



OFFICIAL RULES & REGULATIONS

Updated January 2024

April 5th & April 6th, 2024

Nancy Lane Park

www.townofatoka.com

SANCTIONED BY:



1. LOCATION

The contest will be held at Nancy Lane Park located at Atoka Park Ave and Kimbrough Rd. BBQ teams will be set up in the grass lot on the south side of the park. NLP can easily be accessed from Highway 51 by traveling East on Kimbrough. A contest site map will be available at www.atokaparksandrec.com approximately two weeks prior to the contest.

2. APPLICATION & ACCEPTANCE

Application fees are based on categories and contests entered. Minimum entry fee for participation in the MBN SANCTIONED BBQ CONTEST is \$150.00 which includes entry into one MBN category, 20' x 20' site, one apron, and access to water and electricity. Additional MBN categories are \$100.00 each. ANCILLARY CONTEST entries are \$25/contest, there are seven different ancillary contests.

The Town of Atoka reserves the right to reject any application. If your application is not accepted, your fees will be refunded by mail. No refunds of the application fees will be made once you have been accepted in the contest, whether you appear or not. DUE TO LIMITED SPACE, APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED ARE NOT GUARANTEED ENTRANCE TO THE CONTEST. APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED ONLINE AFTER March 25th, 2024, POTENTIALLY MAY NOT BE ACCEPTED. Notification of acceptance will be sent via e-mail to each team accepted into the contest. Any rejected applications and payments will be returned promptly to the applicant.

3. PRICE MONEY DISTRIBUTION

Grand Champion: \$1500 + Trophy

Whole Hog

1st Place: \$800 + Trophy
2nd Place: \$700 + Trophy
3rd Place: \$600 + Trophy
4th Place: \$500 + Trophy
5th Place: \$400 + Trophy
6th Place: \$300 + Trophy
7th Place: \$200 + Trophy
8th Place: \$100 + Trophy

Pulled Pork

1st Place: \$800 + Trophy
2nd Place: \$700 + Trophy
3rd Place: \$600 + Trophy
4th Place: \$500 + Trophy
5th Place: \$400 + Trophy
6th Place: \$300 + Trophy
7th Place: \$200 + Trophy
8th Place: \$100 + Trophy

Pork Ribs

1st Place: \$800 + Trophy
2nd Place: \$700 + Trophy
3rd Place: \$600 + Trophy
4th Place: \$500 + Trophy
5th Place: \$400 + Trophy
6th Place: \$300 + Trophy
7th Place: \$200 + Trophy
8th Place: \$100 + Trophy

Ancillary Contests

1st Place: \$100 + Trophy
(7 Food Categories)

4. PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

	<u>FRIDAY, APRIL 5TH</u>		<u>SATURDAY, April 6TH</u>
9:00am	Meet Inspections Begin	6:00am	Quiet Time Ends
4:00pm	Cooks' Meeting	8:00am	Judges Check-In
5:00pm	Load-In Period Ends	9:45-10:00am	Hog Turn-In
4:45-5:00pm	Sauce Turn-In	10:45-11:00am	Pulled Pork Turn-In
5:15-5:30pm	Beans Turn-In	11:45-12:00pm	Ribs Turn-In
5:45-6:00pm	Chicken Turn-In	1:00pm	Finals Judges on-site
6:15-6:30pm	Beef Turn-In	5:00pm	Award Ceremony
6:45-7:00pm	Anything Bacon Turn-In	6:00pm	Load Out
7:15-7:30pm	Bologna Turn-In		
7:45-8:00pm	Dessert Turn-In		

5. THE BASICS OF ALL MBN CONTESTS

MBN sanctioned contests offer three official pork categories: Whole Hog, Pulled Pork (pork butts or shoulders), and Pork Ribs. At the majority of MBN contests all three categories are offered and teams may enter as many or as few categories as they wish. For specialty contests

the contest organizer will supply teams with a list of rules for that contest; the rules required by the Memphis Barbecue Network (**version 01/15/19**) are the same for each sanctioned contest.

The contests will usually provide only a regulation space for teams to set up and cook in the event. Teams are required to provide all their own assistants, utensils, meat, sauce, charcoal, wood, cookers, tents, tables, chairs, disposable dinnerware, and/or anything else they may need to compete and serve their entries.

