49 Years Grilling!

Memphis in May International Festival

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

2027

MEMPHIS IN MAY

BARBECUE COOKING CONTEST




Heath Riles BBQ
2025 & 2026
Grand Champion

# 2027 TEAM APPLICATION GUIDE

MEMPHIS IN MAY INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

# 2027 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP BARBECUE COOKING CONTEST

MAY 12-15, 2027 LIBERTY PARK MEMPHIS, TN

49th Edition - Grillin' Since 1978

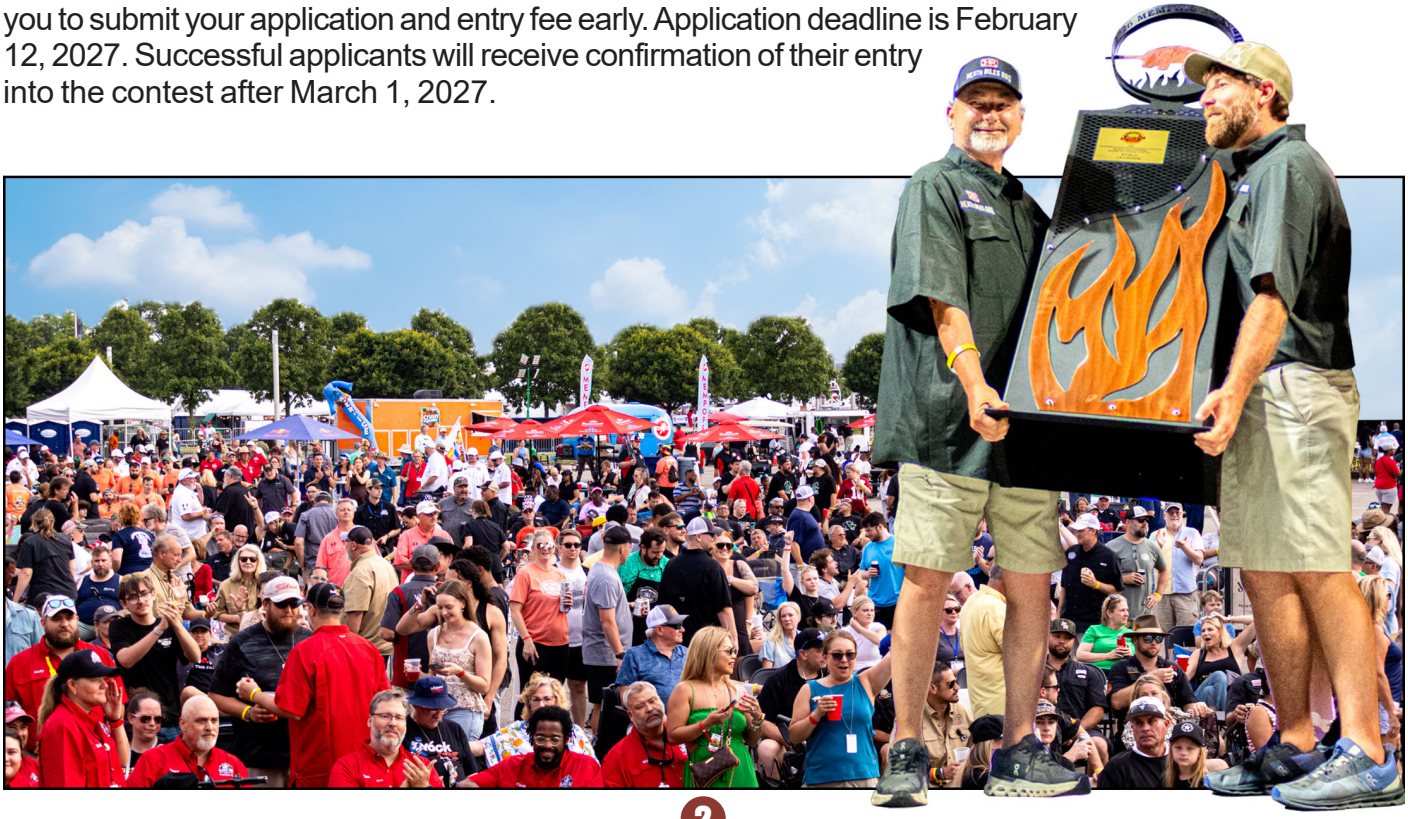
**APPLICATIONS ARE NOW OPEN** for the 2027 Memphis in May World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest at Liberty Park in Memphis, Tennessee.

Recognized globally as the premier competition among world class barbecue pitmasters, the 49th annual edition of the Memphis in May World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest will fire up in Liberty Park in Memphis, TN on May 12 through 15, 2027.

