



Steak Rules

The history of grilling begins shortly after the domestication of fire, which was about a half a million years ago. However, the backyard ritual of grilling is much more recent. Until the 1940s, grilling mostly took place at campsites and picnics. After the Second World War when the middle class began to move to the suburbs, backyard grilling caught on, becoming a staple by the 1950s and 1960s. BCA has developed a consistent set of rules for a steak category conducted as part of a regular barbecue event. The rules for a BCA ancillary steak category are given below.

1. Steaks used in the contest meat must be USDA graded Choice or Select.
2. Promoters have the option to either provide steaks for all participants or have each participant bring their own steak for the contest. If the promoter provides all meat, a fair and equitable meat selection process will be completed.
3. Cooks will turn-in one (1) ribeye steak with a pre-cooked weight of about 16 ounces (1 pound) and an average thickness of about 1 inch.
4. Any heat source (wood, charcoal, propane, or electricity) can be used to cook the steak.
5. Sous vide cooking of steaks is allowed. Sous vide (means “under vacuum” in French) and is a process of cooking food in a vacuum-sealed bag placed in a hot water bath.
6. At the cook’s meeting, participants will be given a standard foam turn-in box with a taped double ticket for this category. They will also be given a hard inset disk. At turn-in time, cooks will place one whole uncut steak on top of the inset disk inside the foam box.
7. Grill marks from cooking are acceptable as long as they do not form a recognizable pattern, image, letter, or word. Steaks may not be branded in any way.
8. No non-natural or outside sauce or garnish is allowed in the steak turn in box. A compound butter is allowed, as long as it is melted on the steak.
9. Some pooling of natural juices in the bottom of the box is acceptable.
10. Seasonings on the steak must be small. No large chopped vegetables or other seasonings will be allowed. The entered steak cannot be stuffed.
11. Cooks have the option to remove the spinalis dorsi muscle, or ribeye cap, from the entry.
12. All BCA judging rules and procedures will be used for a steak contest with the following exceptions:
 - All entries will be given to the judges as they are submitted to the turn-in location.
 - Judges will consider doneness by the color of the meat when a sample has been cut from the steak. Remember each steak should have medium doneness with a warm pink center (about 140-145 °F).

- Judges will give each entry a one-number score in aroma, color, texture, taste, doneness, and overall impression. Multiple individual scores will not be given.