

USA's 2025 BBQ Bash & Competition: Official Competition Rules



This document outlines the official rules for the 2025 BBQ Bash & Competition, to be held on Saturday, June 14, 2025. This event is sponsored by the Union Sportsmen's Alliance (USA). Rules are subject to change.

Contest Entry

Teams are required to register online at <https://bit.ly/USA-BBQ>, and pay the \$5,000 team registration fee via credit card online (<https://buy.stripe.com/28o03L1kp8vk1mo288>) or check (made out to Union Sportsmen's Alliance, sent to Union Sportsmen's Alliance ATTN: USA BBQ Bash, 4800 Northfield Lane, Spring Hill, TN 37174). Teams will consist of one lead chef and no more than five (5) team members. Registration opens March 1, 2025 and closes May 15, 2025.

Teams may check into the BBQ Competition grounds (Torstenson Youth Conservation Education Center, 13735 Cook Rd, Pecatonica, IL 61063) beginning at 5:00pm Friday, June 13, 2025, and MUST be in place by 8:00pm. Team check-out ends at 9:00am Sunday, June 15, 2025.

Event Schedule

Event schedule is as follows:

Friday, June 13

- 5PM: Competition check-in, set-up
- 7PM: Team dinner, provided by USA and Event Sponsors

Saturday, June 14

- 8AM: Team breakfast, provided by USA and Event Sponsors
- 12PM: Event opens, DJ starts
- 12PM: Beer tent opens
- 1-5PM: Competition Food Served
- 2PM: Official BBQ Panel Judging
- 2-5PM: People's Choice Voting
- 5:30PM: Raffle drawings
- 6PM: BBQ award ceremony
- 6PM: Bar closes, event ends

Sunday, June 15

- 9AM: Competition clean-up, check-out

Equipment & Safety

Teams will be provided with a BBQ Pro Gift Package, which will include a large cooler full of fresh (unfrozen) meats, a large commemorative cutting board, several smaller plastic cutting boards, and a chef's knife. Plastic cutting boards are to be returned at the end of the event.

Each Team will supply their own equipment necessary for the preparation, cooking, and cleaning of their station, including smokers, cookers, marinades, rubs, seasonings, pans, trays, additional cutting boards and knives, utensils, sanitation gel, soaps, cleaning sponges, rags, etc.

Precautions must be made to prevent any fire threat. All teams must bring at least one fire extinguisher, which shall be ready and visible on site.

Informational Team Meeting

USA will host an informational team meeting via Zoom one week prior to the event. The final date/time of the Zoom meeting will be shared with teams in May. All team captains should plan to attend the informational meeting, and additional team members are encouraged to participate if schedules allow. During the meeting, teams will review the rules and receive a general overview of the event and competition.

Meat

Each Team will select two (2) preferred meats upon registration. Meat options include pork spare ribs, pork belly, pork shoulder, beef brisket, and beef short ribs. Teams will be provided with up to 100lbs of fresh (raw, unfrozen) meat and will be responsible for all preparation (marinades, etc.). All meat will be provided to each team upon check-in. Preferred meats cannot be guaranteed.

Cooks are to prepare and cook in as sanitary a manner as possible. Cooking conditions are subject to inspection throughout the event. Conditions found to be unsanitary will be grounds for disqualification.

Sides, Drinks, Theme

In addition to BBQ meat entries, Teams will be asked to serve a signature side dish and a signature cocktail from their tent. Teams will also be encouraged, though not required, to create a team theme, decorate their tent, and/or dress up to match their chosen theme. Teams will be judged by "people's choice" on these additional components and awards will be given to the best teams in each category.

BBQ Sites

Outdoor contest spaces of 20'x20' will be available for each team. USA will provide one 10'x10' tent and two 6-ft tables for use in distributing samples to event guests.

Teams are expected to maintain their cook sites in an orderly and cleanly manner throughout the preparation, cooking, and judging process. Teams are responsible for all cleanup of their site once the competition has ended. Cleaning can commence as early as 6:00PM on Saturday, June 14th and must be completed by 9:00AM on Sunday, June 15th.

Contest & Judging

The contest will be conducted on Saturday, June 14th at Torstenson Youth Conservation Education Center, 13735 Cook Rd, Pecatonica, IL 61063. Judging is open to all guests who attend the 2025 BBQ Bash & Competition, regardless of membership status or affiliation.

Entries for Best BBQ will be judged by a panel of judges, at 2:00PM. Each team shall present their BBQ meat entries to the panel of judges for tasting and deliberation. Judges will be made up of event guests and selected at random. Entries will be served unmarked for blind judging. Teams will be responsible for providing descriptions of the items served and providing necessary meal enhancements (buns, sides, sauces, etc.).

Entries for best booth, best side, and best signature cocktail will be judged by guests throughout the event. Contest entries can be presented at any time throughout the competition window (1-5PM). Judging for these categories will be done via a “people’s choice” popular vote managed by USA. Votes can be cast between 2PM – 5PM. All votes must be cast by 5PM on Saturday, June 14th to be considered. Votes will be cast electronically, through an online survey available to guests at a designated voting station. Only one vote will be allowed per person.

Prize Drawings

A random judges panel will determine the winner for Best BBQ. Guests will cast votes in three additional categories: Best Booth, Best Side, Best Booze.

At the conclusion of the judging period, results will be automatically generated via SurveyMonkey. The winning team in each category will receive the following prizes:

BEST BBQ:	TBD
BEST BOOTH:	TBD
BEST SIDE:	TBD
BEST BOOZE:	TBD

One prize will be awarded to each winning Team, regardless of the number of members on said Teams. All prizes will be distributed at the event; winners must be present to win.

Code of Conduct

Harassment is strictly prohibited at the USA BBQ Bash and will be enforced accordingly. If an individual engages in harassing behavior or any other disruption of the event, the event coordinators may take any action they deem appropriate, including warning the offender or expulsion from the competition/event with no refund.

This Code of Conduct applies to all Teams, attendees, volunteers, speakers, sponsors, and all other event participants.

Responsibility

The Lead Chef for each Team will be responsible for the conduct of their Team, guests, or invitees.

Additionally, the Lead Chef will be responsible for their Team's compliance with the rules and regulations herein set forth. Excessive use of alcoholic beverages will be grounds for disqualification.

Any offensive conduct will be grounds for disqualification from the Competition and expulsion from the event grounds.

Terms

Teams will be required to acknowledge that they have reviewed these rules in order to activate their participation in the BBQ Competition on June 14, 2025.

Union Sportsmen's Alliance reserves the right to make additional rules and regulations as the situation warrants. Decisions of USA are final.

USA, its members or directors, Torstenson Youth Conservation Education Center, and all participating organizations and affiliates will not be held responsible for theft or damage to equipment or bodily injury of any kind.