The World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest has been featured on NBC's The Today Show, CBS Sunday Morning, the BBC, A&E's King's of BBQ with Cedric The Entertainer and Anthony Anderson, the Food Network's "BBQ USA with Michael Symon," "BBQ Brawl," and "Pitmasters." It has been covered in Southern Living, Food & Wine, Bon Appetite, Garden & Gun, New York Times, and has been recognized by USA Today as the "Most Prestigious" barbecue competition in the world. Special guests attending the World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest have included Bobby Flay, Martha Stewart, Guy Fieri, Ted Allen, Dave Grohl, Goldberg, and many others.

If you are up to the challenge of competing with the best-of-the-best from across the country and around the world, we invite you to apply for entry into the contest. The competition is fierce, but the rewards are abundant as teams vie for the fame and glory of the coveted crown of World Champion, as well as a total cash prize purse of over $200,000!

Preliminary contest information follows, along with an application for entry into the contest. We encourage you to submit your application and entry fee early. Application deadline is February 12, 2027. Successful applicants will receive confirmation of their entry into the contest after March 1, 2027.



# 2027 APPLICATION INFO

## ENTRY FEES:

Your entry fee is based on the size of the team space requested and includes entry into ONE pork category (Whole Hog, Shoulder, Ribs or Patio Porkers), as well as the following:

- 18 x 24-hour wristiks for Championship division teams
- 8 x 24-hour wristiks for Patio Porker teams
- Commemorative 2027 WCBCC Cook's Apron
- Commemorative 2027 WCBCC Poster
- 2 x Vehicle load-in passes
- 1 x Team parking pass
- 1 x single 110v / 20a electrical circuit

Teams may only select and compete in ONE pork category. For Patio Porker teams, the competition meat is Ribs only, and the team nor its head cook must not have previously competed in the Championship division at WCBCC.

Additionally, both Championship division and Patio Porker teams may enter any of the following Ancillary contests:

- ANYTHING BUT (Beef, Poultry, Seafood & Exotic)
- SAUCE (Tomato, Mustard & Vinegar)
- HOT WINGS
- TURKEY SMOKE
- SCA STEAK CONTEST
- DESSERT ***(new for 2027!)***
- BEST BOOTH
- BEST TEAM SHIRT
- MS. PIGGIE IDOL

Teams may enter as many ancillary contests as they wish, but only one entry allowed per team per contest (except for SCA Steak). A complete description of pork categories and ancillary contests can be found later in this manual. See CONTEST RULES.

## BOOTH SIZES:

Due to limited space, requests for premium spaces or specific locations may not be possible. All special requests will be reviewed and accommodated if possible. Preference will be given based upon date the application and payment is received. Order the size space you need; no on-site expansions are permitted. Any team found intentionally expanding outside of their purchased booth space will be subject to penalties or disqualification. Memphis In May reserves the right to withhold the team's security deposit and prize money up to the amount of outstanding balance. Team booth space will be determined after event sponsors and vendors have been placed. Once accepted into the contest, all team spaces are final.

## SCAFFOLDING:

All spaces larger than 18'×30' must note how many levels will be constructed within your booth. Any team area less than 18' x 30' is limited to single-story structures. This includes ALL Patio Porker areas and all 18' x 20' areas. No load bearing floors are allowed to be built higher than 16 feet from the ground. Teams using a scaffolding structure must submit plans approved by Shelby County Code Enforcement to Memphis in May by Sunday, April 4, 2027 at the Team Meeting. Any scaffolding company used must be approved by Memphis in May VP of Operations.
Memphis Fire Prevention Bureau and Memphis and Shelby County Code Enforcement will closely inspect all structures. It is REQUIRED for building plans to be approved by Code Enforcement prior to construction and for all teams to have met fire safety requirements. Your team must be ready for inspection by WEDNESDAY, May 12, 2027 at 10:30 a.m. Your team must have a copy of the scaffolding certificate with occupancy limit in your team booth visible near the front entry area at all times. Code Enforcement will also write the occupancy limit in the designated spot on your Team Space sign. Moreover, it is the sole responsibility of each team to ensure occupancy levels, weight limits and capacity do not exceed the given maximum. Any team found intentionally exceeding capacity will be ejected from the contest.
Please remember, your team is solely responsible for all activities of contractors you secure, including but not limited to, load out and clean-up.

## SECURITY DEPOSIT & PARK RESTORATION FEE:

Teams are required to pay a $325 security deposit, which is refundable for teams that leave their space clean and do not have any outstanding balances with Memphis In May. Memphis in May reserves the right to withold a team's security deposit and prize money up to the amount of the outstanding balance. Teams competing in the Pork championship division (Rib, Shoulder, or Whole Hog) must pay $210 non-refundable venue restoration fee and special events permit fee. Teams competing in the Patio Porker division are required to pay a $110 non-refundable venue restoration fee and special events permit fee. Memphis in May continues it's commitment to Festival-wide recycling and waste reduction program. Teams are encouraged to use only recyclable and biodegradable disposable products.

