

# CRITERIA FOR CULINARY JUDGING

Judges are asked for input regarding the best qualities of the item entered and on how the item can be improved. We understand that feedback is important for exhibitors, but please note that judges have a limited time to write evaluations based on the volume of entries and spend an average of three to four minutes on comments.

## LEAVENED & UNLEAVENED, & QUICK BREADS

FLAVOR – Taste and aroma appropriate to item	30%
TEXTURE – No streaks or close grain, size, uniformity of cell walls and elasticity	25%
CRUMB – Color and texture	15%
GENERAL APPEARANCE – Shape (proper “dome”, smoothness, crust and color)	10%
LIGHTNESS	10%
CRUST – <i>Thickness</i> , quality, crispness and tenderness	<u>10%</u>
	100%

## CAKES, CUPCAKES & CAKE POPS

FLAVOR – Delicate and pleasing, natural flavor of ingredients	35%
TEXTURE – Butter Cakes-tender, fine, even grain, moist but elastic; Fruit Cakes - not sticky, gummy, dry or crumbly	35%
APPEARANCE – Surface -crust or frosting; Crust-color, texture, depth; Frosting-glossy, not granular, soft, not sticky, suitable flavor. Filling (if appropriate)-minimum 1/4 inch, fluffy, good flavor that blends with cake.	30%
	_____
	100%

## COOKIES, BARS & BROWNIES

FLAVOR – Natural flavor of ingredients-no off-flavor.	35%
TEXTURE – Characteristic of type	35%
APPEARANCE – Outside-uniform, not too thick; Size-not to exceed 3.5 inches (except where different guidelines may apply); Surface-color and texture	30%
	_____
	100%

# CRITERIA FOR CULINARY JUDGING

## PIES & CHEESECAKE

FILLING – Flavor-natural or well-blended (15%); Consistency-fruit is moist but not syrupy, well cooked, filling should hold shape but be smooth and soft (15%). Meringue-light, tender, evenly browned, no shrinking from sides, no weeping, at least 1/2 inch (10%) Cheesecake should be smooth and consistent.	40%
CRUST – Texture-flaky, tender (25%); Flavor-agreeable, no strong taste of fat/salt (15%)	40%
APPEARANCE – Color (10%) and Shape (10%)	<u>20%</u>
	100%

## CONFECTIONS

FLAVOR – Blended, high quality, pleasing	30%
TEXTURE – Crystalline-velvety and creamy	30%
CONSISTENCY – Crystalline-firm, not hard or soft Non-crystalline - should hold shape with no crystals	25%
APPEARANCE – Color, size and shape of pieces; Non-crystalline-smooth.	<u>15%</u>
	100%

## SUGAR ARTS

OVERALL APPEARANCE – Balance and Eye Appeal (15%); Color Harmony (15%) Uniformity and Consistency of Pattern (15%)	45%
ARTISTIC QUALITY – Difficulty of Design (10%); Originality, Creativity (10%); Craftsmanship (10%)	30%
NEATNESS – Texture of Icing or Sugar Medium (10%); Uniformity of Repeat Pattern (10%); Base-Clean and Appropriate to Design (5%)	25%
	<u>100%</u>

## MUFFINS, BISCUITS & SCONES

FLAVOR – Taste and aroma, sweet, nutty, well-blended	30%
TEXTURE – No streaks or close grain, size and uniformity of cell walls, good elasticity	25%
LIGHTNESS – Product should have lightness appropriate for the product	15%
GENERAL APPEARANCE – Shape, proper dome, smoothness, crust color	15%
CRUST – Thickness, quality, crispness, tenderness and uniformity	<u>15%</u>
	100%

