

Chili Cook Off Team Application
15th Annual “Crazy Pepper Chili Cook Off”

Downtown Sebring

Saturday, January 16th, 2027

  **EARLY BIRD SPECIAL**  

Register by December 31, 2026

\$75 TEAM ENTRY

After December 31, 2026

\$125 TEAM ENTRY

Set up begins at 8:00 A.M. Cooking begins at 9:00 A.M. Judging will occur at 12:00 P.M., with tasting to follow until 3:00 P.M.

**This is a Fundraiser for The Rotary Club of Highlands County, Inc.
Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Highlands County
P.O. Box 4264
Sebring, FL 33871**

Contestant Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Contact Phone# () _____ Alternate Phone# () _____

E-mail address: _____

Team Name _____

List any sponsors of your team _____

I, the undersigned, certify that the foregoing is correct, to the best of my knowledge. I certify and acknowledge that I have received, read and understand the Rules and Regulations, as outlined below, and, if my application is accepted, I agree to abide by said rules and regulations. Further, I have made my staff and/or volunteers aware of the Rules and Regulations and, as a participant, agree that I, and my staff and/or volunteers, will apply by the Rules and Regulations. Checks should be made payable to the Rotary Club of Highlands County, Inc.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Print Name: _____ **Amount of Fee Enclosed \$** _____

OFFICIAL COOKOFF RULES AND REGULATIONS

The following Rules and Regulations will apply:

1. **True Chili is defined as** any kind of meat, or combination of meats, cooked with chili peppers, onions, peppers or other vegetables and various other spices and other ingredients with the exception of **RICE** or any type of **PASTA**, which are strictly forbidden. **NOTE:** This means that a contestant may use any ingredient in their chili with the exception of rice and any type of pasta. **BEANS ARE ALLOWED.** Vegan chili and vegetarian chili are allowed.

2. **No ingredient may be pre-cooked in any way prior to the official commencement of the cook off. VEGETABLES MAY BE PRE-CUT BUT NOT PRE-COOKED.** Canned or bottled beans, canned or bottled tomatoes, tomato sauce, pepper sauce, beverages, broth, the grinding and/or mixing of spices may be prepared prior to the start time. Dried beans may be pre-soaked and pre-cooked. **Meat may be treated, pre-cut or ground. Meat may not be pre-cooked! Peppers, Onions and other vegetables may be chopped, sliced or diced prior to stoves being lit.**

3. **The cooking period will be up to 3 hours. The cooking will begin at 9:00 A.M and end at 12:00 P.M. Public tasting will be from 12:00 P.M. until 3:00 P.M.** There will be a mandatory meeting for team captains at 8:30 A.M. at the judging tent. Cooking during the entire period is at the sole discretion of the contestant.

4. **The captain, or a representative, SHALL be present at the team meeting** which will occur before the official starting time of the cook off. **At this meeting final instructions will be given for safe food handling, sanitary guidelines and questions answered. STOVES WILL BE LIT PRECISELY AT 9:00 A.M TO BEGIN COOKING.** Your judging cups and sampling spoons will be disbursed at the team meeting.

5. **A list of ingredients must be posted at your booth to reduce the potential risk of allergic reactions.**

6. ***NO CHILI IS TO BE GIVEN OUT BEFORE SAMPLES ARE TURNED IN TO JUDGING, WHICH WILL OCCUR NO LATER THAN NOON.***

7. **Each team must have paid an entry fee. Teams are limited to 4 members in booth area.** Booth areas are 12 x 12 feet. Teams are allowed as many non-cooking assistants as they wish for shows, demonstrations, People's Choice Solicitation, etc., at their booth but not to infringe upon neighboring booths or those attending the event for the purpose of tasting chili or viewing vendors services and products.

Please Note:

Non-cooking assistants are not allowed to walk the general area of the chili cook off competition to solicit or otherwise hand out materials that would be in direct competition with the fund-raising efforts of The Rotary Club. Violation of this rule will result first in a request to stop activities or actions that violate this rule and if the activity or action does not cease your group and/or organization will be escorted from the property and any future applications and/or participation to or in future events conducted by The Rotary Club will not be allowed/approved. This is intended to be a fundraiser for The Rotary Club and not for other organizations or charities. This is a fundraiser of the Rotary Club and all proceeds will go to the benefit of various community, national and international projects. **Teams can sell associated items (i.e. seasoning mixes) at their booth area. No chili can be sold at the event.**

8. **Contestants are responsible for supplying all of their own cooking utensils, etc.** The Rotary Club will provide space, chairs (4) and one (1) table. Bottled gas, provided by the contestant is recommended for use. **Limited electrical outlets will be available for use by contestants. No stakes or spikes can be used to anchor tents due to shallow electrical lines on Circle Park.** If you are using a tent prepare to anchor it down with weights. All other equipment is to be supplied by contestant team. **Each team must possess an ABC minimum 5 lb Fire Extinguisher. You will not be allowed to cook without possession of the Fire Extinguisher. This is a City Requirement.**

9. **Each contestant must cook a minimum of 10 (ten) gallons of chili.** NOTE: The judging cup will be disbursed at the team meeting. The remainder must be provided for sampling to visitors and guests in tasting cups, which will be provided by the Rotary Club of Highlands County. Teams are encouraged to make more than one pot and may select which of their chili pots will be submitted for judging. Only **ONE** competition chili will be accepted from each competing team.

10. **Each contestant is responsible to deliver his or her judging cup, which must be filled to the bottom of the cup rim, to the judging area by 12 noon, the official time the judging begins.** Each contestant will be assigned a contestant's number by the Rotary Club and be given an official judging cup. Each contestant should verify that the number on the bottom of his or her cup is the same as his or her assigned contestant number.

11. Attendees will be allowed to taste any and all chili in exchange for a People's Choice/Sampling ticket once the competition cups have been turned in to the Judge's Tent until a team runs out of chili.

12. **People's Choice containers will be provided by the Rotary Club to each team**, with the appropriate team number on the bottom. People's Choice/Sampling tickets will be given by attendees to sample chili and attendees are encouraged to give additional People's Choice/Sampling tickets for their favorite chili as a vote. **Teams are responsible for turning in their People's Choice containers with People's Choice/Sampling tickets to the Rotary Club near the judging area by 3:10 PM. No containers or tickets will be accepted after 3:10 PM.** Awards ceremony will follow around 3:45 PM.

13. Judges will vote on the chili that they like best based upon these major considerations: **COLOR, AROMA, FLAVOR, TEXTURE, BLEND OF SPICES AND CONSISTENCY.**

14. **The decisions of the Judges are final.**

Entry Fee

**EARLY BIRD ENTRY FEE: \$75 through December 31, 2026
Beginning January 1, 2027, the entry fee will increase to \$125.00 per team.**

Mail completed application and entry fee check to:

The Rotary Club of Highlands County, Inc
P.O. Box 4264
Sebring, FL 33871

Questions are to be directed to John Pepper 863-381-2689 or e-mail to crazypepperchili@gmail.com.

Thank you for your participation!