## ADDITIONAL TEAM PARKING:

A limited number of additional paid team parking spaces are available at Liberty Park. ONLY ONE ADDITIONAL PAID SPACE PER TEAM IS PERMITTED. No RVs, tractor trailers, tour buses,

# 2027 APPLICATION INFO (continued)

trucks with trailers attached. Access to the lot is from May 8 – 15, 2027. The cost is $160 per spot.

## BIG HOG PACKAGE:

If you have a larger team with an elaborate set-up, 3 (three) additional 24-hour wristiks are available for purchase via our Big Hog Package. You may only purchase one Big Hog Package for $195.

## INSURANCE:

All teams are required to carry liability insurance with a minimum policy limit of $500,000. If you have your own policy, a Certificate of Insurance naming Memphis in May as additional insured must be provided by April 4, 2027. If you need to purchase insurance, Memphis in May has worked with our carrier to offer affordable policy that will help insure your team from load-in through load-out. The cost of this policy is $225.

## SPONSORSHIP:

Memphis in May recognizes the need for teams to secure sponsors. In consideration of event sponsors, teams may display only one sign or banner that includes corporate logos or identification that either faces or is directly exposed to the general public. This includes team cookers, grills, trailers and tents. This sign or banner should be no larger than three feet by ten feet (3'x10'). Multiple banners are acceptable if the total combined signage area does not exceed three feet by ten feet (3' x 10'). Team sponsors may not be in conflict with official Memphis in May World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest sponsors.

## TEAM ACCEPTANCE:

Submission of an application for entry into the 2027 World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest is not a guarantee of acceptance. Team selection and entry preference can be based upon several criteria, including but not limited to date of submission of team entry form along with payment. Acceptance into the 2027 WCBCC is guaranteed for the following:

- Previous WCBCC World Champions
- 2026 WCBCC Kingsford Tour of Champions Winner
- 2026 WCBCC Top Ten in each of the three championship pork categories
- 2026 WCBCC Patio Porker Winner
- 2027 Memphis in May sponsors

Additionally, preference will be given to teams that competed in the previous year's WCBCC. Entry is NOT AUTOMATIC for teams with guaranteed acceptance; an application with payment must be submitted prior to the application deadline.

Teams will be notified of acceptance after March 1, 2027. Teams not selected will receive a full refund.

## TEAM MEETING:

At least one representative from each team will be required to attend the Team Meeting on Sunday, April 4, 2027. At the Team Meeting, you will pick up your Team Packet, Team Wristiks, loading passes, and any pre-ordered tickets. This will also be your last chance to order tickets at a discounted rate, add any additional ancillary contests, or make any changes to your application (except for booth size and pork category).

The Team Meeting will serve to communicate all the necessary information and any important updates to the 2027 World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest. Representatives from Memphis In May and WCBCC vendors will be present to answer questions and assist with any orders.

## KINGSFORD TOUR OF CHAMPIONS:

This program will be held on Thursday and Friday, May 13 and 14, 2027 between 2:00 and 5:30 pm. While any team competing in the World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest may request to participate, preference will be given to teams who have previously placed in the Top 20 in the whole hog, rib or shoulder categories at Memphis in May. See Kingsford Tour of Champions contest rules on page 10.

## COOKER CARAVAN:

This is an experience like no other offered by Memphis in May through the generosity of our teams. A tour, led by one of our volunteers, will take place every hour between noon and 3:00 p.m. on Thursday and Friday. Teams will be scheduled individually and will give a short presentation to the groups. If you are interested in participating, please check the appropriate box on the WCBCC Official Entry Form.

## VIPit PASS TOUR:

Teams who have placed in the top 10 in the whole hog, rib and shoulder categories qualify to participate. This ultimate behind-the-scenes guided tour takes place Thursday and Friday of the competition week. Teams are expected to host 2 tour groups for a minimum of one half hour each and provide food, beverages, and presentation. Each tour group will have 25-40 patrons. Team booths must be large enough to accommodate these groups.

