



## 2026 Southeast Regional Emergency Response Appreciation

### BBQ COOK-OFF RULES & REGULATIONS:

Created: 6/01/2026.

1. The BBQ Cook-off will be held during the SEER Appreciation October 29<sup>th</sup>- November 1st at the Pasadena Fairgrounds located at 7902 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena Texas 77507.
2. NO FIREARMS ARE ALLOWED ON THE SEER APPRECIATION GROUNDS.
3. Applications will be sent via email.
4. Space locations will be on a first-come, first-served basis.
5. The SEER reserves the right to refuse to rent cook-off space to a cook team and/or the responsible head cook for 1 or more years if the SEER Board has previously judged the team or head cook to be in violation of a state law, city ordinance, any other festival rule or other conduct deemed by the Board to be contrary to good order and discipline or the family nature of the festival's activities. The decision of the board will be final as to all judgements resulting in a refusal to rent. A cook team under a different name will be deemed to be the same cook team that was refused rental if it has the same head cook and/or if it has 2 or more assistant cooks as listed on the application for the year when the violation occurred.
6. Persons associated with the SEER as a committee member or as a director may be part of a cook team but can NOT be listed as the head cook.
7. Violation of any of the Rules or Regulations in this document are grounds for expulsion.
8. Competition spaces are not transferable without prior consent and approval from the BBQ committee Director and/or VP.
9. A single team may occupy as many spaces as they want, however, only three (3) will be allowed as competition spaces.

10. One-half (1/2) of the entry fee must be paid upon registration. Payment, in full, must be received by September 1, 2026.
11. Teams must supply their own needed equipment and supplies.
12. Holes dug pits or open flames in boxes are not permitted.
13. Metal pans must be provided by the cook teams and placed under the opening of the firebox to prevent damage to the blacktop or concrete surface or catching the grass on fire.
14. Drip pans must be placed under all grease drains to prevent damage to the blacktop or concrete surface and/or damaging the grass.
15. Exterior décor and interaction with the public must be appropriate for viewing by a public audience of all ages and may not consist of material having a political, religious, discriminatory, or lewd nature. THIS IS A FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENT.
16. The SEER will not be responsible for theft or damage.
17. The SEER reserves the right to make any additional changes to the rules and regulations.
18. Decisions of the SEER judges are FINAL.
19. Those attending or participating in the BBQ contest are required to wear appropriate clothing and shoes.
20. Excessively loud music, horns, air horns, etc. are strictly prohibited.
21. ALL BANDS/MUSIC MUST\_STOP PLAYING AT 11:00 PM EVERY NIGHT. THIS IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PASADENA FAIRGROUNDS ORDINANCE AND WILL BE CAUSE FOR DISQUALIFICATION.
22. Should any contestant have any complaints regarding their Team Rep or any Team Rep committee member, they should immediately report their complaint to Dave Theiler, Director of the BBQ Cook-off.

## **ENTRY FEES**

1. The entry fee is \$250 per 40' x 40' space. There are no additional fees for RVs per day. This entry fee includes competition entries for brisket, chicken, and pork-spareribs.
2. Teams may purchase as many spaces as they want but only three (3) can be used as competition spaces.
3. There will be no optional categories.
4. NO ENTRY FEE TO THE EVENT GROUNDS
5. Private cook-off-team tents are invite-only by tent team.

