

# MWBA COMPETITION INSTRUCTIONS FOR JUDGES

## JUDGES MISSION

To evaluate today's foods, demonstrating objectivity and integrity in your judging, to the best of your ability.

To adhere to all of the requirements set forth in the MWBA judging guidelines.

To ensure that your efforts here today result in the official recognition of the best competition food entries.

Judging is very serious to the contestants! They have dedicated a lot of time and money to compete in this event.

They deserve the best independent and impartial judging we can provide them, based upon MWBA cooking and judging guidelines.

## JUDGE CONDUCT

JUDGE REQUIREMENTS	<p>Must be at least 16 years of age</p> <p>Must be willing to dedicate the time needed for the entire judging process</p> <p>Must be willing and able (no food allergies) to sample all of today's competition categories</p> <p>Must be willing to abide by the MWBA rules of conduct</p> <p>If you do not meet these requirements, excuse yourself as a judge now. Please offer to help out the competition in another capacity</p>
Where to go	<p>If you wander through the venue prior to the judges meeting, do not enter a cook site without invitation; if a cook is working on a presentation box or prepping their meat, do not watch... continue on.</p> <p>After the judges meeting, do not visit contestant cooking area, sample meats, or socialize with any of the cooks until the contest is finished.</p> <p>Between categories, stay near the judging area.</p>
Food/Drink (before and between categories)	<p>Drink only water – alcoholic beverages, coffee, pop, etc., can affect your taste.</p> <p>While judging, eat only unsalted-top crackers to cleanse your palate.</p> <p>Skip the large breakfast on judging day; come hungry. Bring a cooler for your leftovers.</p>
Not allowed at any time	<p>Smoking in the judging area.</p> <p>Consumption of alcoholic beverages or use of controlled substances.</p> <p>Alcohol infractions are grounds for immediate JUDGE disqualification – you will be replaced.</p>

## Judging Method

MWBA judging uses a double-blind judging system facilitated by bar code markings.

The entries are given ID numbers as they are entered into the computer at the turn-in table; the numbers have no correlation to the contestants' identities.

- Each entry is evaluated by a table of six judges; each table will generally judge between 4 and 8 entries per category.
- Entries are not compared or ranked against each other.
- Meat category turn-ins are usually 1 hour apart. Judging time usually takes about 1/2 hour per category

## SCORING

- For every entry, judges provide three element scores (whole-number) using the 10-to-2 rating scale.
- Entries are not compared or ranked against each other. Taste and score each submittal on its own merit, as if it was today's only entry!
- The entire range of number scores is available for each entry. It's OK to have more than one entry with a score of 10 (or any other number). Don't save up your 10's.
- Each element of an entry is evaluated separately, independent of the other element scores.

## SCORING RANGE

		<----->								
		Better			Average			Worse		
SCORE:		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Means:		Outstanding	Great	Good	Slightly Above Average	Average OK	Slightly Below Average	Faulted	Awful inedible	Technical DQ***

\*\*\* Given only by Head Judge Ruling

## THREE ELEMENTS OF EVALUATION

APPEARANCE	Evaluating eye-appeal components of color, arrangement, slice/trim, moist appearance, etc., and adherence to MWBA rules of entire meat presentation.
TENDERNESS/ TEXTURE	Evaluating meat's texture, based on judge's sample bites, to reflect tender, chewy, tough, moist, dry, mushy, etc.
TASTE	Evaluating overall flavor of entry, based on judge's sample bites, to reflect pleasant taste, balance of meat/smoke/seasonings, etc., or taste faults (salty, burned, creosote, etc.) Each element of an entry is evaluated separately, independent of the other element scores.

## ENTRY PRESENTATION

REQUIRED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Competitive food entries must be submitted in event-supplied presentation containers unless otherwise stipulated.</li><li>• Minimum of six, separate, identifiable food portions MUST be submitted.</li></ul> All portions must be visible when the box is opened for appearance scoring. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In the case of pulled or chopped meat, there needs to be a sufficient amount for each judge to take a sample.</li><li>• Teams can submit more than the minimum six portions. (Extra meat can cover portion shortage due to incomplete slicing, etc., and provides food for event staff – table captains, volunteers, etc.).</li><li>• Meat can be presented in more than one style (judges will evaluate no more than three styles, then average scores).</li></ul>
NOT ALLOWED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Containers of sauce or pooling (sauce flows from meat on to garnish or into bottom of box, or sits in pools on top of the meat), or sauce poured, squirted or squiggled onto meat to create a pattern. Sauce submitted must be attached to meat.</li><li>• Marking or sculpting of food that could identify the cook/team.</li><li>• Identifying or distinguishing marks placed in or on the container by contestant.</li></ul>
SPECIAL CATEGORIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specific presentation requirements – including container and garnish – for special categories (not traditional pork butt, brisket, chicken or ribs) will be outlined at the Cook’s Meeting for that event. Prior to the cook-off, information is also available on the website/flyer</li><li>• NOT ALLOWED: Entries must never include servings of alcohol, fire elements, live animals or other objectionable/dangerous items.</li></ul> Read the event flyer for specific information regarding this event. The Head Judge will ultimately decide if an entry will be allowed.

## GARNISH

GENERALLY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Garnish is optional.</li><li>• Garnish must not extend beyond edges of box.</li></ul>
ALLOWED IN CONTAINER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Leaves of the following lettuce: green leaf, butter, romaine, iceberg, Kale</li><li>• Flat leaf (Italian) parsley or common curly parsley</li></ul>
NOT ALLOWED IN CONTAINER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cabbage, endive, red-tipped lettuce, or any other leafy greens</li><li>• Cilantro, dill weed, thyme, rosemary, sage, or any other herbs</li><li>• Flowers, decorative leaves, sliced/carved vegetables or fruit, or other vegetative miscellany</li><li>• Toothpicks, skewers, foil, brush bristles, or other foreign non-food materials</li></ul> Entries not complying with these requirements for meat, garnish or foreign objects will result in the Head Judge directing all six judges to give a DQ score of “1” for appearance.

