

## Northwest Meat Processors Association Cured Meats Championships Rules

1. Eligibility: Competition is open to all meat processors who are either current or new members of the Northwest Meat Processors Association who cure and/or smoke hams, bacon, turkey, manufacture sausage, jerky, meat snack sticks or produce specialty products.
2. General Requirements: Each member firm may enter unlimited production items in each class, providing each entry is accompanied by the required entry fee. All entries must be processed in the exhibitor's plant and must be entered whole. It is the exhibitor's responsibility to specify on the entry blank the class in which their entry belongs. All cooked products must follow Appendix A and B from the USDA FSIS. If uncooked, the product must be labeled as uncooked.
3. Removal of Identifying Marks: Exhibitors are required to remove all identification marks branded or stamped on entries; any such marks found on any entry will be removed by the committee.
4. Trichina Control: All pork products entered in the contest shall be subjected to one of the methods for eliminating trichina specified in section 318-10 of the Federal Meat Inspection Requirements (copies available from NWMPA upon request.)
5. Judges: Entries shall be judged by judges who are particularly qualified in their respective fields. Judges cannot judge their own product. All judges' decisions will be final.
6. Winners: Entries scoring the highest number of points in each class shall be declared Grand Champions; entries scoring the next highest number of points shall be the Reserve Grand Champions; entries scoring the third highest points shall be the Champions. Member plants entering more than one item per class may receive only one award. The highest placing product will receive the award it merits and all other products will be nullified from placement.
  - a. All Around Grand Champion: The Overall Grand Champion Award shall be selected after all judging is complete. Points will be assigned as follows: Grand Champion — 3 points; Reserve Grand Champion — 2 points; and Champion — 1 point. Plants must enter in at least 4 categories and place in the top 3 in three categories. The entrant with most Overall points shall be declared the All Around Grand Champion. In the event of a tie, the judges shall make a decision to break the tie.
  - b. Best of Show Award (Bob Dickson Award): This Award shall be picked from any one of the Grand Champion products. This will be determined solely at the discretion and decision of the Judges.

### Categories:

- Ham – Bone-In
- Ham – Boneless
- Commercial Bacon
- Specialty Bacon

- Summer Sausage (Fermented)
- Summer Sausage (Non-Fermented)
- Meat Snack Sticks
- Whole Muscle Beef Jerky
- Small Diameter Cooked Sausage (Ring, Rope or Link)
- Fresh Sausage – Bulk
- Fresh Sausage – Cased
- Smoked Turkey
- Specialty (Restructured)
- Specialty (Whole Muscle)
- Specialty Cured Meats (Dry cured)

\*\*\*Ingredient Statements and Processing Schedules will be required on all entries.\*\*\*

1. Registration: Cured meats entry and registration will be Friday afternoon at the times indicated in the program/schedule.
2. Fees: A registration fee of \$15 shall be paid for each product registered.
3. Tagging: Each cured meat product shall be tagged and coded in such a way that its identity will remain unknown to anyone having anything to do with judging, scoring and handling of the products with the exception of members of the Association staff or those designated to handle registrations.
4. Cutting: Bone-in hams shall be cut two inches from the aitch bone perpendicular to the long axis of the ham. Bacons shall be cut one-third of the way from the shoulder end. Specialty hams shall be cut only once with the angle of the cut at the discretion of show management.
5. Judging: The judging of the different entries in the show shall be divided between the judges in accordance with their areas of special interest and qualifications so that the judging work load will be shared equitably. Except for special cases, judging of each entry shall be done by one judge who is responsible for the entries in that class. It is the responsibility of the judges to disqualify any entry which does not meet any of the rules or requirements of the show. If any entry appears to be exhibited in the wrong class the judges shall disqualify it. No refunds will be issued for disqualified product. The judges shall refrain from discussing disqualified products during the Awards Banquet. Decision of the judges shall be final. After the judging is finished, there should not be a reevaluation made unless to break a tie; and if reevaluation is necessary, a new sample shall be judged
6. Display: Product entries shall be displayed on Saturday after the Awards Banquet.
7. Refrigeration: Sometimes operators who bring entries for the show request the use of refrigerated space at the convention facility to keep products cold. Although the Association cannot assume responsibility for providing refrigeration, when possible, it will try to make arrangements with the facility to provide storage or try to make arrangements with a local processor to accommodate the products.