## **COOK-OFF TEAMS AND SPACES**

1. A cook-off team may consist of one (1) head cook & four (4) assistant cooks.
2. Cook Teams with multiple spaces may have sub-teams i.e., Team #1, Team #2, Team #3.
3. Each sub-team must have its own space & pit. They must have a different name (Team #1, Team #2, etc.) and each team MUST HAVE A DIFFERENT HEAD COOK.
4. To support our main purpose, it is recommended that each team purchase five (5) cases of beverage (i.e., beer, water, soft drinks) PER SPACE from the PSF, i.e., 1 space = 5 cases, 2 spaces = 10 cases and 3 spaces = 15 cases.
5. ALL ICE MUST BE PURCHASED FROM THE SEER (ONCE YOU ARRIVE ON-SITE).
6. Team names must not be offensive and are subject to approval by the SEER Cook-Off Director.
7. Head cook & team members may not cook on more than 1 team. Doing so will be cause for disqualification of both teams.
8. Props, trailers, motor homes, tents, covering or any other part of contestants' or team equipment must not exceed the boundaries of the assigned space. One (1) cooking pit & (1) one self-contained motor home, or camper will be allowed per space. All RVs will not be charged; RV spots are Limited. If you require an RV spot, please include it in the registration.
9. Teams may not extend, under any circumstances, into any utility alleys created between, behind or beside team spaces. All power alleys and easements must be left clear and open at all times, including move-in.
10. It is the responsibility of each team to get their tent located correctly and a representative of the team must be present while the tent is being erected. If a tent is set up outside of the team's allocated space, the team bears all responsibility to ensure correction of tent placement.
11. No hay, straw, shavings, or similar combustible materials are allowed on the grounds.
12. Teams wishing to utilize perimeter fencing within their allocated spaces will be allowed to do so if it is secure.

## **TENTS**

1. Tent companies may be scheduled to set up between 8:00 am and 8:00 pm on Thursday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2026.
2. Tent tear-down can begin on Sunday, November 1st, 2026, at 8:00 am.
3. No stakes will be allowed on any tent. ALL TENTS MUST BE WATER BARRELED.
4. Personal "pop up tents" will be allowed. These types of tents must be secured by sandbags or concrete stanchions.
5. Tent stakes or other devices that damage the blacktop or concrete surface in any way are prohibited.

6. It is the responsibility of the cook-off team to abide by all tent requirements as noted in the attached City of Pasadena Fire Marshal's Office document.

## **ELECTRICITY & WATER**

1. Limited spaces will have electricity available.
2. Limited spaces will have water available. Hoses must be provided by the cook teams.
3. All generators supplied by the cook teams must be diesel powered as per the Pasadena Fire Code.

(Pete will call fire Marshall to verify)

## **TRASH**

1. Trash receptacles will be placed throughout the contest area for contestants' use.
2. It is the contestant's responsibility to have their trash readily available to be emptied into the trash trailer when it arrives at their space. Plastic trash liners will be furnished after check-in.
3. No free liquids or glass should be put into trash bags, barrels, or boxes.
4. No hot coal or heavy trash should be put in trash bags, barrels, or boxes.
5. Each cook team is responsible for fully cleaning their entire cook space/spaces. SEER is not responsible for cleaning up of spaces. If the spaces are not clean at the end of the BBQ cookoff, the team will not be invited to participate in the 2027 BBQ Cook-off. NO EXCEPTIONS.

## **PITS**

1. Each participating team is restricted to one (1) competition pit per space (1 firebox).
2. Contestants are not allowed to share cooking equipment.
3. Fires must be wood or wood substances. No electric pits will be allowed.
4. Metal pans must be provided by the cook-off teams and placed under the opening of the firebox to prevent damage to the blacktop or concrete surface or catching the grass on fire.
5. Drip pans must be placed under all grease drains to prevent damage to the blacktop or concrete surface and/or damaging the grass.

## **PORT-A-CAN & MOTOR HOME (RV) SERVICE**

1. Service will be available by event preferred vendor

2. It is the responsibility of the cook team and/or RV owners to contact vendor to reserve and pay for service prior to the contest.
3. The port-a-can should be placed in an area inside the cooking space that will be easily accessible for cleaning, and it is the cook team's responsibility to arrange for their port-a-can to be cleaned.