## APPLICATION DEADLINE: February 12, 2027

***Have Any Questions?***

**Call (901) 528-1311 or email mcarson@memphisinmay.org**

# 2027 PRIZE MONEY DISTRIBUTION *

## CHAMPIONSHIP PORK DIVISION
(Whole Hog, Shoulder and Rib)
Grand Champion: $27.000
First Place: $12,000
Second Place: $3,500
Third Place: $2,500
Fourth Place: $1,500
Fifth Place: $1,000
Sixth Place: $900
Seventh Place: $800
Eighth Place: $700
Ninth Place: $600
Tenth Place: $500

## PATIO PORKER DIVISION
First Place: $3,000
Second Place: $1,500
Third Place: $1,000
Fourth Place: $500

## ANYTHING BUT
(Beef / Poultry / Seafood / Exotic)
First Place: $3,000
Second Place: $1,500
Third Place: $1,000
Fourth Place: $500

## CATTLEMEN'S BEST SAUCE
(Tomato / Mustard / Vinegar)
First Place: $2,500
Second Place: $1,000
Third Place: $750
Fourth Place: $500

## HOT WINGS
Sponsored by Frank's Red Hot &
Springer Mountain Farms
First Place: $3,000
Second Place: $1,500
Third Place: $1,000
Fourth Place: $500

## TURKEY SMOKE
Sponsored by the
National Turkey Federation
First Place: $3,000
Second Place: $1,500
Third Place: $1,000
Fourth Place $500

## SCA STEAK CONTEST
Sponsored by GrillGrate and Korte Meats
First Place: $3,000
Second Place: $1,500
Third Place: $1,000
Fourth Place $500

## BEST DESSERT
First Place: $3,000
Second Place: $1,500
Third Place: $1,000
Fourth Place: $500

## MS. PIGGIE IDOL
First Place: $2,500
Second Place: $1,250
Third Place: $750

## TEAM SHIRT DESIGN
First Place: $1,250
Second Place: $750
Third Place: $500

## HOME DEPOT BEST BOOTH
**(Championship Division)**
First Place: $3,000
Second Place: $1,500
Third Place: $1,000

**(Patio Porker Division)**
First Place: $1,000

## KINGSFORD TOUR OF CHAMPIONS
First Place: $3,000
Second Place: $1,500
Third Place: $1,000
Fourth Place $500

*Cash prize amounts listed include any additional Cattlemen's prize money. Additionally, the Top 10 winners in each championship pork category (Whole Hog, Shoulder & Rib), the Patio Porker winner and Kingsford Tour of Champions winner will receive guaranteed acceptance (but not paid entry) into the 2028 World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest.

# THE CONTEST

## COMPETITION CATEGORIES

***Judged on Saturday***

In the pork competitions, there are two types of judging: blind and on-site. Judging also occur in two rounds preliminary and final. All food categories are judged blind, but only the Championship preliminary and finals and the Patio Porker finals are judged on-site. Blind and on-site judging in each category will begin at the same time.

At the World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest, Barbecue is defined as pork meat. FRESH OR FROZEN AND UNCURED, prepared only on a wood and/or charcoal fire. basted or not, as the cook sees fit, with any consumable substances and sauces as the cook believes necessary. Electrical devices may be used within the cooker as long as they do not directly generate heat. Approved devices include rotisseries, fans and delivery systems for approved fuels (e.g. Traeger grills). Electric smokers, holding ovens or other devices with heat producing electrical coils are not allowed. All entries will be inspected prior to preparation. MEAT FOR COMPETITION MAY NOT BE PRE-COOKED, SAUCED, INJECTED, MARINATED, OR CURED IN ANY WAY PRIOR TO INSPECTION. Meat inspection will take place on Friday between 8:00am and 2:00pm. All entries must be available for inspection during this time.

As it relates to the official meat categories for the World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest, Memphis in May defines the cooking process as the time from the product's raw state at meat inspection until the finished product is removed from the grill for placement in the blind box or presented to an on-site judge. Any violation is subject to investigation by Memphis in May contest officials and possible disqualification. The official meat categories for the Memphis in May World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest are as follows:

**WHOLE HOG** - – is defined as an entire hog, whose dressed weight is 85 pounds or more prior to the optional removal of the head, feet and skin, and which must be cooked as one complete unit on one grill surface. **No portion or portions of the Whole Hog entry may be separated or removed from, and subsequently returned to, the grill, prior to or during the cooking process.** Once any portion of an entry is removed from the grill, the cooking process is considered complete.

**SHOULDER** - is defined as the portion containing the arm bone, shank bone, and a portion of the blade bone. The pork ham, considered a shoulder entry, contains the hind leg bone. The pork ham is considered a shoulder entry and contains the hind leg bone. Although the shoulder is sometimes divided into two parts, the Arm Picnic and the Boston Butt, only the whole shoulder is allowable. Boston Butts and Picnic Shoulders are not valid entries. **No portion or portions of the Shoulder entry may be separated or removed from, and subsequently returned to, the grill prior to or during the cooking process**. Once any portion of an entry is removed from the grill, the cooking process is considered complete.