# CRITERIA FOR CULINARY JUDGING

## PRESERVED FOODS – VEGETABLES, FRUITS & TOMATOES

PACK – Acceptable processing method used with correct elevation adjustment; correct preparation procedures followed; correct type of pack (hot, raw) for processing method. Jar filled to appropriate headspace. Liquid covers all solids with no floating pieces. Good proportion of solids and liquids. Free of fancy packs that interfere with heat penetration.	40%
QUALITY OF PRODUCT – Pieces are uniform in size and shape when appropriate. Fresh, natural color to foods; characteristic of cooked product. Pieces retain shape; firm yet tender; free of mushiness; clean-cut edges to cut pieces; no split skins on beans or peas. Free from discoloration, blemishes, bruises, brown or black spots, insect damage, mold or other defects. Free of strings, fibers, unapproved stems, peels, cores and pits. Characteristic of optimum maturity.	30%
QUALITY OF LIQUID – Free from unnatural cloudiness or bubbling. Free from any or excessive sediment, floating food tissue, unintended seeds, peels or other particles. Free from large amounts of trapped air.	20%
CONTAINER – Vacuum-sealed, clean and clear glass standard canning jar. Appropriate size jar for product. New lid and band is free of rust; screw-band clean, unbent and easily removed. Label clean, neatly placed and contains name of product, date processed, processing method and time.	10%
	<hr/> 100%

## MARMALADES, PRESERVES, CONSERVES & SPREADS

PACK – Processed in boiling water or steam canner with correct elevation adjustment made; no open kettle canning. Jar filled to appropriate headspace (¼ inch). Liquid covers all solids with no floating pieces. Good proportion of solids and liquids.	15%
QUALITY OF FRUIT – Pieces uniform in size and shape. Fresh, natural color to fruit; uniformly translucent and characteristic of cooked product. Pieces retain shape; firm yet tender; free of mushiness; Clean cut edges to cut pieces. Fruit free from discoloration; blemishes, bruises, brown or black spots, insect damage.	25%
QUALITY OF TEXTURE – <i>Marmalade</i> - small thin pieces, clear, thick syrup <i>Preserve</i> - Pieces firm and whole, clear, thick syrup <i>Conserve</i> - Jam-like, containing two or more fruits, may contain nuts, coconut, or raisins <i>Curd</i> - An “acid” smooth consistency Free from any sediment, unintended seeds, peels or other particles such as fibers, core and strings. Free from foam or large amounts of trapped air; few bubbles.	30%
CONTAINER – Vacuum-sealed. Clean, clear glass standard canning jar. New lid and band is free of rust; screw-band clean, unbent and easily removed. Label clean, neatly placed and contains name of product, date processed, processing method and time.	20%
FLAVOR/AROMA – Natural flavor of the fruit; not too sweet or strong from overcooking. No scorched or musty odor.	10%
	<hr/> 100%

NOTE: Tender and even distribution of citrus peels in marmalade.

# CRITERIA FOR CULINARY JUDGING

## JAMS

COLOR – Fresh, natural color representative of dominant fruit; fruit pieces are translucent. Color uniform throughout. Free of discoloration, especially from scorching.	25%
CONSISTENCY – Soft enough to spread; not runny or overly thick; not gummy or sticky. Fruit pieces are tender and hold their shape. Pieces of fruit are uniform in size. Fruit pieces evenly distributed throughout container. No separation or layering.	25%
CLARITY – Translucent and not “muddy” or cloudy looking, even though there is no separated, jelled juice. Absence of crystals. Free of bubbles. Free of foreign matter (peel, seeds, etc.) and mold.	20%
PACK – Processed in boiling water canner or steam with correct elevation adjustment; no paraffin allowed. Jar filled to appropriate headspace (¼ inch).	10%
CONTAINER – Vacuum-sealed. Clean, clear glass standard canning jar. New lid and band is free of rust; screw-band clean, unbent and easily removed. Label clean, neatly placed and contains name of product, date processed, processing method and time.	10%
FLAVOR/AROMA – Natural flavor of the fruit; not overcooked, overly sweet or tart. No scorched flavor, No scorched or musty odor.	10%
	<hr/> 100%

NOTE: Conserves must contain 1 ounce or more of the following: nuts, raisins or coconut.

