



## OFFICIAL GRILLING RULES

### Section A: General Rules

1. NEBS Rules and Regulations are applied at the discretion and reading of the NEBS Contest Official(s), at each individual contest. Their decisions and interpretations are final, and are not debatable.
2. The organizer will assign each team a well-defined area. All teams' equipment must fit inside this area. Sharing of any space OR cooker is not allowed.
3. Contestants shall provide all needed equipment and supplies, including an approved fire extinguisher, electricity, ash, grease, and trash disposal and water (except as arranged by the contest organizer). When available, contest organizers will distribute the necessary information to all contest teams regarding electricity, water, and the disposal of ashes, grease and trash, as well as all safety information, which may include local Board of Health codes, and fire and electrical codes. Contest rules and regulations at all times take precedence over NEBS rules when and where a conflict may arise.
4. Cooking media must consist of wood, wood pellets, or charcoal. Allowance of any alternate cooking media is subject to approval by the NEBS Board of Directors, and must be designated in the cook's packet. Gas and/or electric heat are allowed ONLY at the election of the contest organizer, and with the approval of the NEBS Board of Directors. Electric augers, spits or forced drafts are allowed. Contestants may prepare and cook sauces, stuffing, and/or garnishes in advance. They may be cooked and/or reheated on any heat source, without specific allowance in the cook's packet, except where specifically excluded by the contest organizer in the approved cook's packet. For example:

“all preparation/cooking must be done on site” or “all cooking must be done on XX type of heat source” or other clearly defined wording.
5. Contest categories and garnish applicable to each category are to be determined by the contest organizer, listed in the cook's packet, and presented to the NEBS Board of

Directors for review and approval no less than 60 days before contest date. Any changes to the approved cook's packet must be cleared through the NEBS Board of Directors and then must be communicated to all participants, in writing, no less than 7 days prior to the contest date.

6. Either the organizer or an officially delegated party will inspect every team's competition entries. Contest entries must be raw and unseasoned at the time of inspection. NEBS does not allow pre-seasoned meat EXCEPT FOR SAUSAGE. Products that were enhanced or injected at the provider's processing plant are permitted as long as no specific flavorings were added. Only AFTER inspection can entries begin to be seasoned, flavored, marinated and/or cooked. Once inspected, these items must stay at the contest. Sauces may be cooked in advance. When a contest organizer supplies the meat, the contestant is required to enter only the provided meat with the possible addition of other meats as allowed by the garnish rules applicable to that category. Substitution of the provided meat is not allowed. Competition meat not meeting these qualifications shall be disqualified.
7. A contest category shall allow one and only one of the following types of garnish:
  - a. STANDARD GARNISH - Only green leaf lettuce, Italian or flat leaf parsley, curly parsley, or green kale. No stuffing allowed. Entry may not be wrapped with another item, (i.e. meat or pastry dough). Sauces, if used, shall be on the entry. No sauce containers are allowed. Chunks in any sauce must be finely diced. For NEBS purposes, "finely diced" is defined as less than 1/8 inch in size. Additional edible products, of any kind, in the sauce are OK as long as these products are finely diced. Non-edible objects are NOT allowed in the entry box. Shellfish entries can include their own, and only their own, shells, heads, and tails if desired.
  - b. OPEN GARNISH - Anything goes. Chefs Choice or Dessert must use Open Garnish. Stuffing, wrapping, skewers, and decorations of any kind edible or not are allowed. Any size chunks or ingredients can be used. Cooks should remember the judges will be instructed to evaluate how well the cook has represented the contest category. Excessive garnish or additional ingredients, that cover or hide the appearance and/or taste of the defined category, may result in a lower score
  - c. NO GARNISH - Only edible portions of the category item may be in the box. Shellfish entries can include their own, and only their own, shells, heads, and tails if desired

Garnish for each category shall be clearly indicated in the cook's packet, at time of presentation to the NEBS Board of Directors for approval Garnish is at all times optional. A contestant may present his/her entry without garnish under any designated category without penalty.

Any entry's disqualification due to a garnish violation will receive a 1 from the judges in not only appearance, but also in taste and texture.

