



## *Backyard Cookoff Information*

Since 1979, the atmosphere surrounding Downtown Owensboro has been permeated with the sights, sounds, smells and the taste of Kentucky barbecue. This year marks the 45th celebration of the festival and promises to continue the tradition and be one of the most successful! We invite you and your team to join in the fun for the 2025 Backyard Cookoff. This year's competition will take place on **Saturday, May 10, 2025** in Downtown Owensboro, KY. Backyard BBQ "skills and grills", we invite you to showcase your team's talent!

|  |  |                  |                  |                     |
|--|--|------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| <b>2025 Backyard Cook-Off<br/>Grand Champion</b> | Cash Payouts for Overall Winners - 1st-\$1,000, 2nd-\$300, 3rd-\$200 |                  |                  |                     |
|  | Trophies for 1st, 2nd, & 3rd Place Overall                           |                  |                  |                     |
|  | Traveling Trophy   |                  |                  |                     |
|  | Waiver of 2026 Backyard Cook-Off Entry Fee                           |                  |                  |                     |
| <b>2025 Category Champions</b>                   | <b>Beef</b>  | <b>Chicken</b>   | <b>Pork</b>      | <b>Booth</b>        |
| 1st Place  | \$500 Cash   | \$500 Cash       | \$500 Cash       | \$200 Cash + Plaque |
|  | 1st Place Trophy   | 1st Place Trophy | 1st Place Trophy |                     |
| 2nd Place  | \$300 Cash   | \$300 Cash       | \$300 Cash       |                     |
|  | 2nd Place Trophy   | 2nd Place Trophy | 2nd Place Trophy |                     |
| 3rd Place  | \$200 Cash   | \$200 Cash       | \$200 Cash       |                     |
|  | 3rd Place Plaque   | 3rd Place Plaque | 3rd Place Plaque |                     |

Entry fee for the 2025 Backyard Cookoff is **\$100.00** and the deadline to register is **Friday, April 25**.

Below you will find a copy of the 2025 Registration Form and copy of the Backyard Cookoff rules. If you have any questions related to the 2025 Backyard Cookoff, please contact the coordinators listed below.

Kelly Ward  
270-316-6334  
[kellyward17@att.net](mailto:kellyward17@att.net)

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270-925-3058  
[org669@gmail.com](mailto:org669@gmail.com)

International Bar-B-Q Festival  
PO Box 434  
Owensboro, KY 42302



## *Backyard Cookoff Rules*

1. The Festival Board of Directors and Backyard Cook Coordinators must approve all cooking entries.
2. Entry teams may have as many team members as they want. However, for the purpose of related publicity or for awards presentations, only four (4) team members will be considered "official" team members.
3. All times listed below are Owensboro local time, Central Daylight Time (CDT).
4. MANDATORY Team Captain Meeting will be at 8:00 AM at BYC headquarters (location TBD and shared at a date prior to the event). Summarize the day's planned activity, and any last-minute Q&A.
5. Team Locations: Team booth areas are pre-assigned, and an overhead view of the competition area will be included for reference (TBD at a date prior to the event). MAX booth dimensions are 12 feet deep from the curb edge of the street and 21 feet wide. Please plan accordingly so that all teams can be accommodated.
6. Set-up for booth and cooking equipment will be Friday at 12:00 PM or Saturday morning. Cooking may begin at 7:00 AM. Lighting of the grill is considered part of set-up and may be done before 7:00 AM cook time. Fires must be lit once in position, no pre-lit fires before arrival.
7. Meats judged in the 2025 Backyard Cook-Off are Beef, Chicken, and Pork (detailed in Section 9). Judging of all meat begins promptly at 2:00 PM. Best Booth judging will start at 9:00 AM. Winners for all will be announced at the Awards Ceremony at 4:30 PM. Tiebreaker for each meat category will be determined by the highest total meat score. Tiebreaker for booth score will be determined by highest total meat score. For overall tiebreaker, score for pork will be 1<sup>st</sup> tiebreaker, if still tied beef will be 2<sup>nd</sup>, then chicken is 3<sup>rd</sup>.
8. All meats must be prepared on-site and will be judged on taste, cut, tenderness, and appearance.
9. Categories for 2025 Backyard Cook off are as follows:
  - Beef:** 6 servings (suggested serving sizes 2-3 oz.)
  - Chicken:** 6 servings (suggested serving sizes 2-3 oz.) NO CORNISH GAME HENS.
  - Pork:** 6 servings (suggested serving sizes 2-3 oz.) Pork ribs must be cut apart.
  - Best Booth:** Booths will be judged according to Backyard Cook-Off themes and will take place at 9:00am. Booth judging and scoring is conducted separately from other categories and will not be included in cumulative meat scoring.
10. All meat must be raw and uncooked at check-in. Prior preparation, such as marinating and seasoning, is permitted.

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**11. DIP/SAUCE \*\*\*PLEASE PAY CLOSE ATTENTION!!!\*\*\*:**

DURING PREPARATION: You may COOK with sauce/dip.