## PICKLES & RELISHES

PACK – Processed in boiling water or steam canner with correct elevation adjustment made; and no open kettle canning. Jar filled to appropriate headspace (½ inch). Good proportion of solids and liquids, then neatly packed. Liquid covers all solids with no floating pieces. Color and translucency uniform throughout the jar. Attractive; neat; space well used. Spices and seasonings not overwhelming and attractive in pack.	30%
COLOR – Even color, characteristic of fresh product, and even throughout the jar. No artificial coloring. Dill weed and spices visible. Cloves of garlic should be bright and not discolored.	20%
TEXTURE/CONSISTENCY – Pieces appear plump, not shriveled or shrunken. No internal holes in pickles. No separation or layering. Firm for pickles and softer for some relishes. Food pieces cut or chopped attractively, not too fine in relishes. Free of defect spots on peel. No separation or layering. Evenly distributed throughout the container. Cucumber not too old and seedy/	20%
QUALITY OF LIQUID – Clear, no unnatural cloudiness, free of bubbles. Free of trapped air bubbles with no active bubbling. Free of sediment and foreign matter (stems, cores, peel, seeds, etc.) and mold. No oil is to be used.	20%
CONTAINER – Vacuum-sealed. Clean, clear glass standard canning jar. Use appropriate size jar for available processes. New lid and band free of rust with screw-band clean, unbent and easily removed.	10%
	<hr/> 100%

# CRITERIA FOR CULINARY JUDGING

## CHUTNEY

American and European-style chutneys are usually fruit, vinegar, and sugar cooked down to a reduction, with added flavorings. These may include sugar, salt, garlic, tamarind, onion or ginger. Western-style chutneys originated from Anglo-Indians at the time of the British Raj recreated Indian chutneys using English orchard fruits—sour cooking apples and rhubarb, for example. They would often contain dried fruit: raisins, currants and sultanas. No yogurt chutneys.

FLAVOR – Smoothness to the palate. No off flavors.	30%
APPEARANCE – Even color, characteristic of cured or cooked product. No artificial coloring. Free of trapped air bubbles with no active bubbling. Free of sediment and foreign matter (stems, cores, peel, seeds, etc.) and mold. Free of discoloration and blemishes. Color is often dark but depends on ingredients and spices used. Free from any signs Of scorching (burned flecks).	25%
TEXTURE/CONSISTENCY – Pieces appear plump, not shriveled or shrunken. Food pieces cut or chopped attractively, not too fine in relishes. Texture of vegetable Pieces is similar to that of relish, but the liquid is thicker. Has a similar consistency to jelly and salsa.	25%
PACK & CONTAINER – Vacuum-sealed. Clean, clear glass standard canning jar. Use appropriate size jar for available processes. New lid and band free of rust with screw-band clean, unbent and easily removed. Headspace is appropriate.	20%

---

100%

## SALSAS

PACK – Processed in boiling water or steam canner with correct elevation adjustment made; and no open kettle canning. Jar filled to appropriate headspace (½ inch). Good proportion of solids and liquids, then neatly packed. Liquid covers all solids with no floating pieces. Quality of Product. Color and translucency uniform throughout the jar. Free of discoloration and blemishes.	30%
COLOR – Even color, characteristic of cured or cooked product. Free of discoloration and blemishes.	20%
TEXTURE/CONSISTENCY – Pieces appear plump, not shriveled or shrunken. Food pieces cut or chopped attractively. Evenly distributed throughout container. No separation or layering. Spices and seasonings not overwhelming and attractive in pack.	20%
QUALITY OF LIQUID – Clear, no unnatural cloudiness, free of bubbles. Free of trapped air bubbles with no active bubbling. Free of sediment and foreign matter (stems, cores, peel, seeds, etc.) and mold.	20%
CONTAINER – Vacuum-sealed. Clean, clear glass standard canning jar. Use appropriate size jar for available processes. New lid and band free of rust with screw-band clean, unbent and easily removed.	10%

---

100%

# CRITERIA FOR CULINARY JUDGING

## JELLIES

CONSISTENCY – Firm enough to hold shape. Tender, not too stiff or tough but “quivery.” Stays in one mass when shaken loose from jar and does not break. No separation or layering and holds a sharp edge when cut.	25%
CLARITY – Free from cloudiness and fruit pulp (exception: pepper jelly). Absence of crystals. Free of bubbles. Free of foreign matter (peel, seeds, etc.) and mold.	25%
COLOR – Fresh, natural color representative of dominant fruit. Color uniform throughout.	20%
PACK – Processed in boiling water canner or steam canner with correct elevation adjustment made. No paraffin allowed. Jar filled to appropriate headspace (¼ inch).	10%
CONTAINER – Vacuum-sealed with clean, clear glass standard canning jar. New lid and band free of rust, clean, unbent and easily removed. Label clean, neatly placed and contains name of product, date processed, processing method and time.	10%
FLAVOR/AROMA – Natural flavor of the fruit. Not overcooked, overly sweet or tart.	<u>10%</u> 100%

