



presents the

CLEVELAND OCTOBERFEST



October 10 and 11, 2025

Cleveland, Mississippi

Official Barbecue Team Application

MBN Championship & Patio Teams

FINAL event of the Delta BBQ Brawl!

*sanctioned by the Memphis Barbecue Network
sponsored by the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce*





2025 Barbecue Team Application

check ONLY one:

☐ MBN Championship Team

☐ Patio Team

Official Team Name _____

Chief Cook _____

Contact Person _____

Mailing Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone (day) _____ (evening) _____

Email _____

Payment for the total entry fee must be received with application no later than September 29, 2025. Applications submitted are not guaranteed entrance. The MDBSC reserves the right to reject any application after deadline date and/or after spaces are full. If your application is not accepted, your money will be refunded. However, no refunds will be made once you have been accepted into the contest. Limited space is available so apply early to secure your admittance.

Any photos taken at the event become the property of Cleveland Octoberfest/MDBSC and the Memphis Barbecue Network and may be used for promotional purposes. For any additional information or questions contact Elise Jenkins, Barbecue Co-Chair, at jenkins4936@gmail.com or 662-719-1675.

I am entering this contest voluntarily and acknowledge that participation is a privilege, not a right. In exchange for the opportunity to participate in Cleveland Octoberfest/Mississippi Delta Barbecue State Championship, I assume all risks and indemnify and release all sponsoring and/or hosting entities, including but not limited to the City of Cleveland, the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce, Cleveland Octoberfest/MDBSC, the Memphis Barbecue Network and their employees, agents and volunteers from any and all liability for personal injury arising out of my or my team's participation in this event.

Registration deadline is September 29, 2025

Please complete your application, then choose one of the following ways to submit:

- 1) Print and mail completed application and check to: Elise Jenkins, MDBSC/Cleveland Octoberfest, P. O. Box 191, Ruleville, MS 38771. Checks must be payable to Cleveland/Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce.
- 2) Complete your application and email to jenkins4936@gmail.com and you will be provided a credit card payment link or Venmo options.

I verify that I have read all the rules and regulations and understand my responsibilities. I agree to abide by all rules and regulations of Cleveland Octoberfest/MDBSC and the MBN and understand that their decisions are final.

Signature (required): _____ Date: _____

CATEGORIES & FEES**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10****Anything But Division (OPEN TO ALL TEAMS – CHAMPIONSHIP & PATIO)**

CATEGORY	COST PER ENTRY	NUMBER OF ENTRIES	AMOUNT DUE
Sauce	\$25		
Baked Beans	\$25		
Cole Slaw	\$25		
Grilled Cheese	\$25		
Seafood/Fish	\$25		
Chicken	\$25		

Anything But Fees:

\$ _____

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11**Patio Division –** *Electricity included (20 amps) and **20x20** SITE. MUST ENTER 2 CATEGORIES TO RESERVE A SITE.****EXTRA SPACE REQUIRES AN ADDITIONAL FEE****MUST COOK ALL 3 TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR GRAND CHAMPION****CHECK PATIO CATEGORY ENTRIES – \$100 each category**☐ Pulled Pork☐ Pork Ribs☐ Pork Loin

\$ _____

Championship Division –*Electricity included (20 amps) and **20x20** SITE.****EXTRA SPACE REQUIRES AN ADDITIONAL FEE****CHECK CHAMPIONSHIP CATEGORY ENTRIES - \$150 each category**☐ Whole Hog☐ Pulled Pork☐ Pork Ribs

\$ _____

Extras –

Port-a-John @ \$150 regular or \$175 handicap

\$ _____

*Additional electricity-\$50 fee (_____amps)

\$ _____

(Availability is limited...first come, first served, must be reserved/paid by September 25)

****Additional space - \$25 - 30' wide; \$50 – 40'wide**

\$ _____

(Availability is limited...first come, first served, must be reserved/paid by September 25)

ICE Fee – Teams will be provided ice on site - Required for all cooking teams \$ **20.00****MBN Admin Fee – Required for all cooking teams** \$ **15.00****TOTAL ENTRY FEES ENCLOSED:**

\$ _____

*Refer to previous page for payment options.***Team Members**-10 wristbands issued to team members staying on site from 11pm Friday to 6 am Saturday.

