



## Why Organize an EasyCookoff.app Event?

Cook-offs are an exciting way to bring friends, family, and communities together. Whether you are a seasoned pitmaster, chef, or someone who just enjoys tasty food, hosting a competition can be a rewarding experience. This engaging event allows participants to highlight their culinary skills while providing something delicious for attendees to enjoy. In this comprehensive guide, we will take you through the steps necessary to plan and host a successful **EasyCookoff.app** competition that will have everyone talking about for years.

Before diving into the nitty-gritty of planning, it is essential to understand the **value of the EasyCookoff.app** for your event. Here are some compelling reasons to organize an event with the app:

- **Community Engagement:** Cook-off events foster camaraderie and bring people together.
- **Showcase Culinary Skills:** Participants can demonstrate their grilling techniques and recipes.
- **Raise Funds for a Cause:** Cook-offs can serve as fundraisers for local charities or community projects. People's choice events can bring in substantial funds for your cause.
- **Fun and Entertainment:** Cook-off events are entertaining for all ages.

With these benefits in mind, let us explore how to efficiently organize a memorable cook-off.

## Steps to Organize Your EasyCookoff.app Event.

Organizing a cook-off involves steps, from planning to executing the event. It is a commitment to spend the time needed to get the first event off the ground. **EasyCookoff.app** recommends that organizers start months before the event date to find sponsors and volunteers. These two important things can make or break your event. From the financial component to pulling off the event that day with physical help. Financial help with sponsorship will allow for larger cash prizes and trophies. Substantial payouts will attract teams to your event and could be the deciding factor for them to choose your event over others. Continuing this year after year will ensure a healthy event for years to come.

## Step 1: Define Your Goals and Objectives

Before planning, determine **what you hope to accomplish** with the cook-off. Are you looking to raise money for a local charity, create community engagement, or just have fun? Your goals will guide your decisions throughout the planning process.

## Step 2: Select a Date and Location

Choosing the right date and location is crucial. Consider the following:

- **Date or dates:** Look for other similar events nearby so you do not compete with those events, as teams may have to choose. Have the event in conjunction to a town's yearly festival to attract participation by teams and to recruit the public for people's choice judges.
- **Location:** Select a venue large enough to accommodate participants and attendees. Community parks, local sports fields, or even your backyard could work. Ensure the spot has accessibility to facilities like bathrooms and parking.
- **Amenities:** Electricity and water for teams is appreciated, and if electricity cannot be furnished, consider allowing small generators and make clear in the rules what is and what is not furnished/allowed.
- **Easy sign up, communication, and scoring: EasyCookoff.app** communicates to teams you care about making the process easier and the electronic scores component at the end of the event is an incredible feature. Teams know that the app will not have the typical problems with outdated spreadsheets. Improper scoring can be a problem for organizers and can mean poor credibility for future cookoffs.

## Step 3: Develop a Budget and find Sponsors!

A realistic budget helps keep your event financially sustainable. Consider the following expenses:

- Venue rental.
- Permits (food service and event permits).
- Advertising and marketing.
- Equipment (tents, tables, and more).
- Food and supplies for judges.
- Trophies: teams love hardware!

- Gift bags for the teams are a great touch with sponsor coupons, gift cards, t-shirts, branded drink tumblers, supplies, stickers and more. Include their advertisements as well. It is a special touch of appreciation for your competitors. Gift bags can be given out anytime during the event, during the cook's meeting, or at the awards ceremony as a thank you for attending.
- Allow sponsors to set up a booth to talk about their goods and services, especially if you have a People's Choice component for your event. Using level sponsorships, such as bronze, silver, gold, and platinum sponsorships.
- Hang sponsor banners.
- Invite food trucks/ bar stations to enhance the experience if you organize a People's Choice component.

#### **Step 4: Choose the BBQ Categories**

Defining the competition categories will provide structure for your event. Common categories include:

- **Beef Brisket**
- **Pork Ribs: they are the most popular meat used for a single meat event, as it can be combined with a People's Choice or a Ribfest event as well.**
- **Chicken**
- **Pork Shoulder**
- **Ancillaries such as deserts, drinks, and foods with a type of ingredient in mind such as "anything turkey" or "anything bacon."**
- **People's Choice cookoff: Give teams back money for each rib served at the people's choice and be sure to advertise that to attract team participation.**
- **Steak cookoffs are becoming popular as well.**

**EasyCookoff.app** can add an open category for ancillary items like "anything turkey" to add a nontraditional item to the event. Ancillary cookoffs are appealing to teams so they can stretch their creativity.

## Step 5: Recruit Participants

Attracting **participants** is key to a successful cook-off. Use various methods to reach out:

- **EasyCookoff.app** has an event search function where your event is listed for teams to locate your event and sign up, sorting by date or location.
- Create a flyer for the event, including payouts and the cause for teams and community members to consider. It can be as simple as the example below with directions where to sign up.

