



Official Rules – May 31, 2025

Eligibility: This competition is for amateur cooks only. If you own a food business, cater, or cook professionally, you are ineligible. If we discover that you are a professional, you will be disqualified. This event is for backyard BBQ enthusiasts, not businesses.

Categories: Teams will compete in six categories: Pulled Pork, Pork Ribs, Beef Ribs, Brisket, Seafood and “Alternative” (anything cooked on-site, so be creative!). Teams must choose two categories to compete in; no more than two.

Registration: Pre-registration is required and space is limited. Entry fee: \$100 per team. Applications open April 1, 2025. No refunds for any reason. Non-transferable.

Team Spirit: A Team Spirit Award will be given to the team that shows the most pride and camaraderie. Decorate your space, create a team name, and have fun!

Communication: All event information will be sent via email. If your email changes, it's your responsibility to notify the competition committee. Updates will also be posted on the Smokin' on the Creek Facebook page and www.smokinonthecreek.com. Add smokinonthecreek@gmail.com to your known senders to ensure you receive all communications.

Age Requirement: All team members must be 18 years or older.

Site Assignments: Cooking stations will be assigned at 5:00 pm on Friday, May 30th. Set-up begins after 5:00 pm. Sites must be vacated by 8:00 pm on Saturday, May 31st. Sites must be left free of debris and all food items. Teams must dispose of hot embers in appropriate barrels.

Vehicle Access: Vehicles may enter the BBQ area for unloading/loading but must be removed by 7:00 am on Saturday for vendor setup. Competitors must park in the directed area and not the main guest parking. No vehicles will be allowed in the event space between 7am and 8pm.

Team Arrival and Noise: Teams must keep noise to a minimum between 9pm Friday night and 8am Saturday morning.

Team Space: Each team will be assigned a 15' x 15' gravel space.

Food Safety: Teams are responsible for keeping meat at or below 40°F before cooking. All cooked meat must be kept at a minimum of 140°F. Cool meat from 140°F to 70°F within 2 hours. Cool from 70°F to 41°F or below within 4 hours.

Judging Times: Judges will sample the categories at times announced two weeks before the event. Please check the timeline page for details. The stated judging time is the time the food must be submitted to the samples table. Samples submitted after the specified judging time will have a 1 pt deduction in overall score.

Entry Submission: Entries must be submitted in the aluminum tins provided by the event committee. Each tin must contain at least 10 identifiable pieces. Judging will be based on 25% appearance, 25% tenderness and 50% taste.

Grill Types: Any type of grill is allowed (wood, gas, charcoal, or pellets). Electric smokers are not permitted due to limited electrical power. Propane tanks must be stamped and current.

Mandatory Cook's Meeting: A mandatory cook's meeting will be held on Friday, May 30th at 5:00 pm. A team representative must attend.

Team Conduct: The head cook is responsible for their team's conduct. Each team may have up to 4 members. Additional members must pay for festival entry.

Heating and Utensils: Teams must provide all necessary cooking equipment and utensils. All equipment must be fit in the provided 15x15 spot.

Water and Cleaning Stations: Anne Arundel County Health Department approved sanitation stations will be available at select locations. Hot coal barrels will be located by sanitation stations.

Competition results: The results of the barbecue competition will be emailed to competitors on Tuesday, June 3rd and no earlier than that date.

Alcohol Policy: Only alcohol purchased from Hidden Harbour Marina/Anchored Inn is allowed in the event area. Violating the alcohol policy will result in disqualification and removal from the event. If a guest or relative of your team members is found to be drinking underage, that group will be disqualified.

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Pets: No pets are allowed in the event area.

Safety: Safety is a priority. Any unsafe behavior will result in disqualification and removal from the event.

No Commercial Vending or Solicitation: Due to Anne Arundel County Health Department regulations, competitors cannot sell BBQ or offer free samples. Commercial vendor spaces are available—contact event staff for information.

Electricity Requests: Teams may request electricity for \$50. Payment is due at the time of application. Requests are first-come, first-served.

Recreational Vehicles: Recreational Vehicles must have prior approval and pay a \$100 charge. Space is limited. RVs must arrive by 4pm on Friday. There is no electric or water/sewer.

Rule Enforcement: All rules will be enforced at the discretion of the event committee, which consists of at least five organizers.

Reasons for Disqualification and Removal from Property: Failure to adhere to the alcohol policy. Use of controlled substances by a team or its members/guests. Foul, abusive, or unacceptable language. Excessive noise before 9:00 am. Unsportsmanlike conduct.

Thank you!