## DRIED FRUITS, VEGETABLES, MEATS & HERB BLENDS

TEXTURE – Piece uniformly dry throughout. Fruits and tomatoes should be leathery and pliable. If the piece of fruit is folded over itself, it springs back. Chewy and not sticky or brittle. Free from cores and objectionable seeds or peel. Vegetables should be brittle, crisp, tough or cracking hard. Dry enough to rattle. Herbs: Pulverize or become like dust when rubbed. Leathers: Leathery, yet pliable. Not sticky, crisp or brittle. Rolls without tearing or breaking. Jerky: Leathery, drier than fruit, but not brittle. Piece cracks but does not break when bent.	40%
COLOR – Characteristic of product. No excessive discoloration. Color uniform throughout container. Pretreatment, if done, appropriate. Note: Game meat should be frozen to destroy parasites before making jerky.	30%
SIZE AND SHAPE – Pieces in exhibit are uniform in size and shape. Leathers are uniform in thickness. Pieces neatly cut with no ragged edges. Size suitable for later use.	10%
PACKAGING AND LABELING – Label is neat, clean and contains name of product, date dried and method of drying. Appropriate size and material for product; airtight closure. If in jar: No cracks, chips or rust. Lid/band free of dents, rust, corrosion or dents; clean and easily removed. No foreign matter or visible moisture.	10%
FLAVOR/AROMA – Pleasant odor and flavor, characteristic of fresh food except jerky. No scorched or musty odor. Jerky: Not overly salty, smoky or spiced. Free from rancid flavor.	10%
	<hr/> 100%

# CRITERIA FOR CULINARY JUDGING

## SAUCES & CONDIMENTS

COLOR – Bright, attractive color; no artificial coloring used. Color uniform throughout. No darkening at surface.	35%
CONSISTENCY – Flows freely, not too watery. Smooth. May round up at edges like a fruit butter. Free from any or excessive sediment, no foreign matter (floating food tissue, unintended seeds, peels, or other particles such as dark flecks from scorching). No separation, layering and layer of fat.	35%
PACK – Acceptable processing method used with correct elevation adjustment with hot packs used. Jar filled to appropriate headspace.	20%
CONTAINER – Vacuum-sealed. Use clean, clear glass standard canning jar. New lid and band is free of rust with screw-band clean, unbent and easily removed. Label is clean and neatly placed and contains name of exhibitor.	10%
	<hr/> 100%

## LIQUEUR

NOSE – Consists of four categories: Aroma, faults, variety and intensity.	20%
PALATE – Consists of four categories: Complexity, concentration, fruit and length	20%
BALANCE – Refers to the juxtaposition of the liqueurs component parts and is an expression of their harmony and ability to co-exist in a way that leads to the greatness of a liqueur.	20%
FINISH – Consists of three categories: Aftertaste, balance and acid.	20%
APPEARANCE – Consists of four categories: Color, viscosity, brilliance and depth.	<u>20%</u>
	100%

## JERKY

TEXTURE – Leathery, drier than fruit, but not brittle. Piece cracks but does not break when bent.	40%
COLOR – Characteristic of product. No excessive discoloration. Color uniform throughout container. Pretreatment, if done, appropriate. Note: Game meat should be frozen to destroy parasites before making jerky.	30%
SIZE AND SHAPE – Pieces in exhibit are uniform in size and shape. Leathers are uniform in thickness. Pieces neatly cut with no ragged edges. Size suitable for later use.	10%
PACKAGING AND LABELING – Label is neat, clean and contains name of product, date dried and method of drying. Appropriate size and material for product; airtight closure. If in jar: No cracks, chips or rust. Lid/band free of dents, rust, corrosion or dents; clean and easily removed. No foreign matter or visible moisture.	10%
FLAVOR/AROMA – Pleasant odor and flavor, characteristic of fresh food except jerky. No scorched or musty odor. Jerky: Not overly salty, smoky or spiced. Free from rancid flavor.	10%
	<hr/> 100%

# CRITERIA FOR CULINARY JUDGING

## BRINED OLIVES

Table olives will be assessed on the following characteristics:

- visually appealing to eat
- absence of blemishes
- appealing color
- good flesh texture
- olive flavor
- acidity
- saltiness
- residual bitterness
- absence of off flavors
- overall flavor balance

SKIN AND FLESH – The skin of the fruit should be fine, smooth and not wrinkled, yet elastic and resistant to handling damage. Flesh should be firm but not woody or granular. Green olives should have firm, crisp flesh, ripe or black olives will have softer flesh due to the fruit being more mature than green olives, however, it shouldn't be soggy or flabby. The flesh should separate easily from the stone. 20%

BLEMISHES AND COLOR – Blemishes should be absent; however, some white spots on green olives are natural, others such as gas pockets or blistering are caused by processing, and organisms. Green olives should be bright green to a straw green color. Some dulling may occur after several months in brine. Lye treated green olives are very bright green. Olives turning color should be pale pink, and black olives vary from dark pink to black or winey color. 20%

BITTERNESS AND SALTINESS – The olive shouldn't be bitter to taste but some bitterness can be balanced by the amount of saltiness and olive flavor. The level of salt governs the flavor of the olive and must be balanced with the bitterness and acidity. 25%

FLAVOR – the olive should have an appealing fruit flavor, which for green olives often is a typical fermentation taste but retaining "olive" character, and for black olives is a stronger olive flavor. There should be no "off" aromas such as rancid, cheesy or faecal aromas. 35%

---

100%



# CRITERIA FOR CULINARY JUDGING

## HOT SAUCE

GENERAL APPEARANCE– The right visual experience. Hot sauce should look appetizing. A red chili should have a rich, bright color overall and a verde (green Chili) should of course have a green color to it. Both should not have a grey hue but should peak your curiosity and cause you to impatiently want to taste it as quickly as possible.	20%
AROMA – Should smell good and give an indication of what’s in store when you taste it. Should smell good and give an indication of what’s in store when you taste it. Does it caress, arouse, abandon, or attack your senses?	10%
TEXTURE AND CONSISTENCY– It should not be watery, grainy, or lumpy. It should not be watery, grainy, or lumpy.	15%
FLAVOR BALANCE– Use of Heat and burn-to-flavor balance The bite, or after-taste, is the combination of heat and flavor from the selected peppers and spices that lingers in the mouth after the sauce has been eaten. IMPORTANT NOTE: Will lose valuable points if it is not pleasurable to taste.	20%
FLAVOR – The taste should consist of the combination of the peppers, and spices, with a perfect blend of flavors and no particular ingredient being dominant.	25%
DIVISION FIT–Overall Impression and compliant for category	10%

Note: Pack must follow USDA food preservation standards.

---

100%

Each hot sauce entry is judged in a blind tasting using a cup with the entry tag attached to represent each entry. Judges are not allowed to see any indication of the brand, owner, or manufacturer of the product.

## FERMENTED FOODS

SIZE AND SHAPE – Pieces are uniform in size and shape. Pieces in relishes not chopped or ground too fine. No ragged edges.	20%
PACK – Attractive; neat; space well used. Good proportion of solids to liquids. Liquid covers all product with appropriate headspace left empty. No floating of pieces. Liquid Clear. May have color from some spices. Free of sediment or cloudiness. No foreign matter such as stems, leaves, strings, husks.	30%
TEXTURE – Pieces appear plump, not shriveled or shrunken. Firm for pickles and sauerkraut. A visual indication for texture is that 1/16th inch slice has been removed from the Blossom end of cucumbers.	20%
COLOR – Even color, characteristic of fresh product, and even throughout the jar. No artificial coloring.	15%
CONTAINER – Container Properly labeled. Clean, clear standard canning jar. No cracks, chips, or rust on jar. Band free of rust and dents or other damage; clean and easily removed.	15%

---

100%

# CRITERIA FOR CULINARY JUDGING

## LIQUID HONEY

Liquid honey is the way honey comes from the hive. Liquid honey yields a wonderful golden liquid. Fresh honey will be liquid since it was just extracted from the hives.