6. MEAT CATEGORY DEFINITIONS AND SUGGESTED AMOUNTS

Whole Hog

Whole hog entry is defined by the Memphis Barbecue Network as an entire hog, whose dressed weight is 85 pounds or more prior to the optional removal of the head, feet and skin, and the hog must be cooked as a complete unit on one grill surface. No portion of the whole hog may be separated or removed, and subsequently returned to the grill, prior to or during the cooking process except the feet, skin and/or head.

1 Whole Hog is sufficient per contest. It is the team's discretion whether to cook 1 or more hogs.

Pulled Pork

Pulled pork entry is defined by Memphis Barbecue Network as a portion of the hog which may contain the arm bone, hind leg bone, shank bone, portion of the blade bone or a pork collar. A whole shoulder, a picnic shoulder, a ham, a Boston Butt or a pork collar are all considered to be valid entries. The entry must be cooked as one whole unit. No portion of the pulled pork entry may be separated or removed, and returned to the grill, prior to or during the cooking process.

A minimum of 2 shoulders/Boston Butts and/or hind legs is enough per contest (one for the preliminary blind box and one for finals). It is up to the team whether you use all shoulders, Boston Butts, hind legs, or a combination if it meets the criteria described above.

Pork Rib

Pork rib entry is defined by Memphis Barbecue Network as the portion of the hog containing the ribs and further classified as a spare rib or loin rib portion. Country style ribs are not valid

The blind box must contain, at a minimum, 6 sections of ribs for 6 judges to sample the entry. All portions must fit inside the closed container provided and must be in serving size pieces since the judges will not have utensils to cut or divide the entry. No garnish of any kind is allowed in the blind box. You will also need additional portions to present to the judges if you make the finals round. However, no garnish is allowed on the grill. A minimum of 5 to 6 slabs are sufficient per contest.

Meat Handling/Cooking

Teams may cook with any type of wood and/or charcoal. Flammables such as propane, compressed or liquid gas may be used ONLY to START the INITIAL fire. Once the meat has been placed within the cooker no type of flammables may be used. To make additional coals, flammables may be used outside and away from the cooker. Local fire and safety laws may dictate whether the use of any type of gas will be allowed.

Electrical devices that do not generate heat such as rotisseries, fans, and delivery systems for approved fuels (e.g., Pellet grills) may be used within the cooker. Electric smokers, holding ovens or other devices with heat producing electrical coils are not allowed. Microwaves may be used to warm/heat sauces, but not to cook, warm, or reheat meat.

Meat for the contest may be **UNCURED FRESH OR FROZEN** pork meat. Prior to the official meat inspection, the pork for the contest may not be pre-cooked, sauced, spiced, injected, marinated, or cured in any way, or otherwise pre-treated. Each team should prepare and cook their own meat on their own cookers on site. Any team who turns in sample meat that is not prepared and cooked on site will be disqualified from the contest.

Each team is responsible for maintaining the meat at a temperature below 40 degrees Fahrenheit prior to cooking, and at or above 145 degrees Fahrenheit after cooking. They must exercise good hygienic practices.

Date and time of Cooks' Meeting is Friday, April 5th at 4:00pm. It is the team's responsibility to have a team member at the cook's briefing. Any announcements or changes to the contest (if necessary) made at the cook's briefing will take precedence.

MBN JUDGING MEMPHIS STYLE BARBECUE CONTESTS

Memphis Barbecue Network contests consists of two rounds of judging (blind preliminary and on-site finals) depending on how well a BBQ team competing scores in relation to scores from other teams in the same category.

The preliminary round consists of blind judging that identifies which teams in each category will move to the finals round for on-site only judging. Preliminary rounds are judged by category. The final's competitors will be judged with all categories being judged collectively.

STANDARD JUDGING TIMELINE

Hog	10:00am (Turn in 9:45am-10:00am)
Pulled Pork	11:00am (Turn in 10:45am-11:00am)
Rib	12:00pm (Turn in 11:45am-12:00pm)
On-Site Finals	1:00pm Finals Judges on site

JUDGING CRITERIA

MBN has six judging criteria.

- ❖ Area and Personal Appearance (on site finals only)
- ❖ Presentation (on site finals only)
- ❖ Appearance of Entry
- ❖ Tenderness of Entry
- ❖ Flavor of the Entry
- ❖ Overall Impression

1. Area and Person Appearance (on site finals only)

This refers to the appearance of the team area and members of the presentation team. Finals judges are not to score on dollars spent on the area or table setting, the "rig", clothing, etc., but rather the area you are charged with judging is clean and organized. Each member of the presentation team should be clean and wear clean, neat clothing.