**RIB** - is defined as the portion containing the ribs and further classified as a spare rib, loin rib, or a baby back rib. Country style ribs are not valid entries in the Memphis in May WCBCC. They are cut from the blade end of the loin close to the pork shoulder. They contain no rib bones, but instead contain parts of the shoulder blade. **No portion or portions of the Rib entry may be separated or removed from, and subsequently returned to, the grill prior to or during the cooking process**. Once any portion of an entry is removed from the grill, the cooking process is considered complete.

**PATIO PORKER** - is defined as spare or loin ribs prepared on a total grill cooking area that is no larger than 15 sq. feet. Criteria for this division include: The team or its head cook must not have competed in the Championship division at the WCBCC. Limited to the first 35 teams to submit their application and fee. No restaurant affiliations are accepted. Teams may participate in the Patio Porkers division for a maximum of three years after which time they must elevate to the Championship competition. **No portion or portions of the Patio Porker Rib entry may be separated or removed from, and subsequently returned to the grill prior to or during the cooking process**. Once any portion of an entry is removed from the grill, the cooking process is considered complete.

Each team is responsible for observing required temperature control and good hygienic practices. Propane, compressed or liquid gas may be used within the cooker only to start the initial fire. No type of flammables may be used with the cooker once the meat has been placed on the cooker. Flammables may be used outside the cooker to make additional coals. All flammables used must be in accordance with regulations by the Memphis/ Shelby County Fire Department.

# THE CONTEST (continued)

## BLIND JUDGING

Each judge will sample entries without knowing which team cooked them. Each team will receive one container and two cups (for optional sauce and/or rub) for their entry from their Ambassador the morning of the competition. These containers will be pre-labeled with the team name and site number. DO NOT remove this label. Each team will need to bring their samples to the check-in station in the Judging HQ at the times listed below. Once the sample is turned in, the sticker will be replaced with a code known only to the judging committee; the entries will also be checked. GARNISH IS NOT allowed in the blind box. Placing anything other than the meat or making any marks on any of the containers will result in disqualification.

***Special Note to Whole Hog teams***: You may ONLY place the ham, shoulder, and loin in your judging container; no skin or bones allowed! You may not add bacon or any other hog section.

## ON-SITE JUDGING

On-site judging occurs in your team area and runs concurrently with Blind Judging. There will be three judges who judge your team, one at a time. Pay special attention to your judge as they will be giving you your score. You will also have a chance to evaluate the individual judges. As each judge enters your area, they will hand you a scorecard stub. This stub will show your team name and site number, as well as their judging number, (J1, J2, and J3). A team member will need to look at each stub to verify the team information and the judging sequence is accurate. DO NOT let judges into your team space out of order. Also on this stub is a place for you to evaluate your judge.

Please complete each one and your Ambassador will pick them up from you. The judges will not see these evaluations. There are a couple of rules teams must assist judges in adhering to:

- Judges may not stay longer than 15 minutes. Any team which keeps or tries to keep a judge for more than 15 minutes will be disqualified.
- Judges are instructed to compare ONLY the samples judged for the day, and ignore any previous tasting experiences, competitive or otherwise.
- Judges may not bring any visitors into your area while they are judging. Please do not encourage this as it will result in the judge being removed from future contests. See special note below.

***Special note to Whole Hog teams:*** During on-site and final judging, the team must serve at least portions of the ham, shoulder, and loin. Any other sections of the whole hog may be served at the team's discretion. Judges will be instructed to judge the sample as it is provided by the team, deducting points if portions of the ham, shoulder, and loin are not served.

***Special note to all Championship teams:*** Memphis in May has instituted a program to further the training and experience of newly trained judges. On-site judges may be accompanied by an additional judge in training. This judge in training will be given a scorecard in order to better understand the process of on-site judging; however, their scores are not entered, nor do they count for the contest. On-site judges will be easily distinguishable from the judges in training, and the team's focus should be on their on-site judge. All other rules regarding judges and guests apply.

## JUDGING CRITERIA:

Memphis in May judges are trained to look for particular aspects of your food and booth while judging. The criteria pertain to all of our Championship divisions, Patio Porkers, Anything But, Turkey Smoke and Hot Wings:

**1. APPEARANCE OF ENTRY** - Blind and On-site: This criterion refers to the aesthetics of the product. Does the entry look appetizing on the grill and at the table, or in the container in blind? This is the visual appeal of the entry, not what garnishes are provided. Garnishes are only permitted on-site and in non-pork categories.

**2. TENDERNESS OF ENTRY** - Blind and On-Site: For this criterion, the judge will be looking for some firmness but easy separation of the meat. There is a range in barbecue from tough (not cooked to tenderness) to mushy (cooked past tender). There should be some texture, but the entry should be moist and easy to chew.

