

Red Beans & Rice Cookoff

45th Annual Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival

Saturday July 19, 2025
Northwestern State University, Prather Coliseum
Natchitoches, Louisiana

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| Entry | No entry fee! 2 gallons (minimum) red beans for competition and tasting All cooking must be done with fuel (propane gas) or by contained cooking fire. |
| Schedule | 8:00 a.m. registration and cooks' meeting, N-Club Room, Prather Coliseum 8:45 a.m. cooking officially begins 12:30 p.m. judging begins by contest judges 1:00 p.m. sales to public ("Buck-a-Cup") open 3:30 p.m. announcement of winners, Main Stage |
| Categories | Pork Sausage Other Protein Sausage (Alligator, Chicken, Turkey, or Wild Game) Meat Alternative Sausage |
| Awards | Pork Sausage – 1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd Other Protein Sausage – 1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd Meat Alternative Sausage – 1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd |

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Rules for the Red Beans & Rice Cookoff

No alcoholic beverages on the premises.

All spaces for each entry are a 10' x 20' space.

All Head Cooks are responsible for ALL of their own supplies and setup.

Running water is available on the premises.

Red beans & rice must be cooked on-site (beans may be pre-soaked).

- All raw ingredients must be kept on ice until used.
- Red beans & rice must be cooked on the day of the cookoff, beginning after the Cooks' meeting. However, the beans may come pre-soaked.
- No mixes of any kind are allowed.
- Sausage must be kept on ice until used.
- Broth or stock may be prepared in advance, or canned broth may be used.

Sanitation is required.

- Red beans & rice must be prepared in as sanitary a manner as possible.
- All food for consumption must be heated to a boil on-site.
- Cooking conditions are subject to inspection by cookoff officials.
- Cooks may be required to provide a taste of their red beans & rice at the request of cookoff officials. When taste testing, please use a spoon or bowl and dispose after use. The festival will provide tasting utensils and disposable containers for the judges.
- Participants must bring their own trash receptacles and trash bags.
- Chefs participating in "A Buck A Cup" must provide their own bowls, spoons, and napkins.

Cooking facilities are limited.

- All entries must be cooked using propane gas or contained cooking fire.
- All entries must be cooked outside of Prather Coliseum, as directed by cookoff officials on the day of the cookoff.
- All entries will be given a specific, assigned space outside for use during the cookoff.

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Each Head Cook may submit one red beans & rice entry per category.

- Each Head Cook is responsible for preparing a minimum of 2 GALLONS of red beans to be judged in a specific category and for preparing 16 ounces for judging from that same 2 GALLONS.
- Each entry requires a separate registration form.
- The three categories are pork sausage, other protein sausage, and meat alternative sausage.

Attending the Cooks' meeting is mandatory.

- All people participating as Head Cooks or other cooks must attend the cooks' meeting to receive materials for the organization and judging of the competition, including a signed, number identification slip.
- All Head Cooks must sign their confidential identification slips in ink, with the first and last name, at the same time as the materials for the organization and judging of the competition are given, including a signed, number identification slip.
- All Head Cooks must present a signed, number identification slip to be eligible as a winner. (Note: please keep the signed, numbered identification slip in a safe place until the winners are announced.)

Red beans & rice judging will have several criteria.

- At 1 p.m., contest officials will begin collecting the 16-ounce sample for judging.
 - All judges will have numerically labeled containers that will match up to the numerically labeled cooking booth/Head Cook entry.
 - Proportion of rice to other ingredients in the cup is at the discretion of the Head Cook.
 - Judges will not be allowed to add anything to any entry.
- At 2 p.m., all judging will end and all judges will meet in the N-Club room to deliberate the winners. If a second round of judging is needed, judges will request another sample of the entries needed.
- All entries will be judged on the following criteria on a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being the highest score for each criterium:
 - appearance: looks like good red beans – the color of the beans and the distribution of protein is representative of good red beans & rice
 - aroma: smells appetizing
 - texture: has the consistency of good red beans & rice
 - flavor: tastes like good red beans & rice

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Registration Form

Head Cook _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Red Beans & Rice Name _____

_____ Seafood _____ Poultry Plus

Competing in Showmanship: _____ Yes _____ No

Send Form To:

Louisiana Folklife Center
NSU Box 5688
Natchitoches, LA 71497

or

folklife@nsula.edu

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