8. **Releasing the Cured Meat Products:** The cured meat products in the show may be picked up at the time and place specified in the convention program. All products will have a score card attached so the owner will be informed of the score attained by his entries. Cured meat products remaining in the area after the announced deadline will become the property of show management, and will be donated to a local charitable organization.
9. **Responsibility:** Although the Northwest Meat Processors Association will exercise every reasonable precaution to protect and safeguard all cured meat product entries, it does not assume responsibility for the entries; all cured meat products are entered solely at the risk of the exhibitor.
10. **Liability for Products:** Liability for entered products rests solely with the exhibitor. The Northwest Meat Processors Association assumes no responsibility for sickness, illness, disease, infection, malady, or other affliction caused by ingestion, handling or cooking of products entered.
11. **List of Winning Scores:** Shortly after the convention, the names of plant members with winning products will be published in the NWMPA newsletter.
12. **Show Management:** Show management shall have full power to interpret, extend or amend these rules at any time as conditions may arise which may warrant changes for the good of the entrants.

**Standards of Evaluation:** Since judges may be changed from year to year and there may be considerable difference of opinion as to the characteristics of the ideal product, entries shall be judged according to the following standards:

- **COMMERCIAL HAM:** Hams entered in this class will be bone-in whole hams. Bone-in hams will contain the following bones: Aitch bone (Ischium), leg bone (Femur), and a portion of the shank bone (Tibia and Fibia). To be eligible for this class, hams shall be cured mildly and may or may not be tenderized. Hams entered in these classes cannot be slices.
  - **General Appearance:** 200 points. Hams shall be graded on eye appeal, confirmation, trim and cutability or yield. Scoring for general appearance will be done in two phases allowing up to 100 points for appeal, confirmation and trim before cutting; and 100 points for cutability and yield after cutting. Hams will be cut by the judges, approximately two inches from the aitch bone perpendicular to the long axis of the ham.
  - **Aroma:** 150 points. Off, foreign, sour or sharp odors should downgrade the ham and a good mellow aroma that pleases the judge should upgrade it. Aroma shall be decided upon cutting of and before the cooking of the product.
  - **Texture of the Cut Surface:** 100 points. Excessive moisture is objectionable; the ham should not be coarse grained. There should not be an excess of fat marbled in the ham.
  - **Inside Color:** 150 points. The color should be uniform and appealing. It should not be too light or too red and bruises should score quite heavily against color. If a ham should be noticeably cooler than the rest of the

hams, giving it an advantage in color and firmness, this should be considered and graded accordingly.

- Flavor: 400 points. A full half-slice of ham from the cushion side of the ham shall be cooked and two taste samples taken, one from the lower muscle and one from the top muscle, unless the ham is sour or off-flavor in the first sample, making it too inferior to be considered in the top four places. The ham should not be too salty nor too bland, and should have the good mellow flavor expected in commercial ham. The presence of off-flavor such as rancidity, bacterial spoilage, etc. shall severely downgrade the product.
- HAM – Boneless: Hams for this class may be shaped, formed or pressed, but may not be chunked, flaked or reconstituted, and shall be mildly cured. Boiled hams and cuts other than pork hams are specifically excluded. May be boneless or semi-boneless, whole or any part of a whole leg of pork, as long as the product is not cut or sliced before competition.
  - General Appearance: 200 points. Hams shall be graded on eye appeal, conformation, and trim and cut ability or yield. Scoring for general appearance will be done in two phases allowing up to 100 points for appeal, conformation and trim before cutting; 100 points for cut ability and yield after cutting.
  - Aroma: 150 points. Off, foreign, sour or sharp odors should downgrade the ham and a good mellow aroma that pleases the judge should upgrade it. Aroma shall be decided upon the cutting of and before the cooking of product.
  - Texture of the Cut Surface: 100 points. Excessive moisture is objectionable. The ham should not be too coarse grained. There should not be an excess of fat marbled in the ham.
  - Inside Color: 150 points. The color should be uniform and appealing. It should not be too light or too red and bruises should score quite heavily against color. If ham should be noticeably cooler than the rest of the hams giving it an advantage in color and firmness, this should be considered and graded accordingly.
  - Flavor: 400 points. A full half-slice of ham from the cushion side of the ham shall be cooked and two taste samples taken, one from the lower muscle and one from the top muscle, unless the ham is sour or has an off flavor in the first sample, making it inferior to be considered in the top four places. The ham should not be too salty or too bland and should have a good mellow flavor expected of a good ham. The presence of off-flavor such as rancidity or bacterial spoilage, etc., shall severely downgrade the product.
- COMMERCIAL BACON: Bacon must be whole and shall not be cut or sliced. To be eligible for this class, bacon shall be of standard approved trimming with skin on or off, and be cured by an accepted method.
  - General Appearance: 150 points. Amount of trimming, workmanship, eye appeal, conformation and outside should be the main points considered.