8. Only contest-provided containers may be used for all turn-ins. 9x9 Styrofoam, pizza boxes, ½ size aluminum pans, or other containers, may all be used under the discretion of the contest organizer. Cooks cannot use their own platters, dishware, or any other container not provided by the contest organizer, unless clearly designated in the cook's packet.
9. Identifiable sauce marks or other markings on or in the container or shaping of the entry into identifiable shapes is not allowed.
10. The contest organizer shall declare in advance and in writing to each cook:
  - a. The contest categories.
  - b. The turn-in time for each contest category.
  - c. The garnish rules for each contest category.
11. The turn-in window shall be exactly 10 minutes in length. The posted time for a given entry will mark the exact middle of this window. This will be strictly enforced, according to the contest official clock, located at the judging tent, with no exceptions. EXAMPLE: Announced chicken breast turn in time: 12:00 p.m. The turn in window would be from 11:55 a.m. until 12:05 p.m. These windows are overseen by the Contest Official at the turn in table. An official clock will be available at the cooks meeting and at the turn in table.
12. Entries must contain at least six separate and distinguishable portions of each entry (one portion per judge seated at one table). Table captains or judges are not allowed to cut any entries.
13. All cooking areas **MUST BE** cleaned up **BEFORE** teams leave the contest. All live coals must be disposed of properly, according to the organizers directive. Sites shall be left at the conclusion of a contest in the same, or better, condition than they were upon arrival. Failure to obey this rule may result in further action against a team, such as, but not limited to forfeited fees or disqualification from future NEBS events.
14. Contest organizers alone determine whether entry fees are refundable.
15. Exceptions to the rules may be allowed upon authorization of the NEBS Board of Directors. The NEBS Board shall require any exceptions to the rules to be clearly defined in the cook's packet at the time of presentation to the NEBS Board of Directors for approval.

16. A Cooks Meeting will be conducted by the NEBS Contest Official(s), at each contest to explain the rules and regulations of the contest and to answer any questions the contests may have. The time and location of the Cooks Meeting shall be included in the Cooks Packet. Sample contest lineup:

Chicken Wings, Standard Garnish: 12:00pm

Sausage, No Garnish: 12:30pm

Salmon, Open Garnish: 1:00pm

Chefs Choice, Open Garnish: 1:30pm

## **Section B: Judging Procedures**

1. All NEBS-Sanctioned contests shall use a “double-blind” judging system. A previously delegated person will present each entry to a table of at least six judges, and the judges will not know which team’s entry that they are judging at any time.
2. The designated judging area shall be clearly defined, and shall contain a visible and obvious area for teams to turn in entries. Admission into the judging area shall be at the sole discretion of the NEBS Contest Officials.
3. Entries are judged according to the following criteria, in this order:
  - a. Appearance. How appealing does the entry look in regards to what the category is defined as?
  - b. Taste. How does the entry taste in regards to what the category is defined as?
  - c. Texture. Is the entry properly prepared and/or cooked (not burnt or raw or unevenly cooked, etc.)? Is the texture representative of what that item should be?

Judges shall evaluate how well the cook has represented the contest category. For instance, if the category is shrimp, the entry shall be judged on the appearance of the shrimp, the taste of the shrimp and the texture of the shrimp. The score of the entry could be marked down if excessive garnishes, stuffing or sauces hide or hinder the appearance, flavor or texture of the shrimp.

4. Each entry box is shown to all judges at one table, who then score the entry on its appearance. Next, a sample of each turn-in box is taken by each judge and put on their judging plate in the assigned spot. Once all judges have a sample from each entry box for that particular category, each judge samples and scores each entry separately, for taste and texture, before moving on to the next entry.

5. NEBS scoring system is based on whole number values with the highest possible score being 9, incrementally down to 2, which is the lowest score possible from a judge. A score of one (1) is a disqualification and requires approval by a Contest Official.
6. Any entry that is thought to be in violation of any rule must be brought to the attention of the Contest Official. The Contest Official is the only person who is able to disqualify an entry. Cooking contest entries can be disqualified for:
  - a. Use of an unapproved turn-in container
  - b. Marking of the turn-in container
  - c. Use of unapproved garnish
  - d. Marking, designing or shaping the contest entry
  - e. Not enough portions for judges (at least six)
  - f. Violation of sauce rules
  - g. Late turn in
  - h. Turn in of an entry other than the designated category
  - i. Unapproved meat or materials in the turn-in box (skewers, toothpicks, etc.)

An entry that is disqualified after turn in will receive a 1 (one) across the board, for appearance, taste and texture.

A late turn in or no turn in by a disqualified team will receive no score.