**3. FLAVOR OF ENTRY** - Blind and On-site: This criterion refers to the flavor of the meat entry with the sauce. The sauce can be added before, during, or after the cooking process. Dry rubs and marinades may cook with the meat juices to make a sauce. If a team offers no table sauce, the judges are instructed to score

the flavor of the entry based on the sauce made by the rubs/spices added before or during cooking. If a team serves more than one table sauce, the judges are instructed to choose the sauce that, in their opinion, best complements the entry and base the score on that combination.

**4. OVERALL IMPRESSION** - Blind and On-site: This criterion is a subjective score based on the judge's opinion of the total experience of judging the team, and is not an average of the other scores. Judges will be reflecting on their general overall feeling of their judging experience as they leave the area or when they have finished judging all the entries at the blind table.

**5. AREA & PERSONAL APPEARANCE** - On-site Only: This criterion assesses the cleanliness and general appearance of the team area, cooker & members of the presentation team. Judges will be looking for the effort made, not the money spent. They're also instructed to dismiss anything beyond the team's control, such as mud.

**6. PRESENTATION** - On-site Only: This criterion refers to the verbal introduction of, and information about, the team, area, grill and the entry. It should include how the cook has taken the entry from the raw state to the finished product using his/her special cooking methods. They usually will include information about the development of their sauce(s), rub(s), and marinade(s). This is the chance for the team to use salesmanship.

### JUDGING FINALS

The top three teams from each competition category will be notified they are in the finals. A group of judges will travel to all teams and will be seated together. Each judge will judge independently. Championship final judging will begin at approximately 2:00 p.m. and the categories will be judged in the same order as above. Patio Porker final judging will start at 3:15. You will be notified by your Ambassador of specific times. Please have your final product ready within these time frames. All previously stated judging rules apply in finals judging.

## ANCILLARY CONTESTS & JUDGING

A team may enter more than one contest; however, only one entry per category, per team, will be allowed (except for SCA Steak Contest). These contests are judged blind with no final round. No inspection of entries is made before judging. You will receive containers from your Ambassador the morning of the contest. You may include garnish in these categories if the team so chooses. Remember, no late samples will be accepted and COMPLETELY FILL YOUR CONTAINERS. No posting of pictures, videos or live streaming of ANY contest entry is allowed until after judging of that category has commenced. These actions are detrimental to the blind judging process and may result in contest disqualification. Here are brief descriptions of the ancillary contests:

### ANYTHING BUT

**BEEF** - Any portion of domestic cattle may be prepared as the team sees fit. Exotic or cross breeds, such as water buffalo or beefalo, must be entered in the EXOTIC category.

**POULTRY** - Any poultry, such as the domestic chicken. Cornish game hen, duck, turkey, pheasant, ostrich, etc. may be prepared whole or in portions as the team sees fit. Sponsored by Springer Mountain Farms.

**SEAFOOD** - Any fish or shellfish from fresh or salt water and may be prepared whole or in portions as the team sees fit. Frog, turtle, snake, etc. must be entered in the Exotic category.

**EXOTIC** - An Exotic entry is defined as any meat product not meeting the definitions of any previous categories, such as venison, raccoon, rattlesnake, etc., and may be prepared whole or in portions as the team sees fit.

### DESSERT

A Dessert entry is defined as a baked good made on-site within the team space. Each contestant must supply all ingredients, cooking utensils and cooking equipment to prepare entry. Each entry should contain 6 samples for the judges. An edible garnish is allowed in the container with the entry. It is not recommended to submit any entries that require refrigeration.

### HOT WINGS

A Hot Wing entry is defined as any piece of the wing, drummie or flat or a full wing: drummie, flat and flap, of a domestic chicken, sauced and/or seasoned as the team sees fit. Sponsored by Frank's Red Hot & Springer Mountain Farms.

# ANCILLARY CONTESTS & JUDGING (continued)

## TURKEY SMOKE

A Turkey Smoke entry is defined as a commercially purchased or provided domestic turkey that may be prepared whole or in portions, sauced and/or seasoned or not, as the team sees fit. If the contest sponsor provides the turkey for the entry, ONLY the provided turkey may be prepared and submitted as a valid entry. In the event that there is no contest sponsor, or the contest does not provide the turkey for the entry, then ONLY a whole domestic turkey breast may be prepared and submitted as a valid entry. Teams will be notified in advance of the contest whether or not the turkey will be provided. Sponsored by the National Turkey Federation.

## SCA STEAK CONTEST

This contest is an official SCA Steak Competition, judged by certified SCA judges according to SCA rules. Meat for entries is provided by MIM and included in the entry fee. WCBCC teams may have multiple entries for the steak contest, however, only one entry per cook is allowed. The winner receives a guaranteed entry into the 2027 SCA World Championship. Complete SCA rules are available at www.steakcookoffs.com/Cooks/

## CATTLEMEN'S BEST SAUCE

This contest is divided into three categories: Tomato, Mustard, or Vinegar. The sauce's main ingredient will determine the category. Sauces will be judged on how well the various ingredients combine together. The specific areas are:

**APPEARANCE** - This criterion refers to the aesthetics of the product. Does the entry itself look appetizing? Would you want to use this sauce on the product? This is the visual appeal of the entry.

