

Wing-Off 2023: Rules, Regulations, and Procedures

Registration

A “cook” is defined as anyone, regardless of age, that participates by preparing, cooking, or otherwise handling food at the event. All cooks must be registered via the form on the Contact page of the website. This is necessary for planning purposes and to ensure eligibility for the receipt of any donated wings.

All cooks should review Central District Health’s food handling and safety videos, which are available on the website.

Wing Donations

In the past, sponsors such as Sysco, Tyson, Smart Chicken and Food Services of America have donated wings to the Wing-Off. Any such donations are much appreciated and can be registered via the website’s Contact page.

The number of donated wings available will vary based on suppliers’ economic environment. On a good year, there have been sufficient wings to supply each registered cook 20+ pounds, but this is not guaranteed, and teams should be prepared to supply their own wings should the need arise. Donated wings will only be distributed to cooks that are registered for the event.

Information for Cooks

For competitive purposes, everyone is recommended to prepare food at the event as much as possible, rather than beforehand. If you fall ill before or during the event, DO NOT participate in cooking.

All food should be stored at or below 41 degrees Fahrenheit (5 degrees Celsius). Raw food is not to be handled directly, and gloves must be used when cooking. Cooked food should be handled with tongs or other utensils that have not been in contact with raw food. After contact with raw chicken, utensils must be cleaned to prevent cross-contamination.

Chicken must reach an internal temperature gauged by a meat thermometer of 165 degrees Fahrenheit (74 degrees Celsius). A thermometer may be soaked in ice water to verify proper operation, which is determined if the submerged thermometer reads 32 degrees Fahrenheit (0 degrees Celsius).

Warning labels will be provided and must be used for recipes that are extremely spicy or contain allergens, such as nuts.

The ideal configuration for dishwashing consists of four tubs containing, in order of use for cleaning, water and dish soap, water, water and bleach, water. A fifth tub is recommended for air drying.

Recommended Items

- Cooking platform of your choice (grill, smoker, Dutch oven, etc.)
- Fire extinguisher

- Gloves
- Matches or lighter
- Fuel
- Spray bottle with water
- Multiple sets of tongs
- Meat thermometer
- Canopy
- Chairs
- Coolers
- Tables
- Sunscreen
- Signs to identify your recipes with

Cooking Platform Notes

It is each cook's responsibility to safely contain and remove all cooking materials such as charcoal, fryer oil, trash, etc., from the event. Park personnel will be on-site for trash removal, but any remaining trash must be packed out. Oil collection containers may or may not be provided, so all teams using cooking oil must be prepared to remove and dispose of their own oil.

Any damage to park grounds resulting from improper management of materials, cooking-related or otherwise, is the financial responsibility of the team in question. It is also the responsibility of the team to resolve any issues they may have with the Meridian Parks Department.

If teams use a fryer, sufficient air space of at least 12 inches (30.5 cm) must exist between the fryer and ground to insure no scorching or discoloration of park grass.

Judging

There are four awards available for consideration: Best Overall, Most Original, Hottest, and People's Choice.

Scoring criteria will consist of Preparation and Appearance (25%) and Overall Taste (75%). The former category will judge the color of the wings, the degree to which they were cooked, the moisture, any burning, skin quality and visual appearance, while the latter will judge flavor, texture, sauce and quantity of sauce, spiciness, aftertaste, and overall satisfaction. Judges will not discuss their opinions until after the event.

Each attendee will be provided with a People's Choice voting ticket, which will be tallied to determine the People's Choice award winner.

Schedule

7:00 – 11:45: Setup

11:45 – 12:00: Announcements

12:00 – 2:00: Open Wing Judging

2:00 – 2:30: Judging Tally

3:00 – 3:30: Awards Presentation

There is no official end time for the event, barring the closure of Kleiner Park.

Site Plan

Pursuant to fire code, all grills must be placed a minimum of 10 feet (3.05 meters) outside booths. No cooking platforms are allowed under canopies.

Booth locations will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Special efforts will be made to accommodate the requested locations for cooks from previous years.

All teams should include the number of canopies, dimensions, and orientation of their space.

A 12-foot (3.66 meter) fire break will be maintained between every 700 ft² (65 m²) of booth area. Ground crew will be on-site to ensure this space between each group of seven booths.

Park Rules

No glass containers of any kind are allowed in the park. Please bring plastic containers.

Pets are permitted, provided the owner cleans up after them.

To keep the park clean, a “pack it in, pack it out” mentality is required. All trash must be placed in one of the many trash bins provided.

Alcohol in cans or plastic cups is permitted inside the event’s perimeter. However, no outside alcohol may be brought into the beer garden, and no beer garden beverages may be brought outside the beer garden.

If you bring games, please set them up well away from any grills or other guests’ areas.