(please list all members): _____

Standard Area: 20' wide x 20' deep Standard Cooking Site - **Maximum space allowed is 40' wide.**Requests for additional space must be justified by size of rig and/or equipment and must be PAID in advance.

Total Set-Up Size (trailer, cooker, tent, etc.): _____ Space requested: _____ Wide x _____ Deep

Set Up & Registration: All teams must register before setting up. Load in starts at noon on Thursday, October 9 and **ends at 3 pm on Friday, October 10.**

Arrival:

☐ Thursday☐ Friday

Time: _____



2025 Contest Category Prizes



Anything But	1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place
Sauce	\$75 + Plaque	\$50 + Plaque	\$25 + Plaque
Baked Beans	\$75 + Plaque	\$50 + Plaque	\$25 + Plaque
Cole Slaw	\$75 + Plaque	\$50 + Plaque	\$25 + Plaque
Grilled Cheese	\$75 + Plaque	\$50 + Plaque	\$25 + Plaque
Seafood/Fish	\$75 + Plaque	\$50 + Plaque	\$25 + Plaque
Chicken	\$75 + Plaque	\$50 + Plaque	\$25 + Plaque

Patio Team Prizes *featuring Peter's Pottery*

Category	1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place	4th Place	5th Place
Pulled Pork	\$200 + Trophy	\$125 + Trophy	\$100 + Trophy	\$75 + Plaque	\$50 + Plaque
Pork Ribs	\$200 + Trophy	\$125 + Trophy	\$100 + Trophy	\$75 + Plaque	\$50 + Plaque
Pork Loin	\$200 + Trophy	\$125 + Trophy	\$100 + Trophy	\$75 + Plaque	\$50 + Plaque

Patio Grand Champion* - \$300 and Trophy

plus Paid Patio Entry to next Delta BBQ Brawl contest 2026
(equivalent to \$300 in entry fees – total prize package \$600)*

MBN Championship Team Prizes**

****All places receive a trophy featuring Peter's Pottery**

Category	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Whole Hog	\$700 paid entry in 2026	\$600	\$500	\$400	\$300
Pulled Pork	\$700 paid entry in 2026	\$600	\$500	\$400	\$300
Ribs	\$700 paid entry in 2026	\$600	\$500	\$400	\$300

MBN Grand Champion - \$1500 and Custom-Built Trophy

**Prizes/awards for the Delta BBQ Brawl will be awarded at the
Mississippi Delta Barbecue State Championship MDBSC/
Cleveland Octoberfest.**



**Championship and Patio teams that compete in Que' on the Yazoo,
PeaVine Festival, DSU Pig Pickin', The Great Ruleville Roast, and MDBSC
are eligible.**

**Delta BBQ Brawl Championship Team - \$10,000
Delta BBQ Brawl Patio Team - \$3,000**



OFFICIAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. Meat for the contest may be fresh or frozen. Meat may not be precooked, sauced, spiced, injected, marinated, cured in any way, or otherwise pre-treated prior to the meat inspection. Meat must be maintained at a temperature below 40 degrees Fahrenheit prior to cooking. All meat must be inspected at the times set by contest organizers and prior to preparing, seasoning or cooking in any way. **Teams may NOT remove competition meat from the site after inspection.**

Teams may cook with any type of wood and/or charcoal. Other flammables (propane, compressed or liquid gas, etc.) may be used within the cooker **ONLY TO START THE INITIAL FIRE**. No type of flammables may be used WITHIN the cooker once the meat has been placed there. If a cooker has a built-in propane burner, the lines must be disconnected after the initial fire is started. Gas cannot be used to generate heat for the smoker or holding oven. Any team who violates this rule will be disqualified from the contest. Local fire and safety laws may prevent the use of gas anywhere on the grounds at any time, and, if so, these laws shall prevail.

