



2025 PICKLES, PIGS & SWIGS OFFICIAL COOK TEAM RULES

SANCTIONED EVENT

This event is sanctioned by the North Carolina Pork Council's Whole Hog Barbecue Championship Series. For a complete list of the Core Rules, please go to [Sanctioning - Whole Hog Barbecue Series \(wpengine.com\)](https://www.wpengine.com)

JUDGING CATEGORY

Judging will be based on the Product Quality category, and participation is limited to 20 teams. Prizes will be awarded as follows:

First Place: \$1,200
Second Place: \$600
Third Place: \$300

SET UP

The contest will be held in the parking area of the Arlene G. Talton Municipal Center (Mount Olive Town Hall) at 114 East James Street, Mount Olive, NC.

The Cook Teams Coordinator will number and pre-assign all cooking spaces. No changes will be allowed.

A Contest official will direct each team to its site. Teams must be checked in no later than 6:00 p.m. on Friday, November 7, 2025. The Cook Teams meeting is set for 6:30 p.m. at R&R Brewing, 541 NW Center Street.

Teams will be permitted to begin setting up their equipment any time after 3:00 p.m., Friday, November 7, 2025. Set up prior to 3:00 p.m. is prohibited.

Each cooking space will measure 20' x 24' and is limited to one pig/cooker per space. There will be room for a tent and one (1) vehicle parked beside it.

All cookers and equipment must be removed no later than 6:00 p.m., Saturday, November 8, 2025, unless special permission is granted. Neither Pickles, Pigs & Swigs organizers nor the Town of Mount Olive shall be responsible for any cookers or equipment left on the premises before 3:00 p.m. Friday, November 7 or after 6:00 p.m., Saturday, November 8, 2025.

All cook teams must be discrete with any alcoholic beverages consumed on the Festival premises. Law enforcement officers will be present.

Cook teams must respect the rights of others in attendance for Pickles, Pigs & Swigs, with special emphasis from each team member relating to loud music, loud or profane language or infringement on

adjoining sites with any equipment, cookers, cars, campers, vans, pickups, etc. Curfew for quiet time will be midnight. Security will be provided throughout the evening.

COMPETITION

An introduction of teams and sponsors, followed by the Chief Cooks Briefing (Cook Teams Meeting) is set for 6:30 p.m. on Friday, November 7, 2025 at R&R Brewing. Attendance is mandatory.

Each cook team shall have one person designated as Chief Cook. The Chief Cook is the only person permitted to present the pig during the judging process.

Teams must use above ground cookers. Any gas cookers used must meet safety standards, including proper regulators, secured tanks to prevent toppling, and any other requirements the Cook Teams Coordinator deems for safety precautions.

THE USE OF GASOLINE FOR ANY PURPOSE IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

Gloves are not required, but a basin of water and soap are mandatory for cleanliness purposes.

Pigs should not be sauced, inside or out. Those pigs that have been sauced will be disqualified.

No external heat source, including pepper and certain spices, may be used other than the grill. Some examples might include, but are not limited to, heat guns and torches. Those using external heat sources will be disqualified. (Read more about this in the Core Rules.)

Injecting pigs will not be allowed. Some examples might include, but are not limited to, sauce and product drippings. Those injecting pigs will be disqualified.

Once judging is completed, the pigs shall be kept warm until turned over to Contest officials. All pigs must be turned in whole.

Contestants must remove the cooked pork from the grill, CHOP, and ADD SAUCE provided by Contest Staff. Contestants must then place chopped and sauced pork in the provided containers and deliver to the designated Chop Tent. Contestants not turning in whole pigs or removing cooked pork from the grill will be disqualified.

JUDGING PROCESS & PRIZES

The Judges Coordinator will accompany the judges while the pigs are being judged. The coordinator will collect score sheets. The score sheets will contain no information that in any manner identifies the cooks or sponsors.

The Judges Coordinator and Pickles, Pigs & Swigs volunteers, and not the judges, will total and grand total the score sheets.

In the event of a tie, Contest Staff will refer back to the judging sheets, and the winner will be determined by the highest points in the meat taste category. If a tie still exists, the highest points in skin crispness, then moisture, will determine the winner.

The Cook Teams Coordinator will distribute the score sheets to the Chief Cooks only, following the announcement of winners. Score sheets may be given out that day, or, they may be emailed or mailed to the Chief Cooks after the event.

Contest winners will be announced at approximately 11 a.m. on Saturday, November 8, 2025, or as soon as judging is completed and results are calculated. Contest organizers will present prizes to the Chief Cooks at that time. Financial prizes will be paid by check only. Contestants must provide instructions on their applications as to how prize checks should be written. Failure to provide this information in advance may result in a team's delay in receiving its prize money.

GENERAL / CANCELLATION POLICIES

Cook teams are required to keep their cooking area free of trash. Trash containers will be provided throughout the cook area. Each team is responsible for site cleanup at the end of the contest.

Submission of a completed application and payment are required in order to reserve a team's spot in the competition. Online registration and payment are available at www.picklespigsswigs.com. Applications will be received online only for 2024.

Team fees are non-refundable. Additionally, any team that cancels after Wednesday, November 6, 2024 will be invoiced for its pig.

Questions? Contact Cook Team Coordinator Josh Singleton, 919-222-0869, or jsingleton302@gmail.com.