

Mid Atlantic Barbecue Association
Rules for Backyard Division Contest Participants
in effect for all MABA sanctioned contests on or after
XXXX x, 2007

1. **CONTESTANT** - A contestant is any individual, group, restaurant, etc. hereinafter referred to as a team that will prepare and cook an entry or entries for the purpose of being judged in a Backyard Division contest following modified MABA rules as defined herein by MABA. Each team will be comprised of a head cook and as many assistants as required. The contest organizer may not cook in any category in that contest. Neither a family member of a competing cook team nor any cook team member of that cook team may enter the judging area at any time during the contest.
2. **INTERPRETATION of RULES** - The interpretation of the MABA rules and regulations are those of the MABA Representative at the contest and his or her decisions are final. The MABA Representative may not deviate from nor change any MABA rule for any contest for any reason.
3. **EQUIPMENT** - Each team will supply all of the equipment necessary for the preparation and cooking of their entry including a cooker and fuel. No team may share a cooker or grill with any other team.
4. **MEAT INSPECTION** - All meats must be USDA inspected and passed. Official meat inspectors will look for a USDA stamp or sticker which must be visible on meat or package prior to opening. No pre-seasoning, injecting, marinating or cooking of any entry is permitted until after inspection by the Official Meat Inspector as appointed by the MABA Representative or the contest organizer. Meat inspection may begin at any time after the contestants arrive. All meat must be maintained at a maximum temperature of 40 degrees F prior to inspection. Prior to cooking, all meat that is resting in preparation for cooking must be covered at all times. All meats must be cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 145 degrees F. After cooking, all meat must be maintained at a minimum temperature of 140 degrees F in a covered container until turned in for judging. All contest meat, once inspected, may not leave the cook team's site until turn in.
5. **COOKING FUELS** - Approved cooking fuels include wood, charcoal, wood pellets, or propane. Electrical heating element may be used only to start the initial fire or to start burn barrels, charcoal chimneys, etc. An electrical heating element may not enter the cooker after the initial fire is started. Gas bottles must be disconnected from the cooker once the cooking is completed. Electrical heating elements may not be used as any part of the cooking process.
6. **APPROVED COOKERS** - Any cooker, homemade or commercially manufactured, will be allowed to compete in a Backyard Division MABA contests. Only wood, charcoal, wood pellets or propane fueled cookers are permitted. Electric or hand operated rotisseries or rotating shelves are allowed.

7. **CONTESTANT’S SITE** - Each Backyard Division team will be assigned a cook site. All equipment including cooker, canopy, trailer, etc. must be contained within this space. If additional space is required the team should contact the contest organizer and make satisfactory arrangements. Sites may or may not have electrical hookups. Contest organizers will identify if electricity is available for Backyard Division cookers.

8. **BEHAVIOR** - Every team, including members and guests, are expected and required to exhibit proper and courteous behavior at all times. Failure to do so may result in disqualification or expulsion from the contest. Repeat offenders will be barred from competing in MABA sanctioned contests. No alcoholic beverages will be distributed to the General Public at any time. Contest organizers will inform teams of all local laws and teams will adhere to them, or risk disqualification.

9. **CLEANLINESS AND SANITATION** - All teams are expected to maintain their cook sites in an orderly and clean manner and to use good sanitary practices during the preparation, cooking, and judging process. The use of sanitary gloves is required at all times while handling raw meats. Failure to use sanitary gloves may result in disqualification. Teams are responsible for cleanup of their site once the competition has ended. All federal, state and local food safety rules and regulations must be adhered to at all times.

10. **MEAT CATEGORIES** – Contest Organizers will verify Backyard Division categories for each contest. The following categories are typically sanctioned by the MABA as Backyard Division entrees:

- a. Sausage: link or patty, comprising of beef, veal, pork, poultry, and/or any other USDA recognized meat. No wild game, wild animal meat or game fish of any kind may be used. Meat packages must have USDA seal.
- b. Pork chops: may be bone in or boneless.
- c. Poultry: may be whole or diced (i.e.: like shish kabob), bone in or boneless, skin on or skin removed.
- d. Fish: may be whole or filleted, skin or skinless, bone in or boneless. No crustaceans, shellfish, or any meat from them may be allowed.
- e. Steak: beef. Unless a specific cut is identified by contest organizers (i.e.: rib eye, or T bone), any cut of beef may be entered. Entries must be whole, sliced, or cubed (i.e.: like shish kabob).

11. **JUDGING** – Bind judging only. Entries will be submitted in an approved container, with or without garnish. Garnish must include any form of lettuce only. No foreign material of any type, including foil, toothpicks or plastic entities may be allowed in the box. Marking of any kind will disqualify the entry. Each entry will be judged on **PRESENTATION, TASTE, and TENDERNESS**. Meat may be presented with or without sauce, with or without garnish. A minimum of 6 separate and identifiable portions, or enough for 6 portions, must be submitted.

12. **SCORING** – Each entry will be scored by 6 judges in the areas of **PRESENTATION**, **TASTE**, and **TENDERNESS**, following MABA judging procedures and scoring . Scoring ranges from a low of 2 to a high of 9 in increments of 1 point for each category. Using a weighted average, the maximum score for a category is 180 points. Any entry that is disqualified as per section 13 will receive a score of 1 from all six judges at that table.

A zero (0) will only be entered for a category that a team does not submit.

13. **DISQUALIFICATION** – An entry can be disqualified by the MABA Representative only. An entry can be disqualified for any of the following reasons:

- a) There is evidence of marking or sculpting. Marking is defined as: any handwritten, branded or mechanically made mark inside or outside the turn-in box. Sculpting is defined as: the carving, decorating, forming, or shaping of a meat entry contained in a turn-in box that identifies the submitting team to any judge.
- b) There is anything in the box besides the meat or approved garnish.
- c) There are not a minimum of 6 separate and identifiable pieces, or enough for 6 portions.
- d) There is evidence of blood such that the meat is uncooked.
- e) The entry is turned in after the officially designated time.
- f) Gloves are not used while handling food products.
- g) Not cooking pork as a single piece of meat.
- h) Cooking and or submitting of any illegal, or un-inspected meat.

14. **JUDGING PROCEDURE** – The table captain brings all the boxes to the table. He or she announces the number of the box to be judged, opens that box and checks for rules violations such as marking, insufficient number of samples, etc. All judges score this box for presentation. Each judge then takes a sample and scores this box for taste and tenderness. The table captain makes sure that all scores for that box are recorded before moving on to the next box. This procedure is repeated for boxes 2 through 6. After all the boxes have been scored the table captain will return the boxes to a designated area. The table captain will then collect the judging slips and turn them over to the MABA representative.

15. **WINNERS** - The winners in each meat category will be determined by adding all the scores together and the team with the most points will be 1st. place, the team with the next highest total will be 2nd. place, etc. The **GRAND CHAMPION** will be the team with the most total points, and the **RESERVE CHAMPION** will be the team with the second highest total points. To qualify for either **GRAND CHAMPION** or **RESERVE CHAMPION** a team must submit entries in all four sanctioned categories. Ties in any meat category, grand or reserve champion are allowed. In the event of a tie.....
The results of an MABA sanctioned contest are considered to be certified at midnight local time after the completion of the contest.

16. **TURN IN TIMES** – Contest organizers shall identify category turn in times for each meat category. Turn in time will allow for a 10 minute window, that is 5 minutes before

and 5 minutes after the announced time. Meat turn in times as posted by the contest organizer, either in the application form or the confirmation notice, are final and cannot be changed.