

General Guidelines and Rules for Cookers of the South Carolina Barbeque Association

The SCBA has only a few rules that are imposed on cooks who participate in a festival or cook-off where the SCBA judges. We try to make it as easy on the cooks as we can with the knowledge that if we let cooks "do their own thing" we will get the best results. There are a few guidelines that make it fair for everyone, however.

Cooks may use any heat source they wish

There is no requirement by the SCBA that any particular heat source be used in the preparation of barbeque. We leave the choice of the heat source to the cook. It may be wood, gas, electric or any other reasonable heat source. The SCBA expects all cooking devices to be in working order and any cooking devices that may be found to be faulty or dangerous could be disqualified for use in the event.

The SCBA conducts only blind judging

There is no on-site judging by the SCBA.

All meat in SCBA cook-offs must come from the same source.

Unlike other sanctioning bodies that allow cooks to bring their own meats, the SCBA requires that all meats that are eligible for Master Barbeque Award points come from the same source thereby insuring a level playing field for all cooks. The festival promoters are responsible for finding the meat source and providing the meat.

Showmanship Awards

The SCBA does not give points for appearance of the booth or the cooking apparatus or decorations or for booth presentation of any kind. The festival may give an award for booth showmanship if they choose, but the SCBA does not judge such contests.

9 inch boxes

The SCBA recommends to all festivals that they use a standard 9 inch Styrofoam box to hold the meat that is sent to the judging tables. We suggest that it be a non-partitioned box. The SCBA requires that there be enough meat to accommodate 8 judges.

No Markings of any kind on the turn-in box

There should be no markings of any kind on, or in, the 9 inch turn-in box. You should send only barbeque. If there are any markings the receivers will ask that the entry be transferred into a box that has no markings and be resubmitted. If that is the case, however, it must be resubmitted within the normal time allotment (see below).

Wrapping boxes

You may wrap your entry box in tinfoil, hot blankets or any other device that you think helps keep the entry warm. All such devices must be removed before the box is entered, however. This means that if tinfoil is used it must be on the outside of the box and removed rather than being on the inside of the box. If a box is submitted with foil inside of the box the entrant will be asked to remove it and resubmit the box.

The SCBA judges meat not garnish

Cooks should send in only their meat product without any extra articles in the box such as garnish of any kind. The SCBA is not interested in lettuce or peppers or meat done in designs; the SCBA is only interested in barbeque.

Sauce

The SCBA judges barbeque the way it is sent to the receiving table. If you want to add your sauce you should do it yourself. Please do not send in sauce in a container. If you want it judged without sauce then that is the way you should send it in.

Entry Time

The entry time is set by the festival not the SCBA. Most festivals prefer that judging start at 10:00 am but some few are a bit earlier or even in the afternoon. Please check with the festival personnel as to entry time. Generally, if the festival is smaller (less than 20 cooks), your entry should be sent into the receiving table within a 10 minute window; that is 5 minutes before and 5 minutes after the 10:00 time. If the festival is larger, say 25 or over, the time window is generally 20 minutes; that is, 10 minutes before to 10 minutes after the turn-in time. The SCBA Marshal will discuss this with the cooks at the cooks' briefing.

Meat

The festival decides what categories of meat are to be judged. There is no SCBA requirement that any set of meat selections must be included. In fact, most festivals in South Carolina prefer only one or two meat sources, such as whole hog or shoulders. The festival will provide the meat to all cooks so that all cooks are using product from the same source. The SCBA will not judge or award points to any entry that is shown to be from an unapproved or outside source.

The barbeque in the box may be chopped, sliced, pulled, shredded, ground or any way the contestant wishes to submit it. The SCBA encourages all cooks to provide barbeque the way they would provide it to friends and family.

Local Health Regulations

There are always various local health regulations that are imposed by the county, city and state. These regulations are the purview of the agency involved (generally the Department of Health) and not of the SCBA. If any entry is disqualified by the local Health Department then it is disqualified for entry into the contest and will not be judged or awarded points by the SCBA. All cooks are expected to follow all of the local health regulations that are imposed.

Local Festival Rules and Behavior

The local festival sets rules for their festival and for individual behavior, not the SCBA. The SCBA only judges the barbeque entries. We do suggest that you follow all of the festival's rules, however, as any cooker who is disqualified by the festival personnel or the Health Department, for whatever reason, will not be judged by the SCBA.