AT TURN-IN FOR JUDGING: DO NOT add any additional spices, dip or sauce to meats once prepared for turn in. Aluminum foil will be provided when cooks sign in for their team meat trays. Use this foil ONLY. Meat is to be placed on the foil for turn-in. DO NOT fold foil over meat or mark the foil in any manner. NO garnishing or markers allowed. IF ANYTHING IS ADDED ON TOP, SIDE, ETC TO THE TRAY, POINTS WILL BE DEDUCTED OR COULD EVEN CAUSE DISQUALIFICATION! MEAT ONLY IN TRAYS.

12. All decisions of the judges will be final.

13. Turn-in time for all meats starts at 12:30 pm and no later than 2:00 pm at the table in front of the convention center.

14. FREE SAMPLES TO THE CROWD are encouraged. However, contestants and/or sponsors may not sell food, drink, souvenirs, or other items to the public **UNLESS** you have submitted a food & beverage vendor application, paid the vendor fee, and have been accepted as a Food Vendor at the event. Any team registered as a Food Vendor must comply with all Health Department and event requirements for payment, insurance, health permits, etc.

15. City regulations prohibit public consumption of alcoholic beverages unless it is purchased from a restaurant/vendor in the downtown Entertainment District and consumed from a green cup provided by the restaurant/vendor.

16. Teams, Participants and Contestants in the Backyard Cook-Off are responsible for the CLEAN UP of their area immediately following the contest. Each team is responsible for keeping the contest area clean and policed before leaving the event (no ashes, hot or cold, shall not be left on site). Metal ash/hot coals and grease barrels will be provided. Trash cans and bags will be provided during the event. Additional trash bags are available upon request.

17. Utilities (Water and Electric ONLY) are limited and may NOT be available. Use your Registration Form to indicate if you need Electricity. Teams should provide their own electric extension cords and garden hoses.

18. EQUIPMENT SET-UP / STAGING: Up to two (2) vehicles are permitted in the contest area for set-up purposes only on Friday afternoon and before the competition begins on Saturday morning. After set-up, all vehicles driven, towed and any others must be moved to the festival parking area. Enclosed Trailers must be removed from the cooking site, unless your cooker is permanently attached.

19. EQUIPMENT REMOVAL: Cooking equipment may be moved to a side street for vehicle pick up after cooking. NO VEHICLES ALLOWED IN THE COOKING AREA to remove items because of safety concerns for pedestrian traffic.

20. Each cooking team will be required to have a fire extinguisher (A, B, C) in full view at all times.

21. Cleanliness of all team members, cookers and the cooking area is mandatory. Proper hand washing and the use of disposable food safe gloves shall be used at all times when handling food products, raw or cooked. Gloves should be changed often, especially when working with different products and when handling ready-to-eat foods after handling raw foods.

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22. Absolutely no tobacco products allowed during the preparation, handling, cooking or presentation of the contest entries.
23. Clothing, including, but not limited to, shirts and shoes must be worn in all food preparation areas, while handling any food.
24. All traffic lanes in the contest area must be kept open.
25. Once a team's entry fee is received, there are NO REFUNDS of any kind, in any amount, for any reason, in any time frame. Entries will be processed on a first-paid basis.
26. No pets or small animals are allowed in the cooking area unless they are service animals.
27. No political advertisements/signs/etc. in the cooking area.
28. We cannot think of every little detail, but we will try to make your contest experience as enjoyable and fair as it can be. Without your participation, we have no event. Maximize your enjoyment with the intent to return next and subsequent years!
29. Please contact the Backyard Cook Event Coordinators if you have further questions or are in need of assistance for the 2025 contest.
30. Backyard Cook Off Committee personnel reserve the right to amend these rules and regulations as situations warrant. Intent to circumvent these rules or amendments will not be tolerated.
31. Lastly, and most importantly, HAVE A GREAT DAY and HAVE FUN!



## Backyard Cookoff Team Registration Form

\*denotes a required field

\*Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Team Captain: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

\*City: \_\_\_\_\_ \*State: \_\_\_\_\_ \*Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate email: \_\_\_\_\_

Team website: \_\_\_\_\_

\*1<sup>st</sup> T-Shirt (adult size): S M L XL 2XL 3XL Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\*2<sup>nd</sup> T-Shirt (adult size): S M L XL 2XL 3XL Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Do you require electricity for your cooker? (circle one) YES NO

**The following MUST be included to complete your registration and guarantee participation in the 2025 Backyard Cookoff:**

- This 2025 Team Registration Form (completed IN FULL)
- Full Payment of **\$100** made out to: "International Bar-B-Q Festival"
- Mail the 2 items above to:  
**2025 Backyard Cook-Off**  
**c/o Owensboro International Bar-B-Q Festival**  
**P.O. Box 434**  
**Owensboro, KY 42302**
- Payment may be made by cashier's check, personal check, or money order payable to International Bar-B-Q Festival. No cash please.

I have read and agree to the 2025 Backyard Cookoff Rules

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_