The area should have all trash picked up, extra supplies organized neatly, and trash cans clear from the area or covered. Anyone that is not a part of the presentation team should not be in the judging area. Any other little touches that you feel will add to the appearance of your team or area is acceptable.

2. Presentation (on site finals only)

This refers to the verbal introduction of and information about the team, area, grill and the entry. Finals judges are instructed to score you on the introduction of your team, information about your cooker, what you do to prepare the meat before you put it on, how long you cook it and at what temperature, and what you do to the entry while it is cooking.

At this time, you should show the judge the meat on the cooker. The meat should be in a whole state before it is chopped, pulled, or sliced.

Remember, this is the first time the judge will see your product and will also be scoring for appearance. No garnish on the grill will be permitted. With that done, it is normally time to escort the judge to the table to discuss any sauce(s) you might offer. During this time, a

team member should be getting the entry ready for the judge. All items utilized by finals judges during onsite presentation must be disposable in nature.

3. Appearance of Entry

This refers to aesthetics; does the entry itself look appetizing in the container (or on the grill and at the table). This is the visual appeal of the entry itself. No garnishes of any kind are allowed in a team's blind turn in box. This is to keep judges from being able to identify a particular team's entry. Arrangements that can be identified as to a particular team will be marked down during preliminary judging.

The judges will be informed of the possibility of a smoke ring or red layer on the top surface of the meat entry, or throughout the entry.

Judges are instructed to score the appearance of the entry in the blind container during blind judging or on the serving plate in on-site finals. They will ask themselves – "Does this entry look appealing and appetizing?"

4. Tenderness of Entry

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 tender (just right) to mushy (cooked past tender). There should be some texture, but the entry should be moist and easy to chew.

5. Flavor of the Entry

This refers to the flavor of the meat sample 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. Then the flavor score is based on the combination of the sauce chosen and how it complements that entry. Only two (2) containers of sauce may accompany your blind entry.

It is possible for a team to have a great entry and get a poor score because of their sauce. Remember, the sauce should complement the meat entry, not cover it up.

6. Overall Impression

Overall impression is a subjective score based on the judge's opinion of the total experience of judging the team's entry and is not an average of the other scores. Judges will be reflecting on their general overall feeling of their judging experience when they have finished judging all samples at the blind table.

This is the only criterion where the preliminary judges can use a decimal in their score. This is the area where factors can be taken into consideration that have an effect on the judge's decision, but the judge does not feel the team rates a whole number score lower than another team in the same criterion. The judge can deduct a tenth or two or three here without costing the team a whole point or more.

Finals judges are instructed not to judge dollars spent, trophies displayed, size of the cooker or anything else not designated as a judging criterion on the scorecard.

7. Preliminary Judging

Preliminary judging is the judging of all teams and all entries in the contest. Teams are judged one meat category at a time, using blind judging. The purpose of the preliminary round is to identify the top three entries in each meat category and to rank the rest of the entries. The top three entries in each meat category will advance to the final round of on-site judging.

The contest officials have invited and selected judges to judge the contest. Contests are using Memphis Barbecue Network “trained” and/or “certified” judges.

Each team will deliver the provided blind container with their entry to the designated blind drop off area, specified by the contest at the cooks meeting, during the turn in time period. Entries delivered late to the check in area will be disqualified by the MBN reps for the contest.

8. Blind Judging

During the cook’s meeting, teams will be informed about how they will get their containers for their blind sample, where, and at what time they will turn them in. The MBN reps are responsible for getting containers to the teams. Contests require that teams deliver their blind sample to the judging area or a specified check in area. You should have enough team members to accomplish this task.

Teams are required to have their sample at the specified area, at a certain time, within a 15-minute window. The sample must be delivered during this 15-minute window. Please refer to standard judging timeline for times. If your sample is late, it will not be accepted at the check in table and will be disqualified by the MBN Contest Rep.

When a container arrives at the judging area, the label will be removed, and a code number assigned by the judging program will be written on the meat and sauce containers. When the judges get the sample, it will be in a container just like everyone else’s, with only a code number on it. The order that samples are received has no bearing on any team’s table placement.

The judges do not know what number any team is assigned before, during or after judging. The code numbers and corresponding team names are not published or divulged to anyone at any time.

Once all the scores from the blind judging in each category are entered into the judging program and tabulated, the top three teams advancing to the final round of onsite judging will be notified.

