



COOK TEAM INSTRUCTIONS

The following guidelines apply to the **Roux Fest Gumbo Cookoff**, powered by Lagcoe and presented by **MPH Energy Services**, taking place on **February 12, 2026**, at the **Blackham Coliseum**.

Competition Categories

1. **Seafood** – First, Second, and Third Place
2. **Meat** – First, Second, and Third Place
3. **Showmanship** – First, Second, and Third Place
4. **Dessert** – First Place
5. **Professional** – First Place
6. **People's Choice** – One Award (*King of the Roux*)

Roux Fest will take place on February 12, 2026; due to venue regulations, all food must be prepared outside and transported inside the Blackham Coliseum for serving. These rules outline cook team requirements, judging guidelines, move-in and move-out procedures, outdoor and indoor space allocations, and other important regulations to be observed.

Items Provided by Lagcoe with the Purchase of a Cook Team Space

Upon purchase of a cook team space, Lagcoe will provide the following:

- **One (1) 10x10 booth space** inside the Blackham Coliseum
- **Electrical service up to 20 amps per team**
 - Teams must provide their own heavy-duty extension cords
 - Electrical capacity beyond the stated amperage is not guaranteed
- **Ice**, available outside the venue at the designated outdoor cook team cooking area

- **One (1) 6-foot folding table and two (2) chairs** inside the coliseum
 - Additional tables and chairs must be arranged at the team's expense through **Marty Thibodeaux, Party Central – (337) 261-3378 ext. 101**
 - One additional personal table may be brought, provided it does not obstruct walkways, exits, or neighboring booths
- **One (1) fire extinguisher**, which must remain on-site while cooking and be returned to the Safety Coordinator upon completion
- **Three (3) cook team tickets**, issued at registration
 - Additional tickets may be purchased online, at the Lagcoe office, or at the door (subject to availability)
- **Two (2) cook team aprons**
- **One (1) team name sign** displayed at the booth
- **One (1) trash can per booth**

1. Cook Team Guidelines

Cooking & Fire Safety

- Open flames, wood, and/or charcoal fires are **strictly prohibited under the Blackham Coliseum roof.**
- All wood- or charcoal-burning pits must be located outside the building's roofline and used only in designated outdoor cooking areas.
- **All cooking must take place outside** in designated areas.
 - Outdoor cooking spaces are **first come, first served.**
 - Indoor booth assignments are made by Lagcoe and will be communicated approximately **two (2) weeks prior to the event.**
- The Roux Fest Gumbo Cookoff will take place on **Thursday, February 12, 2026.**
 - The event is open to the public from **5:00 PM to 8:00 PM.**
 - All serving to the public must take place inside the Blackham Coliseum.
- Cook teams may begin outdoors setup on **Wednesday, February 11, 2026**, in accordance with move-in guidelines.
- **Cooking is permitted only between 6:00 AM (after the meeting with the Safety Coordinator. ABSOLUTELY NO COOKING WITHOUT MEETING WITH THE SAFETY COORDINATOR) and 3:00 PM on February 12, 2026.**
 - Teams are responsible for safely transporting prepared food from outdoor cooking areas to their indoor booth for serving.
- All teams using open flames outside will be issued **one (1) fire extinguisher**, which must remain on-site at all times while cooking.
- **All gumbo must be cooked on-site.**
 - Pre-made roux is permitted; however, the gumbo itself must be fully prepared on-site.
- Teams must supply their own **tables and equipment** for outdoor cooking areas.
- Fryers are permitted **outside only.**
 - Teams planning to use electric fryers must notify Lagcoe in advance.

- Any cooking oil used must be removed from the premises after the event.
- Food warming using sterno chafing fuel is permitted.
- **Propane is strictly prohibited inside the venue.**

Serving Equipment & Electrical Use

- Teams must provide all serving and warming equipment, including (but not limited to): serving dishes, utensils, chafing dishes, crock pots, rice cookers, steam tables, and table linens.
- Lagcoe will provide containers and utensils for judging only, which will be distributed at cook team registration.
- Electrical service is provided; teams must operate within amperage limits and supply their own extension cords.

Rice Guidelines (Important)

- **NO RICE is permitted in judges' gumbo samples.**
- Teams are strongly encouraged to:
 - Bring rice already cooked,
 - Purchase rice from a vendor for delivery (Lagcoe can recommend vendors), or
 - Cook rice outside the arena.
- Rice cookers are permitted outside only.
- Rice cookers inside the arena are discouraged due to electrical load; teams should plan to keep rice warm indoors rather than cook it inside.