Bacon may be skinned or un-skinned, but skinned bellies should exhibit careful workmanship in skinning. Judges will severely penalize a belly showing excessive trimming or poor workmanship in trimming.

- Fat to Lean (After Cut): 150 points. Lean bacon is desirable and should be scored accordingly unless it is so lean that it would indicate a poor quality. Aroma: 100 points. Off or sour odors should downgrade the bacon and a good, smooth aroma should upgrade.
- Texture: 100 points. Pumped bacon may be downgraded in texture if it appears to have excess moisture. Temperature of the bacon should be considered in scoring the texture since cooler bacon is more firm.
- Inside Color: 100 Points. Lean should be light red, fat should be white; color should be uniform. Bruises should downgrade the bacon.
- Flavor: 400 Points. Flavor should be a pleasing rich flavor, not too salty and not too bland. The presence of off-flavors such as bacterial spoilage, etc. shall severely downgrade the bacon.
- **SPECIALTY BACON:** This product may be any specialty bacon that otherwise would not conform to the Commercial Bacon class. Honey, Beef, Pepper Cottage and Canadian style would be examples of Bacons for this category. The product must be whole and shall not be cut or sliced and should be boneless.
  - General Appearance: 150 points. Amount of trimming, workmanship, eye appeal, conformation and outside color should be the main points considered. Judges will severely penalize excessive trimming or poor workmanship or robbing of lean areas, and lack of uniformity of color.
  - Fat to Lean (After Cut): 150 points. Lean bacon is very desirable and should be scored accordingly unless it is so lean that it would indicate poor quality.
  - Aroma: 100 points. Off or sour odors should downgrade the bacon. A good, smooth aroma should upgrade.
  - Texture: 100 points. Pumped bacon may be downgraded in texture if it appears to have excessive moisture. Temperature of the bacon should be considered in scoring texture since cooler bacon is more firm.
  - Inside Color: 100 points. Lean should be light red, fat should be white, color should be uniform; bruises should downgrade the bacon.
  - Flavor: 400 points. Flavor should be a pleasing rich flavor, not too salty and not too bland. The presence of off-flavors such as bacterial spoilage, etc., shall severely downgrade the bacon.
- **SUMMER SAUSAGE (Fermented):** To be eligible for this class sausage must be a coarse ground (1/8" minimum) sausage consisting of beef, pork, lamb, and/or poultry. This product must be a traditional type summer sausage and must not contain specialty non-meat ingredients (i.e. jalapenos, cheese, etc.) Casing must be left on the product. No colored casings are allowed. Must be whole and shall not be cut or sliced. A fermented or tangy flavored product is expected. This may be achieved by the use of a started culture, encapsulated citric acid, encapsulated lactic acid or other methods to reduce the pH of the final product. Summer sausage shall be cooked to a temperature of not less than 148° F and

shall have been subjected to one of the methods of eliminating trichina specified in Section 318.10 of the Federal Meat Inspection Regulations (copies available from NWMPA upon request). EACH ENTRY SHALL BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE FOLLOWING:

- AN INGREDIENTS STATEMENT WITH INGREDIENTS LISTED IN DESCENDING ORDER OF PREDOMINANCE;
- COPY OF THE PROCESSING SCHEDULE FOR THE PRODUCT OR A CERTIFICATE INDICATING THAT THE PRODUCT WAS PREPARED WITH PORK THAT WAS CERTIFIED TRICHINA-FREE.
- External Appearance: Visual appearance and workmanship; Uniformity of color, 75 points; Uniformity of shape (diameter, etc), 75 points; Lack of defects (i.e. air pockets, wrinkles, fat caps), 100 points.
- Internal Appearance: Uniformity of color, 75 points; Uniformity of texture, 50 points; fat to lean ratio, 50 points; Lack of obvious defects, 100 points; Aroma, 75 points.
- Edibility: Taste (the presence of strong after tastes shall severely downgrade the product), 300 points; Texture/Mouth feel, 100 points. Flavors such as rancidity, bacterial spoilage, etc. shall severely downgrade the product.
- SUMMER SAUSAGE (Unfermented): To be eligible for this class sausage must be a coarse ground (1/8" minimum) sausage consisting of beef, pork, lamb, and/or poultry. This product must be a traditional type summer sausage and must not contain specialty non-meat ingredients (i.e. jalapenos, cheese, etc.) Casing must be left on the product. No colored casings are allowed. Must be whole and shall not be cut or sliced. Summer sausage shall be cooked to a temperature of not less than 148° F and shall have been subjected to one of the methods of eliminating trichina specified in Section 318.10 of the Federal Meat Inspection Regulations (copies available from NWMPA upon request). EACH ENTRY SHALL BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE FOLLOWING:

- AN INGREDIENTS STATEMENT WITH INGREDIENTS LISTED IN DESCENDING ORDER OF PREDOMINANCE;
- COPY OF THE PROCESSING SCHEDULE FOR THE PRODUCT OR A CERTIFICATE INDICATING THAT THE PRODUCT WAS PREPARED WITH PORK THAT WAS CERTIFIED TRICHINA-FREE.
- External Appearance: Visual appearance and workmanship; Uniformity of color, 75 points; Uniformity of shape (diameter, etc), 75 points; Lack of defects (i.e. air pockets, wrinkles, fat caps), 100 points.
- Internal Appearance: Uniformity of color, 75 points; Uniformity of texture, 50 points; fat to lean ratio, 50 points; Lack of obvious defects, 100 points; Aroma, 75 points.
- Edibility: Taste (the presence of strong after tastes shall severely downgrade the product), 300 points; Texture/Mouth feel, 100 points. Flavors such as rancidity, bacterial spoilage, etc. shall severely downgrade the product.

- MEAT SNACK STICKS: To be eligible for this class, the product must consist of portions of beef, pork, buffalo, lamb, veal, poultry, seafood or any combination of these. PRODUCT IS TO BE MANUFACTURED IN A CASING. Products are to be processed so they do not require refrigeration and are ready to eat (RTE). TOTAL ENTERED PRODUCT WEIGHT SHALL NOT BE LESS THAN ½ POUND. Each entry shall be accompanied by the following:
  - AN INGREDIENTS STATEMENT WITH INGREDIENTS LISTED IN DESCENDING ORDER OF PREDOMINANCE;
  - IF THE PRODUCT CONTAINS PORK, A COPY OF THE PROCESSING SCHEDULE FOR THE PRODUCT OR A CERTIFICATE INDICATING THAT THE PRODUCT WAS PREPARED WITH PORK THAT WAS CERTIFIED TRICHINA-FREE.
  - General Appearance: 150 points. External appearance includes uniformity of color, casing or surface appearance and lack of obvious defects.
  - Internal Appearance: 100 points. Internal appearance will be judged high on particle uniformity and excessive fat shall down score the product.
  - Aroma: 100 points. There shall be a desirable cured aroma; objectionable odors will be downgraded.
  - Texture: 150 points. Mouth feel and appropriate moisture content will be extremely important in the judging of this product.
  - Edibility: 200 points. Product shall be shelf stable and require no refrigeration. A desirable appearance, pleasing aroma, desirable mouth feel and flavor along with a pleasant aftertaste that will stimulate continued or further consumption of this product shall up score this product.
  - Flavor: 300 points. A suitably full-bodied flavor is appropriate. Flavor may vary at the discretion of the entrant – (150 points). A pleasant aftertaste is necessary – (150 points).
- JERKY (WHOLE MUSCLE): Jerky must be formed of one whole piece of meat. It cannot be ground and formed. Total entered product weight shall not be less than ½ pound. Product may be seasoned according to the discretion of the entrant. Product must be processed so that it does not require refrigeration and may be eaten without further processing. EACH ENTRY SHALL BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE FOLLOWING:
  - AN INGREDIENTS STATEMENT WITH INGREDIENTS LISTED IN DESCENDING ORDER OF PREDOMINANCE;
  - IF THE PRODUCT CONTAINS PORK, A COPY OF THE PROCESSING SCHEDULE FOR THE PRODUCT OR A CERTIFICATE INDICATING THAT THE PRODUCT WAS PREPARED WITH PORK THAT WAS CERTIFIED TRICHINA-FREE.
  - Appearance: 200 points. External appearance includes eye appeal consisting of size and shape (100 points). Color will be judged on the variation of external and internal color after processing (100 points).
  - Aroma: 100 points. There should be a desirable cured and smoked aroma; off or stale odors will severely downgrade this product.