9. Finals Judging

The final round judging is operated as a completely new contest with nine separate entries: three whole hog, three pulled pork and three rib teams. All judging in the final round is on-site. Final judges are escorted by a contest official that will monitor the time they spend with each team. No scores from the preliminary round are carried over to the finals round of judging.

There will be four finals judges traveling in a group, judging all nine entries. They are responsible for ranking the nine teams without regard to meat category and identifying the Contest Champion. The Grand Champion of the MBN contest will be the team receiving the highest total points in any single meat category in the Championship round of judging.

They will judge the meat categories in the same order as the preliminary judging round. When the teams are notified that they are in the finals, they are told what time the final judges will arrive and be provided place mats that must be used during your final’s presentation. All items utilized by final judges must be disposable. Teams will be notified if there is a change in the schedule.

If there is a chance for an early arrival, teams will be asked if they can take the judges earlier. A team is not obligated to do this and will not be marked down if they cannot take the judges earlier than originally scheduled.

Each team will be judged independently even though the judges are traveling in a group.

Final judges are not announced prior to judging, and teams do not have the right of refusal of a finals judge prior to finals.

If a team is in the final round in more than one meat category, the judges will visit that team area once for each category. Teams cannot serve judges more than one meat category during a visit. Teams will make their complete presentation each time. A team's preparation and cooking methods would not be the same for each category.

The final judges will spend a maximum of 15 minutes with each team in each category. Teams will be presenting and feeding four people, the presentation must still fit the 15-minute limit.

7. ANCILLARY CONTESTS

Ancillary Contests will be held in seven (7) categories: Sauce, Beans, Chicken, Beef, Anything Bacon, Bologna, and Dessert. Each team may enter a maximum of TWO entries per category, therefore each team may submit up to seven (14) total Ancillary entries.

- ❖ Sauce entries should be a barbecue sauce (tomato base, vinegar base, mustard base, etc.) and will be judged based on flavor, spice compatibility, aroma, and overall impression. Must be presented in the provided container.
- ❖ Poultry entries may include any whole or portion of domestic chicken, prepared as the team sees fit.
- ❖ Beef entries may include any portion of domestic beef cattle, prepared as the team sees fit.
- ❖ Anything Bacon must have bacon as the main meat.
- ❖ Bologna entries may include any whole or portion of beef or pork bologna, prepared as the team sees fit.
- ❖ Dessert entries are not to be store-bought items and may be cooked or prepared offsite.

Ancillary entries may have bacon in the dish (i.e.: bacon wrapped) but should be used as an accent to the dish, not the main ingredient other than Anything Bacon.

Ancillary items may be presented in the team's own containers, unless otherwise stated. It is the team's responsibility to return to the judging area to pick up their personal containers. Personal containers may not be picked up while judging is taking place. The Town of Atoka, nor the Memphis Barbeque Network are responsible for lost or damaged presentation dishes. Entries should not be presented in logoed or marked containers, logoed or marked containers will be disqualified.

All cooked entries should be prepared on the contest site (except for dessert), although the team may marinate or season the entry off-site. No inspection of the entry is necessary prior to judging. Each team is responsible for observing prudent temperature control and good hygienic practices, bearing in mind that an internal meat temperature of 137 degrees kills trichinosis, and 165 degrees kills salmonella.

All Ancillary entries will be judged blind with only one round of judging. One first place winner will be chosen from each of the seven (7) categories. Entries must be turned into the judging tent on Friday evening according to the following schedule:

4:45-5:00pm	Sauce Turn-In
5:15-5:30pm	Beans Turn-In
5:45-6:00pm	Chicken Turn-In

6:15-6:30pm	Beef Turn-In
6:45-7:00pm	Anything Bacon Turn-In
7:15-7:30pm	Bologna Turn-In
7:45-8:00pm	Dessert Turn-In

Judging will begin promptly upon receipt of entries. **Entries arriving after the designated time will not be accepted.** You are responsible for the on-time delivery of your blind judging sample. If you are in the check in line at the appointed time, your sample will be accepted. In addition, no sample will be judged prior to the turn-in time, therefore, samples that are submitted in advance of the turn-in deadline will be held until judging begins.

8. AWARDS CEREMONY

Winners in all contests and categories will be announced at an awards ceremony held on Saturday, April 6th. The awards ceremony will begin at approximately 5:00pm.