Electrical devices may be used within the cooker if they do not directly generate heat. Approved devices include rotisseries, fans, and delivery systems for approved fuel (i.e., pellet grills). Electric smokers, holding ovens or containers or any other devices with heat producing electrical coils are not allowed. Microwaves may be used to warm/heat sauces, but not to cook, warm, or reheat meat.

Each team must prepare and cook their own meat on their own cookers on site. Teams are NOT allowed to share cookers/smokers. Any team who turns in sample meat that is not prepared on-site will be disqualified.

Any photos taken at the event become the property of the Octoberfest Mississippi Delta Barbecue State Championship and the Memphis Barbecue Network and may be used for promotional purposes.

Championship Division Meat Categories

2. The Championship official meat categories are Whole Hog, Pulled Pork, and Pork Ribs.

a. A **whole hog entry** is defined by Memphis Barbecue Network as an entire hog, whose dressed weight is 85 pounds or more prior to the optional removal of the head, feet and skin, and the hog must be cooked as one complete unit on one grill surface. No portion of the whole hog may be separated or removed, and returned to the grill, prior to or during the cooking process. No garnish allowed.

b. A **pulled pork entry** is defined by Memphis Barbecue Network as the portion of the hog which may contain the arm bone, hind leg bone, shank bone, and/or a portion of the blade bone or a pork collar. A whole shoulder, a picnic shoulder, a ham, a Boston Butt and a pork collar are all considered to be valid entries. The entry must be cooked as one whole unit. No portion of the pulled pork entry may be separated or removed, and returned to the grill, prior to or during the cooking process. No garnish allowed.

c. A **pork rib entry** is defined by Memphis Barbecue Network as the portion of the hog containing the ribs and classified as a spare rib or loin rib portion. Country style ribs are not a valid entry. No garnish allowed.

Patio Division Meat Categories

3. The Patio official meat categories are Pulled Pork, Pork Ribs and Pork Loin.

a. A **pulled pork entry** is defined by Memphis Barbecue Network as the portion of the hog which may contain the arm bone, hind leg bone, shank bone, and/or a portion of the blade bone or a pork collar. A whole shoulder, a picnic shoulder, a ham, a Boston Butt and a pork collar are all considered to be valid entries. The entry must be cooked as one whole unit. No portion of the pulled pork entry may be separated or removed, and returned to the grill, prior to or during the cooking process. No garnish allowed.

b. A **pork rib entry** is defined by Memphis Barbecue Network as the portion of the hog containing the ribs and classified as a spare rib or loin rib portion. Country style ribs are not a valid entry. No garnish allowed.

c. A **pork loin entry** is defined as bone in or without bone. Loin must weigh at least 5 pounds at time of meat inspection. No stuffing is allowed. No garnish allowed.

4. A Patio team must cook at least two (2) of the three (3) categories to be eligible for a site. A team must cook all three (3) categories to be eligible for Patio Grand Champion.

5. **All meat categories for the Championship Division and the Patio Division must be inspected by the Official Meat Inspector for compliance with entry requirements.**

OFFICIAL RULES AND REGULATIONS, cont.

Anything But Division Categories

6. Categories are Sauce, Beans, Cole Slaw, Grilled Cheese, Seafood/Fish, and Chicken. No inspection is required and garnish is allowed but entries must be in the official container provided by the contest. Teams are allowed multiple entries in these 6 contests only. A fee is required for each entry. A team can only win one place in a category regardless of the number of entries. This division is open to all teams – Championship and Patio Porker teams.

Delta BBQ Brawl

7. All teams qualify for the Delta BBQ Brawl. Teams' highest preliminary score in the official meat categories will be combined with highest scores from Que' on the Yazoo, PeaVine Festival, DSU Pig Pickin' and The Great Ruleville Roast. Championship winner will receive \$10,000 and Patio winner will receive \$3,000. Each team receives a prize belt.