## **COOK TEAMS RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Each cook team with air conditioning must furnish their own drain line and water overflow must be drained into the city drain system or a concealed container. It is the cook team's responsibility to ensure that this is done.
2. Under no circumstances will drain water be allowed to drain into adjoining cooking spaces.
3. The SEER can assist with unloading/loading AC units if equipment is available; however, SEER is not responsible for any damage which may be incurred.
4. The head cook is responsible for the conduct of their team and guests.
5. Each cook team must comply with all laws pertaining to the serving and consumption of alcoholic beverages.
6. Under no circumstances are alcoholic beverages to be distributed to the general public by anyone.
7. NO ONE UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE SHALL BE SERVED OR ALLOWED TO CONSUME ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES WHILE ANYWHERE ON THE GROUNDS.
8. Any cook team having inappropriate entertainment, contests, sales, raffles, etc. will be asked to leave the contest area and will be disqualified from the competition.
9. Cook teams with an enclosed area to which the public is not allowed must furnish their own security.
10. Each cook team must comply with all laws pertaining to the serving and consumption of alcoholic beverages.
11. All spaces must be left clean of all debris and trash. If it is not clean, the team will not be invited back to the 2027 cook-off. NO EXCEPTIONS.
12. Tear-down may begin the morning of Sunday, November 9th, however:
  - a. Each space number must always remain visible.
  - b. Vehicles will not be allowed into cook-off area prior to 9:00 a.m.
  - c. All vehicles must be escorted out during SF hours.

**The following guidelines are recommended by the City of Pasadena Health Department. All teams are required to follow these guidelines.**

1. A cover is required over all open food preparation areas.
2. Three (3) containers of water must be utilized at all times, one gallon minimum each:
  - a. 1st container – Soap & water for washing unless sink and running water are available and useable.
  - b. 2nd container – Clean water for rinsing unless a sink & running water are available and useable.
  - c. 3rd container – 1 cup of bleach per gallon of water for sanitizing.
3. All food must be kept covered.
4. Keep cold food stored on ice or refrigerated at all times. Food must be maintained at 40°.
5. Heated food should be maintained at 140°.
6. Smoking tobacco is not permitted in food serving areas.

## **SAFETY**

1. One (1) portable fire extinguisher 10# Type “K” or 1 10# ABC per space and in view at all times.
2. Each team that utilizes a diesel generator, electrical hook-up or propane tank shall have a 5# multipurpose ABC or BC fire extinguisher readily available. Any use of a fryer will require a Type “K” extinguisher in addition to the ABC extinguisher.
3. Fire extinguishers must be inspected and tagged within the year by a fire equipment company in the State of Texas or the team must have a new purchase receipt for the extinguisher. See attached Fire Marshall’s check list.

## **ANIMALS**

1. ONLY registered Service Animals are allowed on the fairgrounds per the rules of the Pasadena Convention Center. Service animals must be contained either by being crated, caged or on a leash at all times. No animal will be allowed to run loose.
2. No animals of any kind will be permitted in designated food preparation areas or the Judging/Scoring area.

## **COOKS MEETING**

1. Thursday October 29<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30pm in Campbell Hall. This meeting will include:
  - a. Explanation of the rules
  - b. Q&A session for clarification of rules, etc.

2. Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00 am in the Rodeo Arena. This meeting will include:
  - a. Distribution of turn-in containers

## **CHECK IN**

1. Thursday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 am – All equipment 26' and over may start moving in (cooking trailers, RVs, etc.)
2. Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 am – All other equipment may start moving in.
3. All vehicles must be out of the cook-off area by 1:00 pm on Friday October 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **VEHICLES & EQUIPMENT**

1. Gates to thru traffic will be locked at 1:00 pm on Friday October 30<sup>th</sup>.
2. No vehicle will be allowed to enter or leave the contest area after 1:00 on Friday October 30<sup>th</sup> NO EXCEPTIONS.
3. Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES will contestants block any aisle after set-up period ends at 1:00 pm on Friday October 30<sup>th</sup>.
4. Vehicles not removed from cook-off area by 1:00 on Friday October 30<sup>th</sup>, will be subject to removal by a wrecker at the contestant's expense.
5. Under no circumstances will any contestant or member of the public be allowed to bring onto the grounds any of the following: golf carts, motor vehicles, carts, bicycles, roller skates, hoverboards, skateboards, scooters, Segways, remote-controlled toys, drones, motorized coolers, or any other type of transportation, EXCEPT for wheelchairs for handicapped individuals. Use of any of the above-mentioned items would justify a cook team's disqualification.

