



RIP'S RIBS COOK-OFF 2026

RULES & GUIDELINES

Eastland Chamber of Commerce, 209 W. Main Street, Eastland, Texas 76448

www.RipsRibs.com | chamber@eastland.net | (254) 629-2332

Saturday, April 11, 2026 | 9:00 am – 6:00 pm | Rain or Shine

Thank you for being a part of the 2026 Rip's Ribs Cook-Off. We appreciate your participation!

This is our 13th year to put on the Rip's Ribs Cook-Off, and it has been put together through a cooperative effort by the Eastland Chamber of Commerce, Chamber Yearly Sponsors, Eastland Economic Development, City of Eastland, and numerous volunteers.

We all recognize the fact that an event such as this is a learning process, and as such, we know that we may encounter minor "glitches" here and there. If you encounter a problem during the event, please let us know so that we may work to make this a great event that you want to participate in for years to come. We anticipate that Rip's Ribs Cook-Off will continue to grow and improve, and it will be a fun and exciting event for all. We hope you have a great time and make many new friends while you compete for cash prizes!

There will be a MANDATORY COOK'S MEETING at 9:00 am on the day of the event. All additional questions and information will be handled at that time. You will not be eligible to cook if you are not at the meeting.

Some simple rules:

1. All vehicles must be out of the event area by 8:00 AM.
2. No ATV's or golf carts will be allowed in the event area after 8:00AM except event staff vehicles.
3. Eastland has designated an open container area that includes the cook-off and wine festival zones. No glass bottles, or visible kegs allowed. Please use plastic cups or koozies for any alcoholic beverages. No alcohol allowed on Courthouse property.
4. **Cook Teams will provide their own St.Louis-style Ribs. The Eastland Chamber WILL NOT be providing ribs this year!**
5. You may give away and/or sell non-competition provided ribs to the public.
6. **You may sell food to the public but per the TXDSHS, vendors must have up-to-date food and health department related permits and licenses while also adhering to local, state, or federal health regulations regarding the serving and/or selling of food items.** The Eastland Chamber of Commerce does suggest that all food vendors practice food handling protocols (ie. gloves, wash hands, and disinfect surfaces regularly). If you have any questions, please call the Chamber Office at 254-629-2332 or email chamber@eastland.net.
7. You may cook the meat in any manner you wish; however, the meat may not be branded, marked, garnished, or arranged in any manner to identify the cooker or team. Any such marked entry will be disqualified.
8. You will need to turn in **6 ribs to the judges.**
9. Cooking team entries will be evenly and randomly split between 2 tables of 3 judges which will consist of a combination of celebrity judges and BBQ experts with at least 1 BBQ expert at each table. The teams with the top 5 highest scores at each table will continue onto the 2nd round to be judged by at least 2 BBQ experts (1 pulled from each table from round 1) and 1 celebrity or BBQ expert judge. The top 5 teams from each table from round 1 will be scored a 2nd time to get the top 10 places. Final top 5 scoring teams will win 1st – 5th Place Cash Prizes.
10. Ribs will be judged based on taste, appearance, texture, and tenderness. Weighted scores will be given as such: Appearance - .5600, Taste – 2.2972, Tenderness - 1.1428.
11. Judges' rulings will be final.
12. **NEW! Optional Categories: Bloody Mary, Chicken, Wild Game, Beef, Margaritas. Sign up for one or more categories.** You will turn in your entries at the same location as the ribs. Entries are to be inside the provided container with a color-coded ticket taped to the bottom for the corresponding category. Judges for the **Optional Categories only** will be adults selected at random.
13. The Eastland Chamber of Commerce staff will be happy to answer any questions you may have about event procedures. On the day of the Cook-Off, you can reach Chamber staff by cell phone, Julie (254) 631-6790.

LET'S MAKE SOME SMOKE!