No live bands or entertainment will be allowed in individual cooking areas. Playing music on your site is allowed, but it should be limited to your immediate team area. No amplified music or sounds should be projected out of the team area. Music is scheduled in the evening on Friday, take advantage of the music that is provided. There will be absolutely no entertainment or loud music allowed during the judging which starts at 10:00am on Saturday. QUIET TIME IS 11:00PM FRIDAY TIL 6:00 AM SATURDAY, NO EXCEPTIONS.

9. PARTICIPANT GUIDELINES FOR FIRE AND SAFETY

To reasonably protect the safety of first responders, contestants and the public, the following are rules and regulations applicable to the Atoka BBQ cooking contest. These requirements are based upon current fire codes, and requirements of similar events.

Inspection of cookers, tents, and related components, as well as decorative and other materials, will be inspected by a fire department representative on the day of set up and prior to any cooking operations. A permit will be provided to the participant for the assigned location.

Fire & Safety Rules and Regulations

1. Tents and awnings used near cooking operations must be flame retardant. Flame retardant certificate must be attached to the tent or on the site.
2. No hay, straw or bamboo allowed within 20 feet of a tent or cooking site. Dirt and sand may be used to fill voids or ruts.
3. The use of candles or open flames is strictly prohibited in or near tents or awnings. Coleman type lanterns and stoves are permitted. Due to large crowds, including a lot of children and the close proximity, recreational and homemade fire pits must be covered with screens (spark arresters) to reduce flying embers.
4. All cooking operations shall have a minimum of one (1) fire extinguisher with a minimum 2A:10BC rating on site before any cooking fire is started. Extinguisher must be in good condition, properly tagged by a certifying agency, or have been purchased within the last year and receipt must be available for review by the fire code official.
5. No open flame cooking will be allowed near combustibles. Ashes must be disposed of properly and in a non-combustible container, away from or protected from other combustible material. Trash containers shall be emptied when full.
6. Wood chips are to be used only in cooking operations; and they shall be stored away from any heat source. Wood chips are not to be spread on the ground in any manner. Sand may be used in wet areas. Wood, charcoal bags, plastic wood chip bags, etc. shall not be stored near cookers or other heat producing devices.
7. Fire lanes and emergency access shall always be maintained.

8. Open flame or other devices emitting flame, fire, or heat or any flammable or combustible liquids, gas, charcoal or other cooking device or any other unapproved devices shall not be permitted inside or located within 20 feet of the tent, canopy, or membrane structure while open to the public unless approved by the fire code official.

Special Rules on Use of Propane

Fire Department policy will allow participants to use one (1) 20-pound bottle of propane for cooking purposes. The bottle must be secured and located no closer than 10 feet between the cooking unit and the propane bottle. All propane bottles must be D.O.T. approved for propane use and be equipped with a U.L. approved safety relief valve, a hose in good condition, and proper connections. Participants may have one (1) 20-pound bottle on the site to use as a spare, provided it is secured and located away from any heating unit or open flame. This policy applies only to barbecue contestants and will not subject vendors to any specific amount of propane bottles for their use provided the bottles are secured and used with reasonable care and a part of the normal operation of the vendors business.

Thank you for your cooperation. If you have any questions regarding this matter, you may contact Lieutenant Bill Scott, Fire Inspector at 901.331.2099.

10. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Ancillary contests, MBN sanctioned contest, and any other competitions created by the Atoka BBQ Fest are separate contests and will be judged as such. Cash prizes and trophies will be awarded for Ancillary contests and the MBN sanctions contest as described in this document. All winners will be announced at the awards ceremony on Saturday evening. Decisions of the Contest Staff, MBN Judges, and Ancillary Judges are final. Contestant's scores will be made available to all competitors immediately after awards. Scores not picked up may be requested from Dorothy Isbell. Violation of the Rules and Regulations of the Contest may result in disqualification, expulsion from the grounds and/or disqualification from future participation. Be sure to READ and KEEP these rules for future reference. If you have questions, need to make advance arrangements or if you have been accepted and for any reason cannot attend, please contact Dorothy Isbell at disbell@townofatoka.com or 901-837-5306.

11. RELEASE AND INDEMNITY

In consideration of the granting of the right to participate, entrants, participants and spectators, by execution of this form, release the Town of Atoka, Town of Atoka staff, Board of Mayor and Aldermen, and any representative or workers, or property owners, or occupiers, or sponsors connected with the presentation of the Atoka BBQ Fest of and from any claims, injuries, losses, damages or judgments that may be suffered by the entrant, participant, or spectator to his person or property and agree to indemnify the aforesaid parties any loss, liability, expenses, or payment resulting from any such injury to person or property.