



Elkhorn Ribfest Backyard BBQ Rib Cook-Off
Walworth County Fairgrounds, Elkhorn, WI - Sunday July 19, 2026



-All teams in the Backyard BBQ Rib Cook-off must have pre-registered and paid the \$30 entry fee for first rack entry and \$25 for any additional racks (allows you to cook additional racks but still only provide one entry to be judged) at time of entry. (non-refundable)

-All entries must be prepared and cooked at the fairgrounds in the designated competition area. You may season or prepare the meat as you see fit after the meat inspection.

-Cooking can be done on a charcoal, wood fired, electric, wood pellet, or propane cooker of any design.

-Amateurs only ****Only 20 Spots available****

Note: You are responsible for observing prudent temperature and sanitary requirements as set by the Wisconsin Health Department.

Rules

1. Each team will consist of a Chief Cook and up to 3 assistants.
2. Each team will provide a grill/cooker to be used exclusively by that team within the confines of the team's assigned cooking space, a Tent-10' x 10' max (i.e. "easy up" style). If you are cooking under a tent, it must be a flame retardant version.
3. Each team will bring their own products, including meat, seasonings, cords and all cooking equipment.
4. All seasoning and cooking of the product shall be done within the confines of the team's cooking space. No pre-marinating or pre-cooking or pre-seasoning.
5. Vehicles must be parked outside the cooking area. 1 additional tent (10'x10' max) or umbrellas are permitted for shade
6. Contestants must adhere to all electrical, fire, health and other codes whether local, county, state or federal.
7. No cooking of any kind may begin before 9:00 a.m.
8. All contestants are expected to respect the rights of other teams. This is a family event. Profane language or infringement on another team's area will not be permitted.
9. Each team must cook at least one rack of ribs and supply five individual pieces of meat for judging. Entries will be scored in the areas of Appearance, Tenderness, Texture and Taste.

Set Up

1. There will be an area for truck/trailer parking outside the festival area.
2. Generators are not allowed and limited electricity will be provided.

Judging Overview

1. Teams must cook at least 1 rack of ribs (baby backs or spare ribs)
2. Each team must prepare seven individual pieces of meat or servings for the judges.
3. Anything placed in the container that identifies your team, will not be scored.
4. All samples must be delivered to the judging location before 3:00 p.m.

Judging Criteria

1. Entries will be scored in the areas of Appearance, Tenderness, Texture and Taste. The scoring system is 10 (Excellent) to 1 (Poor), all whole numbers.
2. Garnish will not be allowed in the turn-in box.
3. No sauce containers will be allowed in the turn-in box.
4. Product may be presented with or without sauce or seasonings.
5. If you choose to use a sauce with your ribs, it must be applied to the ribs. Sauce must not be pooled in the container. No sauce containers will be allowed in the turn-in box.
6. Marking or sculpting of any kind, of the meat or of the container, will not be allowed.
7. No aluminum foil or stuffing is allowed in the container.
8. Toothpicks, skewers, foreign material or stuffing are NOT permitted. Any entry not complying with this rule will be disqualified in all judging categories.

Timeline:

7:30-8:30 a.m. Team Check In; 8:30 a.m. Team Meeting & Meat Inspection; 2:50-3:00 p.m. Entry Turn-In at the Log Cabin; 3:00 p.m. Judging; 5:45 p.m. Awards Presented on the main stage under the Big tent.

Note: Judging notes can be picked up at the Fair Office.

Rib Contest Prizes

1st Place - \$150 & Trophy
2nd Place - \$75 & Trophy
3rd Place - \$35 & Trophy
Wild Bunch