The image displays three promotional flyers for BBQ events. The left flyer is for the Kelly Thronson Memorial BBQ Contest 2016, held on Saturday, Sept. 6 in ADA, MN, with prizes for Best Ribs (\$500, \$250, \$100), Best Chicken (\$250, \$150, \$50), and a People's Choice traveling trophy. The middle flyer is for the 9th Annual Pitmasters Barbecue Contest on Saturday, Sept. 6, 2025, at Southbrook Golf Club in Anandale, MI, featuring a judged competition with an entry fee of \$100 and prizes for Best Rib, Best Chicken, and Best Wings. The right flyer is for the Double Rib Burn on Sept. 20th, 2025, at Liberty Fireworks in Nicoma Park, OK, with entry fees of \$125 for ribs and \$50 for chicken wings, and prizes for 1st through 6th place in both categories. It also includes information about a silent auction, raffle, and gift card bag.

- List your event on local event platforms such as city websites if available.
- Promote via social media channels.
- Give incentives such as awards, gift bags, or cash prizes.
- Offer cash prizes that are as generous as possible to attract teams to the event.
- Organize a “People’s Choice” contest to foster community engagement, to raise awareness and dollars for your cause by selling rib cards.
- For a People’s Choice cookoff, consider profit sharing with teams; paying teams for each rib ticket redeemed so they can cover their costs. Food Sports are a fun hobby and can be costly. It is becoming more common to pay a team \$1 or more for each rib ticket handed in. If a 5-rib card sells for \$15, and giving back \$5 of that income helps teams offset costs and it will attract more teams to your event.
- Awards should be as elaborate as possible as teams love to win hardware! Trophies are great and WWE style belts for People’s Choice events are growing in popularity.



• **Make sure to have a straightforward registration process.**

Use the **EasyCookoff.app** as it collects necessary details, including the participant's name, team name, categories entered, and contact information along with the ability to take registration payments! It offers other benefits for the participant and organizer as well. Take credit card payments, or you can choose to accept cash or check payments.

The app assigns teams to the event and has advanced scoring capabilities along with features such as:

- Excellent communication capabilities between organizers and teams, and team to team communication.
- Team Captains can invite team members to the app via email.
- Search for events in your area.
- Team/organizer tracking current and past events, with scores and comparative data.
- Assigning judges to judging tables.
- Printable and emailed scores after the awards ceremony.
- Ability to share the event through the app to social media by teams and organizers.
- Instructions on how and where to pay for entry fees. (Cash, Check, Venmo or PayPal)
- Organizers set the team count and can adjust up to the day of the event.
- Sign-ups are approved or rejected before payment.
- Organizers can post rules, site maps and other .pdf for teams and contestants to reference as well as pictures of the event location and trophies are desired.
- Peace of mind of not using an unreliable scoring spreadsheet.
- Tracks all cookoffs that the teams enter perpetually for later reference and compiles historical data.
- Check out the app and website for more information at **EasyCookoff.app!**

## Step 6: Assemble a Judging Panel

A credible judging panel adds legitimacy to your cook-off. Invite local chefs, food bloggers, and BBQ aficionados to serve as judges. Brief them on judging criteria, which may include appearance, taste, and tenderness. Community members such as city officials and business leaders give your event another layer of community involvement. Reference sanctioning bodies to emulate rules and judging criteria. Find sanctioned trained judges to judge and/or train event judges. The **EasyCookoff.app** uses sanctioning body logic.

**EasyCookoff.app** judging scorecards are free to download and once scoring is completed, scores are entered into the app and can be provided to teams for feedback on their turn-in boxes.

**Tip:** Consider having a People's Choice award, which allows the audience to vote for their favorite team. People's Choice events are referenced in this document.

Email [support@easycookoff.app](mailto:support@easycookoff.app) for more information if needed. Please refer to the People's Choice document for more information.

## Step 7: Plan Logistics

Efficient coordination is vital for the smooth execution of your cook-off. Focus on the following aspects:

### A. Permits and Health Guidelines

Check with local health departments for any required permits, especially if food is sold. Understand regulations regarding food safety, waste disposal, and sanitation.

### B. Equipment and Supplies

Ensure you recommend the teams that sign up have all necessary equipment, such as:

- Grills and smokers (most important)
- Tents for shade
- First-aid kits
- Trash and recycling bins.
- Metal ash containers
- Rubs, sauces, utensils, nitrile, or vinyl food gloves.
- Soaps and sanitizing wipes.
- Paper food boats to hand out people's choice rib samples to the public.
- If possible, offer water and electricity to teams.

## C. Create a Schedule

A detailed schedule during the event ensures everything runs smoothly. Include time slots for setup, cooking, judging, and awards presentations.