Judging

8. **ANYTHING BUT JUDGING** will be held on Friday, October 10. Blind judging only and garnish is allowed. *These contests are open to all teams (Championship and Patio).*

9. **PATIO DIVISION JUDGING** will occur on Saturday, October 11. Blind judging rules of the Memphis Barbecue Network with **one preliminary judging round** (see Item 13) only will be used for each contest. The Patio Grand Champion will be determined by the highest cumulative score from all 3 categories (pulled pork, pork ribs, and pork loin).

10. Each Patio team should cook enough to provide bite size samples of pulled pork and pork loin for 6 judges and at least 6 sections of ribs and all pieces must fit inside the closed container (9"x9") provided. No garnish of any kind is allowed in the blind box.

11. **CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION JUDGING** will occur on Saturday, October 11. Preliminary blind judging and finals on-site judging rules of the Memphis Barbecue Network will be used. Preliminary blind judging will begin at 10:00 a.m. for Whole Hog division; 11:00 a.m. for Pulled Pork division; and 12:00 p.m. for Pork Rib division. Finals judging will be on-site and begin at approximately 1:00 p.m.

a. **WHOLE HOG ENTRIES** - Portions of the ham, shoulder and loin must be present and identifiable in the blind box. No other portions of the whole hog are allowed in the blind box. All meat in the blind box **MUST** come from the whole hog cooked as a complete unit. No other meat or garnish of any kind is allowed in the blind box. The blind box must contain enough of each portion to give bite size samples to 6 judges and all pieces must fit inside the closed container (9"x9") provided. No garnish of any kind is allowed in the blind box. During finals judging, other portions of the whole hog may be presented to the 4 finals on-site judges in addition to the ham, shoulder and loin. However, these portions will **NOT** be judged.

b. **PULLED PORK ENTRIES** - The preliminary round blind box must contain enough pulled pork to give bite size samples to 6 judges and all pieces must fit inside the closed container (9"x9") provided. No garnish of any kind is allowed in the blind box.

c. **PORK RIBS ENTRIES** - The blind box must contain at least 6 sections of ribs and all pieces must fit inside the closed container (9"x9") provided. No garnish of any kind is allowed in the blind box.

12. Each Championship team must cook enough to provide bite size samples to 6 judges in the preliminary blind judging [all pieces must fit inside the closed container (9"x9") provided] and have enough to provide for 4 finals on-site judges if the team qualifies for the final round. It is recommended that Championship teams entering the pulled pork division cook a minimum of two (2) butts or shoulders. It is up to the team whether you use all shoulders, Boston Butts, pork collars, hind legs or a combination as long as it meets the MBN criteria #2. Teams entering the Championship pork rib division should cook a minimum of five (5) slabs of ribs. It is not necessary to cook more than one hog.

13. **PRELIMINARY BLIND JUDGING** is the "blind" judging of all teams (Championship and Patio) and all entries in a secure location where judges do not know which team submitted the samples. The purpose of preliminary blind judging in the Championship Division is to identify the top three (3) entries in each meat category and to rank the rest of the entries. The top three (3) entries in each meat category in the Championship Division will advance to the final round of on-site judging. The preliminary blind judging in the Patio Division will determine the winners in each meat category. These scores are then combined for a cumulative score to determine the Patio Grand Champion.

14. In the Preliminary Judging there are 6 judges per table in Championship and 6 judges per table in Patio and the lowest score in each criterion is dropped. Teams should pay special attention to the way their meat is prepared for the blind judges. There are no sharp knives in the judging area, so it is recommended that teams cut or "pull" their entries into small enough sections to easily fit into the 9"x9" container provided by the contest.

15. Sample containers will be placed in a "holding box" and delivered by the contest officials to a secure location for preliminary judging.

OFFICIAL RULES AND REGULATIONS, cont.

