



Hi-Line Harvest Festival Cook Off Competition Rules

Categories

Risk It For The Brisket

Sponsored by Prairie Meats & AgGro Weather Media

Rack Attack Ribs

Sponsored by Tip Top Lounge

Hi-Line Wing Fling

Sponsored by Terra Firma Organics & Flathead Boat Rental

Bake Off

Pie and Cheesecake Categories

General Rules

- Competition will take place on Friday, September 12th - Saturday, September 13th, 2025 at the Tip Top Lounge 111 E Washington Ave, Chester, MT (Formerly Cheri's Lounge)
- Teams: Up to Ten (10) 1-3 person teams. Unlimited pie teams!
- Registration Fee: \$20 per team, \$50 for all 3 meat smoking competitions (brisket, wings, & ribs). \$5 per pie or cheesecake.
 - Registration is first come first serve, you are not registered until you have paid your team fee.
 - ***You do not need to register ahead of time for the bake off. Bring your pie downtown to the festival by 4:00 PM!***
- Meat Provided: 1 package of spare ribs contains 2 racks of ribs, 1 brisket 10-13 lbs, 5lb bag of wings
 - Teams must use the meat provided – no outside meat allowed.
- Pickup: You may pick up your meat on Wednesday, September 10th, 2025.
- You can pay online or write and mail a check to LCCDC, PO Box 553, Chester, MT 59522. Fee is nonrefundable.



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- *You hereby grant permission to the rights of your image, likeness and sound of your voice as recorded on audio or video tape without payment or any other consideration.*

Cooking Rules

- Cooking Method: Grill or Smoker. **NO FRYERS ALLOWED.**
- Temperature Requirement: Ribs and Brisket must reach an internal temperature of 145 and chicken wings must reach an internal temperature of 165 or will result in disqualification.
- You bring your own gear – cook setup, thermometers, tools, etc.
- Smoking may begin on Friday, September 12th.
 - 5:00 PM Start Time on Friday, September 12th. 5:00 PM End Time on Saturday, September 13th.
 - ***The Hi-Line Harvest Festival is not responsible for any damages or stolen property***
- All cooked meats will be given to the Harvest Festival to be served for the Community Dinner.
- Pies & cheesecakes will be auctioned off in a fundraiser for the Harvest Festival.
- All brisket must be cooked and ready to be judged by 5:00 PM.
- Ribs must be cooked and ready to be judged at 4:00 PM.
- Wings must be cooked and ready to be judged by 4:30 PM.
- Rub or Sauce must be homemade or made with 3 or more ingredients if using store bought ingredients to create your own sauce.
- No outside meats allowed, only provided meat to keep the competition fair.
- It is crucial all contestants cook in a sanitary manner. Cooking conditions are subject to inspection by the judging committee. Infractions identified by the judging committee shall be immediately corrected or the cook will be subject to disqualification.



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Judging Criteria

This is just a review of what the judges will be looking for so you have an idea. There will be 3 judges in each category.

Appearance/ Presentation:

- Judges look for a visually appealing, noting the color, the evenness of the cook, and the absence of excessive charring or dryness and plating
- The texture should be appealing, with a slight sheen indicating proper cooking

Taste:

- Taste is a crucial element, encompassing the overall flavor profile, including smokiness, sweetness, and savory notes.
- The balance of flavors is important, and the seasoning should complement the meat without being overpowering.
- Judges look for a clean finish, meaning the taste should linger pleasantly without any off-flavors.

Tenderness/Texture:

- The meat should be tender enough to pull cleanly from the bone with a slight bite, but not so tender that it falls off the bone with minimal effort.
- Judges often test tenderness by holding the bone and taking a bite in the middle, assessing how easily the meat separates.

Scoring:

- 9 for excellent, 8 for very good, 7 for good, 6 for fair, 5 for poor, and potentially lower scores for inedible entries.
- Some systems may include a score of 1 for disqualification or penalty.



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- Judges typically evaluate each criterion (appearance, tenderness, taste) and may also give an overall impression score.

Prizes

- Brisket Competition
 - All Cash Prizes are Sponsored by AgGro Weather Media
 - 1st Place Winner: \$500 Cash Prize & Traveling Trophy
 - 2nd Place Prize: \$250 Cash Prize
 - 3rd Place Prize: \$100 Cash Prize
- Wing Competition
 - 1st Place Winner will receive a full day rental at Flathead Lake Boat Rental on Flathead Lake. Generously sponsored by [Flathead Lake Boat Rental!](#)
 - 2nd Place Prize Smith & Rogue Gear
 - 3rd Place Prize Smith & Rogue Gear
- Rib Competition
 - 1st Place: Cooler & BBQ Gear
 - 2nd Place: Cash Prize
 - 3rd Place: Cash Prize
- Bake Off Competition
 - Pie 1st Place: \$150 Cash Prize
 - Cheesecake 1st Place Prize: \$150 Cash Prize
 - The traveling trophy & gift basket from the Front Porch goes to the best of both categories!