### Step 8: Marketing Your EasyCookoff.app event.

Visibility is vital for participation and attendance. Use a blend of traditional and digital marketing strategies:

- **EasyCookoff.app:** Utilize Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to engage with your audience and share updates and direct teams to download the app to sign up. The app can be used by anyone to find event cookoffs including People's Choice events for free using a zip code or date search. Encourage anyone you invite to your event to download the **EasyCookoff.app** for information about your event.
- **Social Media Campaigns:** Utilize Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to engage with your audience and share updates.
- **Local Press:** Reach out to local newspapers and radio stations for coverage. Your event is local news, and they welcome the information.
- **Flyers and Posters:** Distribute materials in community centers, restaurants, and shops to attract local interest.

### Step 9: Execute the Event

On the day of the competition, ensure all personnel know their roles. Here is a checklist for the day:

- Have your team spots labeled and be present to help teams find their area to set up. The **EasyCookoff.app** can list a map/picture of the event area for teams to reference.
- Set up the people's choice/team registration booth early. Post on the tent a schedule of when milestones happen such as box turn ins and when People's Choice ticket sales will be sold. Communicate clear timing to the public so teams and the public can have the time to get ready for "People's Choice" judging.
- Ensure judges understand the judging criteria and have all necessary materials. Hold a judge's meeting to explain the criteria. Use **EasyCookoff.app** scorecards to track the scores to enter later into the app. Provide the cards to teams at the end of the event for reference as there are comment sections.
- Keep communication lines open among organizers, participants, and volunteers.

- Have a plan to manage food safety and heating procedures.
- Have an early morning cook's meeting to inform teams about the day's events/milestones and to discuss judging criteria, along with rules to box turn in and turn in times. Mention that **EasyCookoff.app** will push out the team scores after the awards ceremony to the team accounts and by email. Urge teams to post pictures of the event on their Facebook and other social media pages, and to tag the event page throughout the day to attract the public.
- Gift bags for the teams are a great touch, Sponsor coupons, gift cards, gifts, t-shirts, stickers and more. Include their advertisements as well. It is an added special touch of appreciation for your competitors.
- For People's Choice, offer paper boats for the teams to hand out their samples. This is a common item that teams forget to provide.
- Consider a 9:22 am team shot to foster comradery. This is a KCBS tradition.
- Use Facebook to post updates on your event page during the cooking time of the event, interview teams with your phone and use it as a "countdown" every hour to hour and a half to the turn in time to promote the event and to foster excitement. Highlight teams on social media.

### **Step 10: The Award Ceremony**

This part of the event adds an exciting and formal touch to your **EasyCookoff.app** event.

Celebrate the challenging work of your participants with an award ceremony. Recognize winners in each category and offer trophies or certificates as keepsakes. Consider recording the event and doing a "Facebook Live" and/or "Tik Toc Live" for the public to see the energy and fun at the event.

Provide quality awards to winning teams to attract year after year team attendance to your event. Offer awards as deep into the field as possible. Prizes such as sponsor gift cards for lower places go a long way. Teams appreciate recognition even at lower places, especially if it is their first cookoff. If your event has sixteen teams, consider awards to eighth or lower places no matter how small the award might be. This is an excellent time to offer gift bags to teams as a thank you and is another distinctive touch.

## Post-Event Activities

Once the cook-off is over, it is important to wrap things up positively. Here are post-event activities to consider:

### 1. Gather Feedback

Reach out to participants and attendees to gather feedback about the event. **EasyCookoff.app** can provide an Event Feedback Form. Use the information to improve future competitions. Pass out the comment card provided to solicit team feedback and ask them to hand it in before they leave and keep them anonymous and ask teams to send over event pictures taken during the event for future event promotion.

### 2. Share Highlights

Use social media to share highlights, photos, and videos from the event. Tag participants and encourage them to share within their networks. Teams and Organizers can use **EasyCookoff.app** to share the event on social media pages. Consider recording the event and doing a “Facebook Live” and/or “Tik Toc Live” for the public to see the energy and fun at the event.

### 3. Consider Your Next Event

If your event was a success, think about making it an annual tradition. Planning helps you build upon successes and refine aspects of the event. **EasyCookoff.app** can list your next event!

## Conclusion

Organizing cook-off can be a fun and fulfilling experience that strengthens community ties and shows culinary talents. By carefully planning each aspect—from defining goals to executing the day of the event—you can create a memorable experience for everyone involved.

Strong community support, effective marketing, and a passion for competition cooking will ensure your event stands out. So, fire up those grills, gather your friends, and get ready for an incredible Food Sport showdown.

Be sure to celebrate the event on social media and shout outs to the teams, volunteers, and sponsors to say thanks for their hard work.

The **EasyCookoff.app** is a great tool for organizers and competitors! The ease of use with friendly features, and the ability to accurately score and to take payments enhances the experience for teams and organizers will love!