

TOP DAWG Chili Cook-off

Community competing for a cause.

Hays County Fire Chief Association ESD's and First Responder teams compete for the Top Chili Dawg award. One award will be presented: Top Chili DAWG First Responder traveling Trophy. There is no entry fee to First Responders competing for the Traveling Trophy. To be eligible for the cash prizes, there is a \$50 entry fee.

Civilians are eligible for the 2nd Annual Top Dawg competition for a \$50 entrance fee. All participants who pay the \$50 entrance fee will be eligible for the cash/trophy awards.

First prize: \$300/Trophy

Second Prize: \$200/Trophy

Third Prize: \$100/Trophy

People's Choice: Trophy

Chili winners will be decided by a panel of 5 Judges.

Contestants may begin at cooking at 9 am and turn in for Judging 12:05 pm Winners announced 4 pm.

1. Each contestant will be provided a 10x10 space along with (1) 32oz container with cover (for judging) and 3 oz sample cups/spoons for distribution to spectators/public.
2. Each contestant is responsible for supplying all their own 10x10 tent, cooking equipment, ingredients, supplies and utensils, paper towels, soap, water, ice, food safety gloves, table and 10x10 tent.
3. **A fire extinguisher** and washing station at each booth.
4. **Washing station** requires soap, paper towel, a five-gallon bucket and water dispenser which can dispense water without being held or 'pushed' by fingers or hand. (Traditionally you can find 2.5-gallon water dispensers at HEB or Walmart).
5. **Meat may be pre-cut or ground**, but MAY NOT be pre-cooked, treated, seasoned, or marinated in any manner. Preference is not given to either cut meat, ground meat, shredded meat, or cubed meat.
6. No ingredient may be pre-cooked in any way prior to the commencement of the official cooking time. The only exceptions are canned vegetables, sauces, pepper sauces, liquids, seasoning pastes, and meat substitutes.
7. Grinding and/or mixing of spices is allowed prior to the event. All other ingredients must be prepared and/or chopped on-site during the preparation period. The preparation period begins when cooks arrive onsite for competitions. **0800-0900 Only prepping allowed at this time – NO COOKING of chili.**
8. Garnishes are not allowed. Rule of thumb- if an ingredient found on the top layer of an entry bowl cannot also be found mixed throughout the entire bowl, it is a garnish and is not permitted.
9. **No Fillers** of any kind, such as Beans, Rice or Pasta are allowed.
10. All ingredients are subject to inspection at any time, by local officials.
11. All food - whether stored, resting or cooking - must always be maintained **at food-safe temperatures**. Food temperatures are subject to inspection by any local/state officials.

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12. All food handling, preparation and serving must comply with all local guidelines, policies, and rules.
13. Failure to abide by any of the above, in the unilateral and unfettered opinion of the Chief Judge, will result in immediate disqualification from the cook-off.
14. A representative of the cook-off will conduct a contestant meeting no later than 1 hour prior to the start of the competition cooking period. At this meeting instructions will be given, and questions answered.
15. The typical cooking period is 3 hours. The exact starting and ending of each cooking period will be 0900 and end 1200. Cooking during the entire cooking period is at the sole discretion of the contestant.
16. **Contestants must cook a minimum of 40 quarts** and provide chili to fill a 32 oz. cup which is submitted for judging. Contestants must cook and turn in their own entries. The Chief Judge has the right to disqualify any cook or team of cooks found turning in an entry(s) not prepared by them.
17. **Each cook will be assigned a contestant number** and given one 32 oz cup. Each cup will have their contestant number marked on the bottom. It is the contestant's responsibility to verify that the number on the bottom of their cup(s) is the same as their assigned contestant number.
18. Each cook is responsible for delivering their cup(s) to the judging area at the end of the cooking period. Each cup must be filled to the bottom of the rim.

Judging

1. At least 30 minutes prior to the end of the cooking period, the Chief Judge is required to hold a meeting with all judges. This meeting serves to educate judges on procedures, technique, and etiquette. No matter how many times someone has been a judge, they **MUST** attend this meeting.
2. When the Chief Judge signals the start of judging, Judges may start tasting at any bowl location on the table, then proceed counterclockwise. They may re-taste at their own discretion (a new spoon must be used, no double dipping!). Judging is a process of elimination and retasting is permitted until each Judge has chosen their top chili.
3. Judges taste each bowl and note any comments on their official ballots.
4. Judges must use a clean spoon for each taste.
5. Judges should clear their palates after each taste using the condiments supplied on the judging table, such as water, flour tortillas, sour cream, etc.
6. Talking, face gestures or influential body language is not permitted. **Judges must not make any comments or gestures about any of the chilis that may influence the decision of another Judge.**
7. Each Judge must write their winning chili choice within the designated spaces on their ballot before giving it to the Chief Scorekeeper. It is requested that **all Judges sign their ballots.**
8. Judges should stay in the general judging area but must stay away from Scorekeepers and judging tables until the **Chief Judge and the Chief Scorekeeper** have declared that there is a verified winner.
9. The Chief Judge and all Scorekeepers should keep results in a closed folder and must not divulge or discuss the winner until after the announcement of the winner to the public.

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People's Choice

1. All attendees who have paid their entry fee of \$10 will receive a ticket for voting.
2. Each Contestant will have a can slotted for tickets which attendees may deposit their ticket to vote on that contestant.
3. All people's choice cans will be collected at 1545, tallied and winner announced 1600 with the Top Dawg announcement.