DENSITY – Honey variety will be considered	30%
FLAVOR – Unwanted flavors: fermented, scorched, smoky or burnt	30%
ABSENCES OF IMPURITIES – Free from dirt, lint and wax.	25%
<i>NOTE: More than 50% crystallization will result in disqualification.</i>	
CONTAINER APPEARANCE AND CLEANLINESS – No cracks, dents, or imperfection in glass and lid. Jar is clean on the outside	10%
ACCURACY OF FILLING – 8-12 ounces. Headspace and uniformity.	5%
	<hr/>
	100%

## CREAMED UNFLAVORED HONEY

Has a mild flavor, spreads like butter at ordinary room temperature and doesn't drip. Creamed honey is really crystallized honey or granulated honey. Well-made honey possesses a creamy texture because the crystallization process has been precisely controlled.

CRYSTALLIZATION – Smooth texture and fine crystals. Crystal sizes consistent.	25%
FLAVOR – Flavor not adversely affected by processing. Unwanted flavors: fermented, scorched, smoky or burnt.	30%
SPEADABLE – Easy to spread.	20%
ABSENCES OF IMPURITIES – Free from dirt, lint and wax.	10%
CONTAINER APPEARANCE AND CLEANLINESS – No cracks, dents, or imperfection in glass and lid. Jar is clean on the outside	10%
ACCURACY OF WEIGHT – 8-12 ounces. Headspace and uniformity.	5%
	<hr/>
	100%

# CRITERIA FOR CULINARY JUDGING

## COMBED HONEY

Combed honey is intended for consumption, which still contains pieces of the hexagonal-shaped beeswax cells of the honey comb.

NEATNESS OF CUT – Cut is parallel and uniform. No crushed honeycombs.	20%
UNIFORMITY OF APPEARANCE – Foundation straight (no wave) and level. Caps and other features uniform.	25%
ABSENCE OF UNCAPPED – All cells should have caps.	15%
CAP APPEARANCES – White and clean caps. No travel stains or watery/wet caps.	15%
FREE OF GRANULATION AND POLLEN Granulation can be disqualified. No excessive pollen present.	10%
CONTAINER APPEARANCE AND CLEANLINESS – No cracks, dents, or imperfection in glass and lid. Jar is clean on the outside.	10%
ACCURACY OF WEIGHT – 8 - 12 ounces. Uniform weight of each section.	5%

---

100%

## PURE BEESWAX PRODUCTS – LIP BALM

SCENT OR FLAVOR – Appropriate for item .	20%
TEXTURE – Balanced between waxy and greasy.	30%
APPEARANCE – Uniformity of fill and color, pleasing to the eye.	20%
PACKAGING – Ease of opening, ingredients listed, attractiveness.	20%
CLEANLINESS – No foreign matter visible on package or product.	10%

---

100%

## PURE BEESWAX PRODUCTS – HAND-CRAFTED SOAP

SCENT OR AROMA – Appropriate for item.	10%
QUALITY – Hardness, free from white lye powder pockets, water cavities, and greasy areas.	20%
COLOR – Attractive color combinations, uniformity across bars.	20%
APPEARANCE – Consistency of shapes, pleasing to the eye. NOTE: No soda ash except as part of intended appearance.	20%
PACKAGING – Ease of opening, ingredients listed, attractiveness.	20%
CLEANLINESS – No foreign matter visible on package or product. Jars & labels clean.	10%

---

100%

# CRITERIA FOR CULINARY JUDGING

## PURE BEESWAX PRODUCTS – MOISTURIZER

SCENT OR AROMA – Appropriate for item.	10%
ABSORPTION – Without residual stickiness or greasiness.	20%
TEXTURE – Creaminess, absence of lumps or watery areas.	20%
APPEARANCE – Uniformity of fill and color, pleasing to the eye.	20%
PACKAGING – Ease of opening, ingredients listed, attractiveness.	20%
CLEANLINESS – No foreign matter visible on package or product. Jars & labels clean.	10%
	<hr/>
	100%

## EXTRA VIRGIN AND FLAVORED OLIVE OIL

AROMATIC CHARACTERISTICS – Forward aroma. Intensity of the olive fruit aroma. Balance and harmony of the olive fruit aroma. Appropriate to the product.	30%
FLAVOR CHARACTERISTICS – Intensity of olive fruit flavor (retronasal aroma). Balance and harmony of fruit, bitterness, and pungency. Mouth feel should be Appropriate to the product.	40%
OVERALL IMPRESSION – The complexity of the oil. Finish and persistence of the oil.	30%
	<hr/>
	100%