Team Composition & Conduct

- Each cook team ticket allows one (1) Chef and up to two (2) Sous Chefs.
- All food must be prepared by registered team members only.
 - The use of hired or professional chefs is prohibited.
- Roux Fest is a family-friendly event.
 - Inappropriate behavior, language, signage, attire, or conduct may result in immediate disqualification and removal at Lagcoe's discretion.

Sampling Requirements

- Teams must supply their own cups, bowls, utensils, napkins, and serving items for public tastings.
 - Lagcoe will provide cups for judges' samples only.
- Teams should plan to provide approximately 100–150 samples (not full servings).
- Food served to the public must be substantially similar to the dish presented to the judges.

2. Showmanship

- Showmanship participation is **optional and free of charge**.
- Participating teams must select a theme and decorate their booth accordingly.
- Decoration access inside the coliseum is permitted on **February 12, 2026, from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM only**.
 - After 3:00 PM, the venue will close to the public until 5:00 PM.
- Mulch is prohibited in all decorations.
- Tents are permitted **for decorative purposes only**.
 - Tent stakes are prohibited due to concrete flooring; weighted anchoring methods are required.
- Showmanship judging will begin **after the event opens to the public (after 5:00 PM)**.
- Music, DJs, or live bands are not permitted in cook team booths. Lagcoe will provide event music.

3. Move-In Procedures

- Outdoor cooking areas and tents may begin move-in on **Wednesday, February 11, 2026, from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM** and on **Thursday, February 12, 2026 from 6:00AM to 12:00PM**
- Lagcoe is not responsible for items left on the premises overnight.
- **Mandatory Safety Meeting:**
 - The Chef and at least one Sous Chef must attend.
 - Teams must check in with Roux Fest safety Coordinator - **Brian Saltzman** upon arrival to receive safety orientation, fire extinguisher, and team materials.

4. Move-Out Procedures

- Outdoor equipment removal can take place from **12:00 PM – 10:00 PM on February 12, 2026**

- Indoor breakdown on **February 12, 2026** is **ONLY PERMITTED BETWEEN 8:00 PM – 10:00 PM AFTER THE EVENT.**
- **DO NOT BEGIN BREAKDOWN INSIDE THE COLISEUM PRIOR TO 8:00 PM, your team will be disqualified and not allowed back to future Roux Fests.**
- All equipment, tents, and trailers must be removed from the outside by **Friday, February 13, 2026, at 10:00 AM.**

5. Wristbands, Alcohol & Conduct

- Wristbands must be worn at all times.
- Individuals under 21 will receive a **red wristband**.
- A **hand stamp** is required for alcohol consumption at individual tents.
- **Alcohol sales is strictly prohibited.**
- Glass bottles and drinking games are prohibited.
- Serving alcohol to minors may result in **booth closure**.

6. Pets, Voting & Contact Information

- Pets are not permitted, except **registered service dogs with proper documentation**.

People's Choice Voting

- Voting will be conducted via kiosk machines.
- Voters must present official **Roux Fest doubloons** to vote.
- **No doubloons, no vote.**
- Voting runs from **5:00 PM to 7:45 PM**.
- **DO NOT HOLD DOUBLOONS AT YOUR BOOTH.**

Contact Information

Lagcoe

 (337) 235-4055

 info@lagcoe.com



COOK TEAM SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Wednesday, February 11, 2026

Blackham Coliseum, Lafayette, Louisiana

12:00 PM – 5:00 PMCook Teams Outdoor Setup

Thursday, February 12, 2026

Blackham Coliseum, Lafayette, Louisiana

6:00 AM – 12:00 PMCook Teams Outdoor Setup

Mandatory Safety Meeting Prior to beginning any cooking

10:00 AM – 3:00 PMCook Team Indoor Setup

10:00 PM – 12:00 PMCook Team Registration

Indoor setup times are subject to change. If Event Solutions completes booth setup on Wednesday, cook teams may be permitted earlier access to the Blackham Coliseum. Any changes will be communicated to teams via email.

3:00 PM – 5:00 PMJudging: Meat and Seafood Categories

Cook teams will receive their judging cups (green for seafood, blue for meat) at registration. Judging will begin at 3:00 PM.

A runner will visit each aisle to collect judging cups.

Do not bring judging cups to the judging area.

No rice is permitted in judges' gumbo samples.

5:00 PMEvent Opens to the Public

Flag Ceremony – *Scouting America Troop 162*

National Anthem – *Dustin Gaspard*

Welcome – *Mayor-President Monique Boulet*

Live Music – *Caleb Lapeyrouse & The Drivers*

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM Judging: Showmanship and Dessert

- Judges will visit participating booths inside the arena.
- Each judging group will be accompanied by a volunteer runner.