## **BEER & ICE**

1. In order to support our main purpose, Emergency Responders, it is recommended that each team purchase 5 cases of beverage (i.e., beer, water, soft drinks) PER SPACE from the SEER Event, i.e., 1 space = 5 case's; 2 spaces = 10 cases and 3 spaces = 15 cases.
2. ALL ICE MUST BE PURCHASED FROM THE SEER EVENT (ONCE YOU ARRIVE ON-SITE).
3. Under no circumstances will outside BEER, ICE or COLD DRINK VENDORS be allowed into the contest area.
4. AT NO TIME, will cooks be allowed to re-stock beer or ice from outside the cookoff.

## **BANDS/PERFORMERS**

1. Private Tent Bands/performers for Saturday night must be pre-registered with SEER. Any cook-off team having a band/performer (or musical equipment) that requires entry into the cooking area after 11:00 am on Saturday October 31st, must submit a Band Registration Form to the SEER office by 5:00pm on Monday October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

2. BANDS/PERFORMERS/MUSIC MUST END ALL PERFORMANCES BY 11 pm EVERY NIGHT. THIS IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PASADENA FAIRGROUND ORDINANCE AND WILL BE CAUSE FOR DISQUALIFICATION.

## **GENERAL CONTEST JUDGING RULES**

1. There will be trophies, for 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> place Brisket and for 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> place Pork Ribs and 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> for Chicken.

2. A cook team's entry fee entitles contestants to enter the Pork Spareribs, Brisket and Chicken. You are allowed one (1) entry per category per space.

3. Judging will be held in Campbell Hall unless otherwise noted.

4. Chicken and Pork Spareribs turn-in times will begin FIFTEEN (15) MINUTES PRIOR to the scheduled judging time. It is the team's responsibility to ensure the entries are delivered to the judging area in a timely manner.

5. Competition Brisket must be inspected by a Team Rep PRIOR to cutting. A Team Rep will observe the cutting and packaging of the brisket. A team member, with the brisket cut, will then be taken, by golf cart, to Campbell Hall for delivery to be judged.

6. All golf carts used for pick-up must report to the Team Rep area fifteen (15) minutes prior to 1:00 on Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026.

7. SEER utilizes a "Blind Judging" system that is based on a duplicate numbered ticket which will be utilized in all judging categories.

a. Blind judging consists of ½ of a double ticket being enclosed in a small envelope and being secured by duct tape to the bottom of the turn-in container.

b. The 2nd half of the ticket is placed inside the container. This ticket should be retained by the contestant.

8. Any container that appears to have been deliberately marked or altered will be referred to the General Chairman of the Judging and Scoring Committee who will rule on disqualification.

9. If a container gets damaged, tell your Team Rep or bring it to the Team Rep area so that it can be replaced.

10. All entries will be scored on a scale of 1 to 10 in each of the judging criteria with 10 being the highest score possible. In case of a tie, the computer will be used to break the tie.

11. In addition to the categories listed above, a trophy will also be awarded for Hospitality.
12. Sauces, garnishes or foil are not allowed in the judging container and will be grounds for disqualification.

## **HOSPITALITY JUDGING**

1. Judging will occur in the team's cooking space.
2. Nudity and lewdness will not be allowed or tolerated. Violation of this rule by any contestant will result in immediate disqualification of that team.
3. Teams of judges must be able to enter each participating team space to judge the space and will be anonymous.