7. Each entry's score will be calculated out of a possible 180 maximum points, with the following breakdown:

Appearance – 14.285%

Taste – 57.145%

Texture – 28.570%

8. Each judge's scores will be calculated using a total of 36 points, using the same breakdown as listed above. The judge with the lowest score will be dropped. If two entries receive the same total after the lowest score is dropped, the tie will be broken in the following order until the tie is broken:
  - a. The team with the higher sum of taste scores (not including the dropped judge's score).
  - b. The team with the higher sum of texture scores (not including the dropped judge's score).
  - c. The team with the higher sum of appearance scores (not including the dropped judge's score).
  - d. The team with the higher score from the dropped judge.

- e. If teams are still tied, the computer will randomly assign values to each team, the higher of these randomly generated values will break the tie.
9. Total points per entry will determine the rankings within each contest category. Tiebreakers will determine the finishing order when needed. They will not affect a team's point total in a given category.
10. The sum of points of four categories in each event shall count towards NEBS Grand Champion, Reserve Grand Champion, and Team of the Year points. Additional categories can be held as separate contests. The four categories shall be clearly stated in the cook's packet, at the time of presentation to NEBS Board of Directors for approval (60 days before contest).

### **Section C: Food Safety & Sanitation Rules**

Throughout the entire event, proper food safety and food handling will be of the utmost importance. Failure to follow proper Food Safety guidelines can/will result in disqualification. The NEBS Contest Official(s), will have the final judgment and decision regarding present contest and NEBS Board of Directors will have judgment over future contests.

1. Absolutely no smoking is allowed during the prepping, handling, cooking or presenting of the contest entries
2. Cleanliness of all team members, all cookers and the cooking area is mandatory.
3. Proper hand washing and the use of disposable food safe gloves shall be used at all times when handling food products, raw or cooked. Gloves should be changed often, especially when working with different products and when handling ready to eat foods after handling raw foods.
4. Clothing, including, but not limited to, shirts and shoes must be worn in all food preparation areas, and while handling any food.
5. Teams must have three bins set up for the washing, rinsing and sanitizing of utensils. Bin #1 shall have hot soapy water, bin # 2 shall have clean water for rinsing, and bin # 3 shall have a bleach/water disinfectant rinse (one cap of bleach/gallon of water). Sanitizing of all prep and work areas is mandatory. Use a bleach/water rinse (one cap of bleach/gallon of water).
6. Contest organizer must inform all contestants and Contest Officials IN THE COOK'S PACKET as to whether or not First Aid is available.

7. Potentially hazardous food (meat) must be maintained at 40 degrees or less, refrigerated or packed in ice, before being cooked
8. After cooking, all potentially hazardous food (meat):
  - a. Must be held at 140 degrees or above, or
  - b. Cooked potentially hazardous food (meat) shall be cooled:
    - Within 2 hours from 140 degrees F to 70 degrees F, and
    - Within 4 hours from 70 degrees F to 40 degrees F or less
9. Potentially hazardous food (meat) that is cooked, properly cooled, and later reheated for hot holding and serving shall be reheated so that all parts of the food reach a temperature of at least 165 degrees F for a minimum of 15 seconds.
10. Any team not complying with safety and sanitation rules may be disqualified and/or expelled from the NEBS event, as well as future NEBS events.

## **Section D: Reasons for Disqualification**

Cooking teams can be disqualified from the event for the actions of any of its members or guests for infractions relating to:

1. Abusive use of alcoholic beverages.
2. Serving alcoholic beverages to the general public.
3. Use of illegal substances.
4. Any language that is foul, abusive, coarse, or unacceptable.
5. Excessive noise. Quiet time will start at 11:00 p.m. on contest nights and will last until 7:00 a.m. Radios must be kept at a volume not to be heard outside of a team's own site during quiet hours.
6. Fighting and/or disorderly conduct.
7. Use of unapproved heat sources inside the cooking device. In addition, if disqualified for this reason, the team and its members will be banned from competing in NEBS events for one year.

NEBS Contest Officials, Contest Organizers and/or Security personnel reserve the right to **immediately** disqualify any team, if there are ongoing complaints from other teams or guests, or continued disregard for the above rules.

For clarification or any questions regarding these Grilling Rules, please email the NEBS Board of Directors at [contact@nebs.org](mailto:contact@nebs.org).