16. With each entry container, there can be up to two sauce containers with lids turned in. Teams may send any combination of sauce, rub, marinade or basting sauce. Only the containers and lids that were issued by the contest may be used for sauce; no other container is allowed. Teams will turn in the sauce container with their blind box sample container. **DO NOT** put the sauce container inside the sample box.

17. Teams are not allowed to mark on the meat or sauce containers in any way. If a team is turning in a “HOT/SPICY” sauce for judging, the check in volunteer will mark that container as “hot”. If marks are on the container, the sample(s) will be put in replacement containers.

18. Meat turned in for blind judging may not be garnished, sculpted, shaped or presented in any way to make it identifiable. Any suspicion of this will result in the sample not be accepted.

19. The Preliminary Blind Judging Criteria - Appearance of Entry, Tenderness of Entry, Flavor of Entry and Overall Impression.

20. **FINALS ON-SITE JUDGING** is done only in the Championship Division. This round is operated as a completely new contest with nine separate entries: three whole hog, three pulled pork, and three rib teams. All judging in the final round is on-site. Final judges are escorted by a contest official that will monitor the time (maximum of 15 minutes) they spend with each team. No scores from the preliminary round are carried over to the finals round of judging.

21. There will be four (4) finals judges traveling in a group, judging all nine entries. They are responsible for ranking the nine teams without regard to meat category and choosing the Grand Champion. Each team will be judged independently even though the judges are traveling in a group. Even though teams will be presenting and feeding four (4) people, the presentation must still fit in the 15-minute window.

22. NO garnish is allowed on the grill surface or presenting platter in finals judging. Foil is permitted on the grill surface. Only disposable napkins, bottled water/cups, etc. must be used during finals judging. The MBN will provide each team with “finals placemats” that are used to serve the judges. It is the team’s discretion as to what they present the sample/entry on at the table. Cloth table cloths and decorations in the team area are acceptable.

23. The Finals On-Site Judging Criteria – Area and Personal Appearance, Presentation, Appearance of Entry, Tenderness of Entry, Flavor of Entry and Overall Impression. Judges are required to use decimals in all criteria.

General Information to all Teams

24. Contestants’ category(ies) **must be stated on entry form.**

25. **All competition entries for all divisions must be prepared and cooked on site. Any team (Championship and/or Patio) found to serve judge competition meat that was not prepared and cooked on-site, by them, WILL be disqualified.**

26. Each team must comply with all applicable rules/regulations of the Bolivar County Health Department. **NO MEAT/ENTRY/PRODUCT MAY BE SOLD.**

27. Each contestant competing shall supply all of his own meat, cooking ingredients, individual cooking devices, utensils, preparation tables, etc. A regulation cooking area (20’ by 20’) is provided. Additional space requires an additional fee. The **maximum space is 40’ wide**. All contestants must adhere to all electrical, fire and other city, county, state or federal codes. A fire extinguisher must be in each cooking area.

28. Each contestant must check in with the Barbecue Chair before set up when cooking area assignments will be issued. Standard set up begins at noon on Thursday, October 9 and ends at 3:00 p.m., Friday, October 10. **All teams must be set up by 4:00 p.m. and attend the mandatory cooks meeting.** Cooking may begin any time after meat inspection which begins at 7 a.m. on Friday. Teams will not be allowed to move vehicles into the team area until after awards on Saturday.

29. All deliveries of equipment and supplies, etc. must arrive before 4:00 p.m. on Friday, October 10. **All vehicles must be removed from the area by 3:00 p.m., Friday. No vehicles are allowed to remain in the cooking areas.**

30. A team may have as many assistants as are necessary. All cooks and assistants that handle food in any way must comply with all applicable rules and regulations of the Bolivar County Health Department.

31. No live animals, including pets (dogs, pigs, etc.), are allowed in the cooking area. Cooking in pits is not allowed.

32. **All teams are required to send a representative to the Chief Cooks’ meeting on Friday at 4:00 pm.** Location will be provided at team check in on Friday.