**CONSISTENCY** - This criterion refers to how thick or runny the sauce is. The right consistency is important for barbecue sauce to stick to meat and compliment flavor.

**FLAVOR** - This criterion refers to the taste of barbecue sauce and is the "marriage" of the various flavors of many varied ingredients blended into one. Judges will be instructed to not let a familiarity with and/or personal preference for a particular style of sauce prevent their judging each sauce according to the judging criteria. Barbecue sauces vary from sweet and mild to fiery hot, but the judges will be scoring the sauces on their ability to titillate the taste buds.

**OVERALL IMPRESSION** - This is not an average of all the other judging criteria. It is a separate judging criterion measuring the judge's overall subjective experience of judging the entry.



THE HOME DEPOT®
CATTLEMEN'S BBQ SAUCE
Dr Pepper Est.1885

# SPECIAL EVENTS & JUDGING

## KINGSFORD TOUR OF CHAMPIONS

Teams who have previously placed in the top 20 in the whole hog, rib and shoulder pork categories in our World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest are invited to participate in Kingsford's Tour of Champions. Patrons will have the privilege of tasting the best of the best by visiting a select number of the participating teams in their team booths. At the end of the tour, patrons will judge who they think is the greatest of the greats. This program will be held Thursday and Friday between 2:00 and 5:30 pm. Teams may participate in one day only. Competing teams in this contest will be required to follow and comply with Health Code regulations during the specified times of the contest.

While any team competing in the World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contests can request to participate, preference will be given to teams who have previously placed in the Top 20 in the whole hog, rib or shoulder pork categories at Memphis in May. Patrons will be briefed on Memphis in May's four basic judging criteria - Appearance, Tenderness, Flavor and Overall Impression.

Teams will participate in one session only. Teams will be provided with pork butts to serve patrons, but they are not limited in what they offer patrons. Competing teams in this contest will be required to follow and comply with Health Department codes and regulations during the specified times of the contest.

A maximum of 100 patrons will visit three teams per session in their team booths. At the end of the tour, patrons will select the team they judged to be the best within their session based on the judging criteria. Each participating team will be given a score based on the percentage of first place votes within their session. Overall team rankings will be based on the highest percentage of firstplace votes.

## MS. PIGGIE IDOL

The Ms. Piggie Idol competition gives the finest swine on your team an opportunity to show his/her vocal talent to the world. The contest will be limited to the first 10 teams to register. All contestants will be judged on stage Thursday, May 13 at 6:00 p.m. The objective of Ms. Piggie Idol is to provide an entertaining release from the serious task of cooking world-class barbecue with a friendly and light-hearted event. Participating teams and the general public can assemble together in the spirit of camaraderie to enjoy the entertaining Ms. Piggie spectacle—which is a comical prelude to the weighty barbecue competitions later in the week. Participants are expected to enter Ms. Piggie Idol in the good-natured spirit of the event.

## RULES

- Each team may have up to 6 members, but only one Ms. Piggie Idol who will perform the live lead vocal selection for the judges. The other 5 members can be used as background vocalists, dancers, etc. There will be a total of three microphones; 1 for the Ms. Piggie Idol and 2 additional for the background vocalists.
- Each team must provide their music on a USB thumb drive without any pre-recorded lead vocals. These recordings can be karaoke style and if they are karaoke tracks, they must be standard commercially available tracks. No pre-recorded intros, vocals, custom backup vocals, voice-overs or spoken words. Please write the team name on the thumb drive with a Sharpie.
- A written copy of the lyrics with the thumb drive must be handed into the judging committee chair by Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. in a full size envelope with booth number and team name. The entire performance cannot exceed 4 minutes.
- Each team will be allowed 2 minutes for set up, so be ready.
- Costumes will be considered in the showmanship scoring, but are not required. Backdrops or other set theatrical props will not be allowed. Contestants may carry handheld props, signs, flags, banners, etc. Sound monitors on stage are not provided.
- Ms. Piggie Idol contestants must be at least 18 years of age.
- Profanity and vulgar displays are prohibited.
- No flammable, powdery, or liquid substances will be allowed on stage, including explosive or smoke devices.
- No items of any kind may be thrown from the stage into the crowd during performances.
- VIOLATION OF ANY OF THE ABOVE RULES WILL RESULT IN DISQUALIFICATION FROM THE MS. PIGGIE IDOL CONTEST AT THE DISCRETION OF MIM OFFICIALS. Ms. Piggie Idol team entries will be evaluated by

# SPECIAL EVENTS & JUDGING (continued)

a panel of judges according to the rules and criteria outlined here. Once certified by MIM officials, the judge's scores will be accepted as the results of the competition. The certified results, decisions of the judges and MIMIF (Memphis in May International Festival) will be final. While the panel of judges are provided the criteria for scoring performances, the Ms. Piggie Idol competition and judging procedure is subjective by nature.

