


Vermont's North Country Chamber of Commerce Chili Challenge Cook-off Guidelines

 **Date:** Saturday, September 27, 2025

 **Time:** 11:30 AM – 2:00 PM (Setup begins at 11:00 AM)

 **Location:** Main Street, Downtown Newport, Vermont

 **In Partnership with the Newport City Fall Festival and Newport Downtown Development**

 **This is the Newport Area Chamber's Annual Fundraising Event**

Official Rules and Regulations

1. Eligibility

The competition is open to **both amateur and professional** chefs. All are welcome to compete.

2. Definition of "Chili"

Entries may be traditional or creative. Chili **must include chili peppers** but may be made with or without beans.

3. Registration

All participants must complete and return a **pre-registration form** in advance, due no later than September 8th, 2025. Forms can be submitted:

- **Online:** www.vtnorthcountry.org
- **Mail:** PO Box 243, Newport, VT
- **In-person:** Newport Welcome Center
- **Email:** director@vtnorthcountry.org

4. Chili Preparation

- Chili must be **fully cooked, hot, and ready to serve** upon arrival.
- Contestants are responsible for all setup items including **tables, tents, heat sources, and signage**. Please reach out to the Chamber if you need assistance with any items.
- The event will provide **serving cups and spoons** for public tastings.

5. Setup & Timeline

- **Setup begins at 11:00 AM.**

- Be fully prepared and ready to serve by **11:30 AM**, as attendees begin arriving early.
- The official competition begins at **12:00 PM** and concludes at **2:00 PM**.
- Votes will be tallied and awards handed out by **4:00 PM** same day.

6. Booth Assignments

Booth locations will be pre-assigned and mapped by the event coordinator. All booths will be located on Main Street.

7. Serving Requirements

- Each contestant must prepare a **minimum of 5 gallons** of chili.
- Only **one recipe** may be served to ensure consistency for public judging.
- Participants must maintain safe serving temperatures and follow standard food safety practices. The food temperature should be **at or above 135°F (57°C)** at all times during serving.
- Chili may only be served to guests who have purchased an official tasting spoon.

8. Judging Process

- This is a **People's Choice** competition.
- Each contestant will receive a contestant number for ballot purposes, but should prominently display their name or team at their booth to help tasters remember your chili when voting.
- Attendees vote for their favorite chili using a ballot, which they return to the judges' stand.
- The chili with the **most votes wins**. In the event of a tie, a **blind taste-off** will determine the winner.

9. Awards & Recognition

- Winners will be announced **on-site shortly after voting concludes**.
- Awards include a **Trophy** and public recognition.
- Each contestant will receive up to \$100 rebate to help offset ingredient costs.

10. Cleanup Responsibilities

- Participants must **thoroughly clean their booth areas** by the end of the event. No materials or equipment may be left behind.

11. Marketing Tip

Please display your **name or team name prominently** at your booth. This helps tasters remember your entry when voting.