33. It is the responsibility of each contestant to see that the contest area is kept clean. All fires must be put out and all equipment, garbage, etc. removed from site. Each team is responsible for proper disposal of hot ashes. Any site not properly cleaned will result in disqualification from future participation.

OFFICIAL RULES AND REGULATIONS, cont.

34. The chief cook will be held responsible for the conduct of his team and guests. Any disturbances or altercations as a result of team members, guests or individuals in the team's area are grounds for disqualification and expulsion from future contests. Excessive use of alcoholic beverages will be grounds for disqualification. **No glass containers are allowed.** Under no circumstances are alcoholic beverages to be distributed (given away or sold) to the general public by the contestants.

35. The use of golf carts and ATVs is restricted to the Barbecue Committee. **Team members and/or guests are NOT allowed to use any type of vehicle (golf carts, ATVs, etc.) in the festival area. Violations will result in disqualification.**

36. No live bands, combos, etc. will be allowed in the individual cooking areas at any time during the event. Absolutely no entertainment allowed during judging on Saturday beginning at 10:00 a.m. **All entertainment and music must end at 11 p.m. on Friday. Quiet Time will be enforced by the Cleveland Police Department from 11:00 p.m., Friday to 6:00 a.m. Saturday. Only team members with wristbands are allowed to stay on-site in their cooking areas from 11:00 p.m., Friday to 6:00 a.m. Saturday.**

37. Standard cooking area is 20' x 20'. Special requests must be stated on the application and must be approved in advance by the Barbecue Chair. **Maximum width is 40'** and must be justified. 30' wide space requires an additional \$25 fee and 40' space requires an additional fee of \$50. Water and electricity (110 outlet, 20 amps) are included in application fees. **Requests for additional space and electricity must be made in advance with BBQ Chair and require additional fees.**

38. Applications submitted are not guaranteed entrance. Accepted applicants will be contacted and entry fees will be deposited. Accepted applicants will be contacted with information regarding the judging process, registration and parking.

39. The Barbecue Committee reserves the right to reject any application. If your application is not accepted, your fees will be refunded by mail. No refunds will be made once you have been accepted into the contest whether you appear or not.

40. All checks should be made payable to the **Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce** and mailed to **Elise Jenkins, P. O. Box 191, Ruleville, MS 38771** or provide required credit card information.

41. The OCTOBERFEST/MDBSC Committee reserves the right to make additional regulations as the situation warrants. Violations of rules and regulations will result in disqualification, expulsion from grounds, and/or disqualification from future participation.

42. Decisions of the OCTOBERFEST/ MDBSC Committee Chair, Co-Chair and judges are final.

For other information or to make advance arrangements, contact John Paul Gates, MDBSC Co-Chair, at 662-588-9888 / johnpaulgates@gmail.com or Elise Jenkins, MDBSC Co-Chair, at 662-719-1675 / jenkins4936@gmail.com or the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce at 662-843-2712.

Chamber website: <http://www.octoberfestms.com/>

Official Judging Times		
Category	Check-in Time	Judging Time
Sauce & Beans	Friday, 5:30-6:00 pm	6:00 pm
Cole Slaw & Grilled Cheese	Friday, 6:30-6:45 pm	6:45 pm
Seafood/Fish & Chicken	Friday, 7:15-7:30 pm	7:30 pm
Championship Whole Hog (preliminary)	Saturday, 9:45-10:00 am	10:00 am
Championship Pulled Pork (preliminary)	Saturday, 10:45-11:00 am	11:00 am
Championship Pork Ribs (preliminary)	Saturday, 11:45-12:00 pm	12:00 pm
Patio Pulled Pork	Saturday, 10:15-10:30 am	10:30 am
Patio Pork Ribs	Saturday, 11:15-11:30 am	11:30 am
Patio Loin	Saturday, 12:15-12:30 pm	12:30 pm
Championship On-Site Finals Begin		1:00 pm
Awards (approximately)		5:30 pm