## **CHICKEN**

1. Judging will begin at 11:00 am on Saturday, November 8th.
2. Entries must be turned into the Judging Area in the Campbell Hall.
3. Judging container must contain ½ chicken, fully jointed which includes breast, wing, thigh & drumstick plus additional cut-up pieces of both white and dark meat for judging.
4. NO CORNISH GAME HENS will be allowed and will be grounds for disqualification.
5. Sauces, garnishes, or foil will not be allowed in the judging container and will be grounds for disqualification.
6. All chicken entries must be cooked on-site.
7. Trophies will be awarded for 1st through 5th places. Placement #1 through 10 will be posted.

## **PORK SPARERIBS**

1. Judging will begin at 12:30 pm on October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026.
2. Entries must be turned in to the Judging Area in the Campbell Center.
3. Turn-ins will consist of pork spareribs only with knuckles removed.
4. Turn-in container should be full, at least 8 ribs should be provided.
5. Sauces, garnishes or foil will not be allowed in the judging container and will be grounds for disqualification.
6. All pork sparerib entries must be cooked on-site.

7. Trophies will be awarded 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> places. Placement #1 through 10 will be posted.

## **BRISKET INSPECTION**

1. Brisket inspection WILL BEGIN at 10:00 am on Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Only brisket should be in their original vacuum-sealed packaging.

2. No contest brisket will be allowed on pits before being tagged on Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

3. Each team will be allowed to tag two (2) briskets per cook space. Only one brisket per space will be allowed for competition entry.

4. Pre-cooked, salted, seasoned, or marinated meat is not allowed prior to being tagged.

5. Fires must be wood or wood substances, no electric or gas fires are allowed.

## **BRISKET PICK-UP AND JUDGING**

1. Brisket verification will begin at 1:00 pm on Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026. Judging will begin as soon as all entries are turned in, approximately 2:00 pm.

2. Contestants will have fifteen (15) minutes in which to provide their Team Rep with their brisket entry for tag verification and to slice the brisket in the presence of the Team Rep and present it for judging entry. The Head Cook or a team member will be transported via golf cart driven by a SEER representative to make their turn-in at Campbell Hall.

3. Only the cut from one (1) tagged brisket will be allowed for competition entry. There are no exceptions to this rule.

4. The turn-in container should be completely filled. This is double elimination judging so make sure you have enough briskets for two (2) judging tables.

5. Sauces may be used during the cooking process but cannot be applied for entry presentation or judging.

6. Sauces, garnishes or foil will not be allowed in the judging container and will be grounds for disqualification.

7. All brisket entries must be cooked on-site.

8. Trophies will be awarded 1st through 5th places. Placement #1 through 10 will be posted.

## **DESSERTS**

1. Judging will begin at 3 pm on Saturday, October 31, 2026.
2. Desserts MUST INCLUDE HALLOWEEN Theme.
3. Desserts should be enough for 6 Judges. Lids do not have to close on this entry.
4. Trophies will be awarded 1st through 5<sup>th</sup> places. Placement #1 through #10 will be posted.

## **HOSPITALITY**

1. Judging will occur in the team's space.
2. Judges must be able to enter each participating team space to judge the space. Judges are anonymous and will be judging Friday and Saturday.
3. The winner of the Hospitality Award will be announced at the Awards Ceremony on Saturday, October 31, 2026

## **AWARDS**

1. Awards will be held at 5:00 pm on Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026.
2. Only one (1) person from each winning team should report to the verification table with the winning ticket.
3. Group photos will be taken. Please have your team together and ready to take a photo immediately after each award presentation.

## **TEAR-DOWN AND EXIT**

1. Tear-down may begin on Sunday morning at 9:00 am.
2. Vehicles may start entering at 9:00 a.m. Sunday for loading and exit through the BBQ Gate.
3. All space numbers must be visible during tear-down.
4. ALL COOK SPACES MUST BE LEFT CLEAN OR THE TEAM WILL NOT BE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2025 COOK-OFF.
5. As a safety precaution for the cook-off teams and PSF personnel, ALL cook-off traffic MUST exit via the BBQ Gate. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this. We are looking forward to another fun and successful SEER BBQ Cook-off!! As always, we greatly appreciate your support and thank you for your participation!