**COMPETITION MEATS**

**REGULAR  
COMPETITION  
(overnight)**

Traditional Meats	Allowed	Presentation		
		Whole	Sliced	Chop/Pull
Pork Butt	Boston butt, picnic or whole shoulder - uncooked weight of at least five pounds going into the pit. Must be cooked in its entirety – bone in or bone out – and may not be parted out during cooking.		X	X
Beef Brisket	Whole or flats of any size; no corned beef.		X	X
Chicken	Cut-up whole, mixed assortment or all the same pieces, Cornish game hen halves or parts	X	X	
Pork Ribs	Spare / side ribs or baby back / loin ribs (not “country-style”)		X	

**LITE  
COMPETITION  
(one-day)**

Presented in  
MWBA-provided  
9”x9” display box

OPTIONAL MEATS	ALLOWED	Presentation		
		Whole	Sliced	Chop/Pull
Beef Tri-tip	Whole		X	
Salmon Fish	Can be submitted as single uncut slab or cut into a minimum of 6 pieces	X	X	
Sausage	Links or sausage patties, individual cooked pieces or larger pieces sliced.	X	X	
Competition meat, other	Prior to the cook-off, information is available on the website/flyer. Criteria will be also announced at Cooks meeting		X	

**SPECIAL  
CATEGORIES**

Criteria for presentation and evaluation of special category entries, on the website/flyer. as well as container and garnish requirements, will be provided during the cooks meeting, and will be presented to the judges for their use in evaluating the entries. Prior to the cook-off, information is also available

## JUDGING PROCEDURE

- After bringing entries to table area, the Table Captain will tell you their box numbers; write them in the squares on your judging sheet.
- First, the Table Captain will present an entry box for the judges' appearance scores. When judging appearance, remember to focus on the meat, not the garnish. Mark your appearance score on your judging sheet.
- Second, the Table Captain will present the entry box for you to take a sample. Using the tongs, place your selection on your judging plate. Do not take the display piece, if one is included, or extra helpings from the entry boxes. Pass the tongs along to the next judge.
- Third, sample the entry and mark your scores for Tenderness/Texture and Taste. Place your leftover meat into the zip lock bag, then double-check that you have circled all three scores before the next entry is presented.
- This process repeats until all entries at your table have been judged. After giving your score sheet a final review for completeness, hand it to the Table Captain.
- If you fail to abide by any of these judging guidelines, the Head Judge may choose to remove you from further judging.

## JUDGES INSTRUCTIONS

GENERAL	<p>Take your time! There is adequate time between the presentation of entry categories for you to carefully evaluate each sample.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take only 1 or 2 bites of each sample. Do not overeat during the judging.</li><li>• When marking your score sheets, please write legibly, be sure the box numbers are accurate, and circle your scores clearly.</li><li>• If you pick up a piece of meat and there are two or more pieces stuck together, do not shake, pull, or cut the pieces loose. Bring this to the attention of the Table Captain or Head Judge. If there is not enough product for each judge to receive a separate sample, the Head Judge will instruct the table how to score the entry.</li><li>• Score carefully! Once marked, scores cannot be changed unless directed by Head Judge due to a rules infraction. If you mark in an incorrect area, immediately bring this to attention of Table Captain, and the Head Judge will direct you what to do.</li></ul>
TO THE TABLE	<p>Be seated at correct time – 10 minutes before the hour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No sitting at same table as spouse/significant other/close friend.</li><li>• Turn off all electronics – cell phones, pagers, iPods, etc..</li><li>• Discontinue chatting with visitors (visitors are not allowed in the judging area).</li></ul>
AT THE TABLE	<p>Take score sheet from judging kit; check correct category or "Other" and write in category at top.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At the bottom, write your name, the event and year, your judge number, and the table number.</li><li>• Use the table's felt tip pen to put your name on your water bottle and zip lock leftovers bag.</li></ul>
DURING JUDGING	<p>No talking allowed; maintain neutral body language, facial expression.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No comparing entries.</li><li>• Circle each score as you judge the sample; double-check your marks frequently.</li><li>• Try to keep your score sheets free of excessive grease, sauce, etc.</li><li>• If you have questions about an entry or believe you see something that might be a disqualification, immediately bring it to the attention of the Table Captain discretely/quietly.</li><li>• In any question regarding an entry, the Head Judge is the final decision-maker.</li></ul>

AFTER JUDGING	<p>Between categories, clean your area of trash; help set up table for next category.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking may resume quietly after the scoring sheets are collected.</li> </ul> <p>Be considerate of judges and tables around you who have not yet finished judging their entries.</p>
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#### COMMENT CARDS

Comment cards are utilized at selected events to provide feedback to cooks.

Cards allow judges to explain the basis of their scores, and enable them to discuss just-scored entries with others at table after score cards have been collected.

The cards are provided to the cooks along with the contest report print-out at the end of the event.

PROCEDURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy box numbers and scores from scorecard to Comment Card.</li> <li>• Complete a card for EACH entry; provide comments for ALL Appearance, Texture &amp; Taste.</li> <li>• After last entry, review cards for completeness before handing score card to table captain.</li> <li>• Comment Cards are collected before judges leave the table.</li> </ul>
REMEMBER	<p>Comments can be very brief; at a minimum, mention your most notable observation..</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide specific feedback, i.e., “Great balanced flavor”, not “Wow” or “Nice”.</li> <li>• Comments need not be unique: “Nicely arranged” may apply to several entries.</li> </ul>