6:00 PM Announcement of Seafood Winners

7:00 PM Announcement of Dessert and Showmanship Winners

5:00 PM – 7:45 PM People’s Choice Voting

- Attendees may cast their votes using official Roux Fest doubloons at the People’s Choice kiosk.
- The kiosk will be located near the stage (right-hand corner), clearly labeled and equipped with iPads for individual voting.
- Teams should not collect or hold doubloons to vote at the last minute.

8:00 PM Announcement of the People’s Choice Winner and Event Closing

8:05 PM – 10:00 PM Break Down

Teams are asked to clean their area throughout the event to ensure an efficient breakdown process.

Thursday, February 13, 2026

Blackham Coliseum, Lafayette, Louisiana

8:00 AM – 10:00 AM ALL Tents and Trailers must be removed from the Blackham Coliseum premises



Judging Procedures for Roux Fest 2026

All judging for Roux Fest will be conducted in accordance with the procedures outlined below. Each competition category will be evaluated by designated judges, accompanied and supported by trained volunteers and Lagcoe staff.

Judging Panels

- **Seafood Category:** Three (3) judges
- **Meat Category:**
 - **Round One:** Eighteen (18) judges (YOU ARE ONLY PREPARING 3 SAMPLES)
 - **Final Round:** Three (3) judges (IF YOU MOVE TO THE SECOND ROUND, YOU WILL ONLY PREPARE 3 SAMPLES ON LAGCOE PROVIDED CUPS)
- **Dessert Category:** Three (3) judges
- **Showmanship Category:** Three (3) judges
- **Professional Category:** Three (3) judges

Judging Process by Category

Seafood & Meat Categories

- Participating cook teams will receive **numbered judging cups** at cook team registration.
- Teams **must use the official numbered cups** provided and ensure samples are ready when the start of judging is announced.
- Judging for **Seafood and Meat** will take place between **3:00 PM and 5:00 PM**.
- At the start of judging, volunteers will be dispatched to each aisle with **collection carts** to retrieve samples from cook team booths.
- **Teams must not bring samples to the judging area.**
- All samples will be transported by volunteers to the designated judging area, **Roux Reserve**, where judges will evaluate entries.
- **NO RICE is permitted in judges' gumbo samples.**

Dessert, Showmanship & Professional Categories

- Judging for **Dessert, Showmanship, and Professional** categories will begin at **5:00 PM**, once the event opens to the public.
- Judges will enter the arena and visit participating booths **in person**, accompanied by assigned volunteers.
- Volunteers will guide judges to each participating booth to ensure consistency and flow throughout the judging process.

Judge & Volunteer Identification

- All judges will be escorted by designated volunteers wearing **yellow safety vests**.
- Only authorized judges and volunteers are permitted to participate in judging activities.

Judging Criteria

Judges will score entries based on the following criteria. Scores will be tabulated to determine winners in each category.

Seafood & Meat Categories – Gumbo

Judges will evaluate based on:

- **Flavor & Seasoning** – Balance, depth, and overall taste
- **Texture & Consistency** – Proper gumbo thickness and ingredient balance
- **Aroma** – Appealing and inviting scent
- **Appearance** – Visual presentation of the gumbo (no rice)
- **Overall Impression** – Cohesion, originality, and execution

Dessert Category

Judges will evaluate based on:

- **Taste & Flavor Profile** – Sweetness, balance, and overall enjoyment
- **Creativity & Originality** – Uniqueness of concept or execution
- **Presentation** – Visual appeal and plating
- **Texture** – Proper consistency and mouthfeel
- **Overall Impression**

Showmanship Category

Judges will evaluate based on:

- **Theme & Creativity** – Clarity and originality of the booth theme
- **Booth Presentation** – Décor, visual impact, and overall appearance
- **Team Engagement** – Interaction with attendees and judges
- **Energy & Enthusiasm** – Spirit, professionalism, and execution
- **Overall Experience**

Professional Category

Judges will evaluate based on:

- **Culinary Technique** – Skill, preparation, and execution
- **Flavor & Balance** – Depth and refinement of taste
- **Presentation** – Professional appearance and attention to detail
- **Consistency** – Execution across samples
- **Overall Professional Quality**

People's Choice Voting

- People's Choice voting will take place **from 5:00 PM to 7:45 PM**.
- Upon entry, each attendee will receive **one (1) Roux Fest doubloon** after either:
 - Turning in a paper ticket, or
 - Scanning an online ticket

- The doubloon serves as the attendee's **single voting token**.
- Voting will occur **only at the official People's Choice Booth**, located near the stage.
- Attendees must present their doubloon to access the voting iPads.
- Each iPad will display a list of all participating cook teams (company name and team name).
- **Voting is not conducted at individual cook team booths.**
- **Bulk voting is prohibited. Each person must vote individually.**
- **Lost doubloons will not be replaced. A doubloon is required to vote.**