CANDIDATE, PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING AND INITIAL TO INDICATE YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE GUIDELINES **PRIOR** TO BEGINNING THE TEAM COOK.

Master Judge Candidate Guidelines:

1. The Master Judge candidate understands this is an observation type of event. They are there to observe the process and are not expected to participate in the cooking process with the teams.
2. Understand the cook team's major emphasis is to prepare its competition samples and to cook to win the contest.
3. Judge is to fully comply with all instructions given by the cook team. The judge is not there to provide input, but to observe.
4. Judge should contact the cook team and determine the time to report to the cook team on Friday. The judge should understand that cook teams have different methods for cooking which may change the cooking timelines. Your reporting time may be different from others who have received their Master Judge certification. Please be on time.
5. Please feel free to take notes during the time with the BBQ team and ask questions. Many pit masters will gladly share information with you and will answer your questions. If they do have something proprietary, they may not answer your question fully. Remember this is an opportunity to educate you in the cooking process and allow you to observe how a BBQ team executes a successful cook.
6. Only take pictures if the pit master allows during any part of the cook. Never take pictures of finished turn-in boxes. Most teams will not allow you to take pictures of their turn in boxes.
7. The Master Judge candidate is expected to attend the cook's meeting with the team representative. The cook's meeting is usually held at 5 pm on Friday afternoon.
8. You are not required to stay the night with the cook team. The pit master will release you when they are finished on Friday evening and will give you a time to return on Saturday morning. Expect the return time to be early. Please be on time.
9. You are more than welcome to socialize with teams on Friday evening, but understand most teams turn in at a reasonable hour due to early starts on Saturday.
10. Plan to stay for the awards ceremony and cheer your team on.

MJ Initials _____



MASTER JUDGE PROGRAM COOK TEAM GUIDELINES

Cook Team Guidelines:

1. Teams are expected to allow the judge to observe the entire process and not shield any part of the process from the judge.
2. If possible, provide an educational environment for the judge. Instruct as much as you feel comfortable. An interactive session throughout the cook will provide a great experience for the Master Judge candidate. Make it conversational.
3. Provide explicit instructions to the judge if needed. Do not be afraid to tell the judge exactly what you would like them to do. Be polite about it. However, if they are causing issues and disturbing your cook, please feel free to dismiss them from your cook site. Please let the lead representative know prior to leaving the contest what occurred.
4. The judges are not there to wash dishes or tote trash. They are there to observe how you make great BBQ.
5. If you trim before arriving at a contest, you are not required to trim in front of your Master Judge candidate. You are not expected to change your process to accommodate the Master Judge candidate. Take time to explain why you trim your meats the way you do but follow your timelines.
6. Invite the Master Judge candidate to socialize with you. This is one of the interesting things to observe at a BBQ contest. However, when it is time to turn in, send the judge candidate home with detailed instructions on when to return. Have them attend the 9 am Nasty with you if that is part of your process. Let them experience the full contest.
7. For the most part, the Master Judge candidates are there to observe the cook process and watch how you turn out good BBQ. Please make the interaction fun for both you and the Master Judge candidate.

Head Cook Initials _____



MASTER JUDGE PROGRAM COOK TEAM PARTICIPATION

Contest: _____

Location: _____ Dates: _____

Team Name: _____ Head Cook: _____

Master Judge Candidate: _____ FBA Member # _____

(This section is to be filled out at the completion of the contest.)

By signing this document, I, as Head Cook, do certify that the Master Judge candidate named above completed his/her Master Judge Cook Team requirement as outlined in the Master Judge Cook Team Guidelines at the FBA Sanctioned barbecue contest listed above.

Head Cook: _____ Date: _____

By signing this document, I, as part of my training for Master Judge, certify that I completed my Cook Team requirement as outlined in the Master Judge Cook Team Guidelines at the FBA Sanctioned barbecue contest listed above.

Master Judge Candidate: _____ Date: _____

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Head Cook: Give these forms (3 pages) to the Lead Rep prior to the awards ceremony.
2. Lead Rep: Please send these forms to the Secretary.