- Each participating team in Ms. Piggie Idol, by entering the competition, acknowledges they understand the nature of the competition and will accept the final decision in a sportsmanship-like manner and the light-hearted spirit of the event. Any team not intending to participate in a spirit of camaraderie with fellow barbecue teams should not enter Ms. Piggie Idol.

## JUDGING CRITERIA

- **Vocal Skill** - Tone, pitch, articulation & vocal performance of the lead singer or "idol."
- **Creativity of the Original Lyrics** - Incorporation of one or more WCBCC themes including Barbecue, Memphis, Memphis in May and the country of honor.
- **Showmanship** - Theatricality of the stage presentation (costumes, dancers, props, choreography, originality and stage presence).
- **Overall Impression** - Strength of the performance overall, effective use of the combination of criteria items listed above overall entertainment level and festive spirit.

## HOME DEPOT BEST BOOTH

The Best Booth contest encourages team creativity in booth design and décor. Dressing up your booth contributes to the lively atmosphere of the Memphis in May International Festival and the World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest. The country of honor should be shown in every aspect of your booth. The judges will be allowed 5 minutes to judge your booth. You DO NOT need to be present for your booth to be judged. You WILL NOT be making a presentation to the judges.

## THE JUDGES WILL SELECT THE BEST BOOTH BASED ON THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- Originality of Design - Decor is unique from others.
- Visual Appeal - Clean, unified theme, quality workmanship.
- Use of Honored Salute Theme - How the country of honor is incorporated.
- Overall Impression - Is it the best booth today?

## BEST TEAM SHIRT DESIGN

This contest gives each team an opportunity to proudly submit their most creative design that represents their team's identity, honors this year's saluted country, the World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest, or Memphis in May International Festival. All submissions need to be large or extra large in size for all shirts to be judged equally. Any shirt not the correct size will not be accepted. Your team's shirt must be submitted at each of the cook's briefings.

## THE JUDGES WILL SELECT THE SHIRT BEST FITTING THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- Originality of Design - New, different, unique from others.
- Visual Appeal - Would you wear this shirt? How good is the T-Shirt art?
- Creativity and Theme - How effectively does the design represent the team's identity or creatively incorporate the Honored Country, WCBCC, or Memphis in May?
- Overall Impression - Is it the best?

Please remember that the design on your team shirt should be in good taste and not offensive. Use of the Memphis in May International Festival name, logo, or any other registered service mark is not required, nor will it have any impact on the judging.

## SCORES & POSTING

Scores for each category will be posted outside the judging tent by 8:00 pm each evening. Team standings and scores will be posted on our website, www.memphisinmay.org, by 6:00 pm on Wednesday, May 19, 2027. Memphis in May will send each team a PDF form of their score within two weeks after the end of the contest.



# TEAM REFERRAL REWARDS

Memphis in May World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest Teams can receive cash discounts from your 2027 World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest registration fees for each team that you recruit and that successfully registers for the 2027 Contest.

## TEAM REFERRAL REWARDS:

- With 1 New Team Referred - $100 off your team entry fee.
- With 2 New Teams Referred - $100 off your team entry fee + 1 Load-In Pass
- With 3 New Teams Referred - $100 off your team entry fee + 1 Load-In Pass + 1 Team Parking Pass

## REFERRAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

To qualify as a new team, the referred team must either:

- Be a first-time competitor, **OR**
- Must not have competed in the Memphis in May World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest any year after the 2019 contest.

To ensure proper credit for referrals, all new teams must complete the following on their official team application:

- List the referring team's name
- List the referring team's contact name
- List the referring team's contact phone number

***This information must be included at the time of application submission. Memphis in May will not retroactively apply referral credits once registration forms have been processed.***

## ADDITIONAL TERMS & CONDITIONS

Memphis in May will review all applications and verify that referred teams meet eligibility requirements. All decisions regarding eligibility and verification are final and made at the discretion of Memphis in May staff.

- Incentives will be applied after both the referring and referred teams have paid their entry fees and their application has been approved.
- Incentives are awarded per contest year and do not roll over to future events.
- Rewards are non-transferable and may not be exchanged for cash.
- Only one referring team may be listed per new team application.









Memphis in May International Festival

*CELEBRATNG 50 YEARS!*

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