- Texture/Mouth feel: 200 points. Hardness, chew ability and moisture content are very important to the judging of this product. Product must be shelf-stable.
- Edibility: 100 points. Chew ability and lack of residue will upgrade this product.
- Flavor: 400 points. A desirable, intense flavor is appropriate. Flavor may be slightly salty, peppered, sweet or spicy (325 points). A pleasant aftertaste is necessary (75 points).
- **SMALL DIAMETER COOKED AND/OR SMOKED SAUSAGE** This class includes any smoked and cooked sausage that does not conform to the Meat Snack Stick category. The product must be stuffed in edible casings that do not exceed 40mm in diameter. No colored casings are allowed in this class. The product must have been heated to a minimum of 152° F. internal temp. **TOTAL ENTERED PRODUCT WEIGHT SHALL NOT BE LESS THAN ¾ POUND.** Each entry shall be accompanied by the following:
  - NAME OF PRODUCT;
  - AN INGREDIENTS STATEMENT WITH INGREDIENTS LISTED IN DESCENDING ORDER OF PREDOMINANCE;
  - A COPY OF THE PROCESSING SCHEDULE OR A CERTIFICATE INDICATING THAT THE PRODUCT WAS PREPARED WITH PORK THAT WAS CERTIFIED TRICHINA FREE.
  - External Appearance: Visual appearance and Workmanship, Uniformity of color, 75 points; Uniformity of shape (diameter, etc), 75 points; lack of defects (i.e. air pockets, wrinkles, fat caps), 100 points.
  - Internal Appearance: Uniformity of color, 75 points; uniformity of texture, 50 points; fat to lean ratio, 50 points; Lack of obvious defects, 100 points; Aroma, 75 points.
  - Edibility: Taste, 300 points; Texture/Mouth feel, 100 points; Off flavors such as rancidity, bacterial spoilage, etc., shall severely downgrade the product.
- **FRESH SAUSAGE – BULK:** Sausage may not be in casings, and should be packaged as it would normally be retailed. Because fresh sausage will lose its natural color rapidly, the way it is packaged will be taken into account when judging the external appearance. Packaging should be moisture-proof, as products will be held on ice during the competition. The total weight of the product entered for competition must be at least one pound. It should be a non-cured-non-cooked product. Judging will be based on the following:
  - General Appearance: 100 points. Product shall be graded on eye appeal, conformation and packaging, and uniformity of shape.
  - Internal Appearance: 150 points. Product shall be judged on fat/lean ratio and general internal appearance. Judges will look at particle definition, uniformity of texture, lack of obvious defects (such as blood spots) and aroma.
  - Characteristics of cooking: 200 points. Product shall be graded on aroma during cooking, fat/lean ratio, and moisture content.

