

Champions Barbecue Alliance (CBA)

4211 Sundance Circle, Weslaco, Texas 78599 • 956-472-8828 • www.cbabbq.com

Promoter Handbook

1. Introduction

Competitive barbecue has grown rapidly over the past decade, fueled by television exposure, cooking classes, and a growing community of passionate pitmasters. As interest increases, well-run cookoffs are more important than ever. A successful event depends on thoughtful planning, clear communication, and a positive experience for cooking teams, judges, sponsors, and the public.

The Champions Barbecue Alliance (CBA) exists to support promoters at every stage of their event. From date selection and logistics to judging and awards, CBA provides guidance, structure, and a proven scoring system to ensure fairness and consistency.

2. Why Sanction With CBA

Sanctioning with CBA provides significant benefits to promoters and cooking teams:

- A modern, transparent scoring system
- Fair and consistent judging across all categories
- Valuable feedback for cooking teams
- Experienced event representatives and area ambassadors
- Promotion through CBA's website and social media

3. CBA Membership & Team Outreach

CBA maintains an active and engaged network of competitive barbecue teams across Texas and beyond. Through social media, direct communication, and event visibility, CBA helps promote your cookoff to hundreds of potential teams, increasing participation and long-term growth.

4. Event Planning Basics

4.1 Choosing a Date

Select a date carefully to avoid conflicts with:

- Other barbecue competitions
- Local festivals or major community events
- Holidays, school breaks, or major sporting events

Consult a CBA Area Ambassador for guidance on scheduling to maximize turnout.

4.2 Selecting a Site

When choosing a venue, consider:

- Adequate space for teams, judges, and spectators
- Pavement preferred (concrete or asphalt) for weather reliability
- Drainage, dust control, and accessibility
- Parking availability

4.3 Charity Tie-Ins

CBA encourages partnering with a charity. Charity involvement can:

- Attract sponsors
- Increase media exposure
- Help secure venues
- Boost public attendance

5. Sponsorships & Entry Fees

5.1 Sponsors

Sponsors help offset event costs and increase prize payouts. Area Ambassadors can assist in developing a sponsorship plan to maximize profitability.

5.2 Entry Fees

Promoters set all entry fees. In general:

- Higher entry fees often allow for higher payouts
- Teams are typically comfortable paying more when payouts are competitive

6. Competition Categories

6.1 CBA Standard Categories

- Chicken
- Pork Ribs (Spare or Baby Back)
- Pork
- Brisket

6.2 CBA Future of BBQ (Youth Categories)

CBA proudly supports the future of competitive barbecue by offering youth cooking categories designed to encourage learning, sportsmanship, and confidence in young cooks.

Youth categories are divided into two age brackets:

- Junior Division: Ages 6–11
- Senior Division: Ages 12–17

Youth competitors will cook one (1) protein, determined by the promoter:

- Steak
- Pork Chop
- Chicken Wings

6.3 Jackpot / Optional Categories

Examples include:

- Beans
- Fajitas
- Dessert
- Pan de Campo
- Chef's Choice

7. Communication & Cook Information

7.1 Event Information

Provide clear, accessible information such as:

- Directions and maps
- Entry and setup times
- Site layout and gate access

7.2 Event Contact Person

Designate a knowledgeable contact person to handle inquiries including:

- Directions and site access
- Site size and layout
- Setup times
- Water and electricity availability
- Overnight stays
- Jackpot categories
- Head Cook Meeting details
- Assigned CBA Event Representative

8. Promotion & Logistics

Recommended promotional efforts include:

- Visiting other cookoffs to distribute flyers
- Emailing or mailing entry forms
- Posting flyers in local businesses
- Utilizing radio and TV public service announcements
- Ordering trophies or certificates
- Recruiting taste judges well in advance

9. Event Site Checklist

Ensure the following are in place:

- Clearly defined cook sites
- Central check-in area
- Public address (P.A.) system
- Designated judging area
- Tables and chairs for judging
- Concessions and vendors
- Security
- Adequate parking
- Portable restrooms and handwashing stations
- Grease, ash, and trash disposal
- Lighting for evening hours
- Fire extinguishers and emergency services coordination
- Electrical access for officials and judging area
- Media access and signage

10. Event Flyer Requirements

All flyers must be approved by a CBA Area Ambassador before distribution.

Flyers must include:

- Event name
- Date and location
- Contact information
- Competition categories
- Entry fees
- Prize payouts

- Setup times
- Meat inspection notice
- CBA logo
- Turn-in times
- Water and electricity availability
- Additional activities (vendors, music, etc.)

11. Taste Judges

11.1 Recruiting Judges

Recruit taste judges early using social media, phone calls, and local outreach. Judging recruitment is the sole responsibility of the promoter.

11.2 Judging Area Preparation

Provide the following:

- Plastic utensils (bulk only)
- Napkins or paper towels
- Bottled water
- Palate cleansers (saltines, pickle slices)
- Trash cans and liners
- Electricity
- Helpers for table monitoring and cleanup

12. Responsibilities

12.1 Event Promoter Responsibilities

- Recruit qualified taste judges (minimum age 16)
- Ensure head cooks do not judge
- Provide judging supplies
- Arrange tables, chairs, and helpers
- Provide a sound system
- Provide meals for CBA staff (non-BBQ preferred)
- Cover CBA Event Representative expenses
- Manage leftover food and waste disposal

12.2 CBA Responsibilities

- Provide Area Ambassadors

- Assign a CBA Event Representative
- Conduct Head Cook Meeting
- Supply turn-in containers
- Instruct judges
- Tabulate scores and announce winners

13. Expenses Overview

Required costs commonly include:

- Annual sanctioning fee: \$75
- Per-team fee: \$5
- Event Representative fees and travel
- Judging supplies and setup
- Awards and prize payouts

14. Final Notes

CBA Area Ambassadors and Event Representatives are your partners throughout the process. Lean on their experience and guidance to ensure a professional, smooth, and successful barbecue competition.