- Palatability Characteristics/Flavor: 400 points. Product will be judged on flavor as related to the name of the product. Each product will be rated on its own merit, very similar to MMPA's specialty class.
- Texture/Mouth feel: 150 points. Rancidity, spoilage, chew ability and bind will all be taken into account.
- FRESH SAUSAGE – CASED: Sausage must be in edible casings. Because fresh sausage will lose its natural color rapidly, the way it is packaged will be taken into account when judging the external appearance. Packaging should be moisture-proof, as products will be held on ice during the competition. The total weight of the product entered for competition must be at least one pound. It should be a non-cured-non-cooked product. Judging will be based on the following:
  - General Appearance: 100 points. Product shall be graded on eye appeal, conformation and packaging, and uniformity of shape.
  - Internal Appearance: 150 points. Product shall be judged on fat/lean ratio and general internal appearance. Judges will look at particle definition, uniformity of texture, lack of obvious defects (such as air pockets in the casing and blood spots) and aroma.
  - Characteristics of cooking: 200 points. Product shall be graded on aroma during cooking, fat/lean ratio, and moisture content.
  - Palatability Characteristics/Flavor: 400 points. Product will be judged on flavor as related to the name of the product. Each product will be rated on its own merit, very similar to MMPA's specialty class.
  - Texture/Mouth feel: 150 points. Rancidity, spoilage, chew ability and bind will all be taken into account.
- SMOKED TURKEY: To be eligible for this class, turkey shall be brine cured and smoked, must be fully cooked and follow Appendix A Rules/Guidelines. Must be whole and may not be boneless.
  - General Appearance: 200 points. Turkeys shall be graded on eye appeal, conformation, and plumpness of breast, straightness of keel bone, smoked color and yield. Skin shall be intact, not to dry and shall have a uniform smoked color. Bruises and pin feathers will downgrade this product.
  - Aroma: 150 points. Off, foreign, sour or sharp odors shall downgrade the turkey and the good mellow aroma that please the judge shall upgrade it.
  - Texture of Cut Surface: 100 points. (White Meat-100 points; Dark Meat – 50 points). Excessive dryness in the turkey and a basted turkey shall be cause to downgrade the product. The turkey should not be too coarse grained.
  - Inside Color: 150 points. (White Meat – 100 points; Dark Meat – 50 points). The color of the white meat should be uniform light pink color and bruises shall score quite heavily against color. The dark meat should be a uniform light red color and bruises shall score quite heavily against color. Any uncured areas will downgrade the product.

- Palatability Characteristics: 400 points. (White Meat – 200 points; Dark Meat – 200 points). One wedge-shaped slice of dark meat shall be taken from the midpoint of the length of the thigh bone, one wedge-shaped slice of white meat shall be taken from one half of the breast near the keel bone in line with the point of the keel bone and an additional cross section sample shall be taken from the breast. Slices shall be tasted cold. The turkey should not be too salty or too bland, should have the good mellow flavor expected in a good smoked turkey, with no unpleasant after taste and should be tender. The presence of off-flavors such as rancidity, bacterial spoilage, etc., shall severely downgrade the product.
- SPECIALTY CLASS (RESTRUCTURED): Any cured meat or manufactured product not listed as a specific category, and that has been ground, restructured, comminuted or formed. A card identifying the product by name should accompany the entry to assist in judging. To be judged by the same rules listed above.
- SPECIALTY CLASS (WHOLE MUSCLE): Any cured meat or manufactured product not listed as a specific category that is made from full muscles. A card identifying the product by name should accompany the entry to assist in judging. To be judged by the same rules listed above.
- SPECIALTY CURED MEATS (DRY CURED). This class is intended for products that cannot be entered in other available competition classes. Product may include cured cuts that are intact muscle, sectioned and formed., and/or ground. Some examples might be: Westphalian Ham, Black Forest Ham, Prosciutto Ham, Corned Beef, semi-dry sausages (i.e. old world summer sausage) cooked to lower internal temperatures than those entered in the cooked summer sausage class, or a variety of traditional dry sausages such as pepperoni, hard salami, genoa salami, etc. This product must contain the correct amount of restricted ingredients according to the FSIS Directive 7620.3. A mild to tangy fermented product aroma and flavor is expected. Product must be entered whole and not be sliced. If casings are used, no colored casings are allowed. If entered in a casing, the product diameter must be between 2 and 4 inches.

**EXTERNAL APPEARANCE: 200 Points.** General appearance of intact product – 200 Points

**INTERNAL APPEARANCE AND TEXTURE: 300 Points.**

Color – 100 Points. Fat-to-lean ratio – 50 Points. Texture of cut surface – 50 Points. Lack of defects – 100 Points.

**AROMA AND FLAVOR: 500 Points.** Aroma – 50 Points.

Flavor – 400 Points. Flavors such as rancidity, bacterial spoilage, etc. shall severely downgrade the product.

Texture/Mouth feel – 50 Points.

Product Evaluation: Each Product should be scored on its own individual merits. Products should be cut for internal evaluation in a manner typical for that specific type of product. Products should be heated before tasting only if it would typically be done by a consumer.

product