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## **Public will have access to food this year at BBQ Cook-Off**

- Special to the Leader & Times

The Kansas City Barbeque Society contest is scheduled for Aug. 1 and 2 during the Seward County Five State Fair. According to Jim Rice, organizer for the event, teams have signed up from New Mexico, Kansas, Texas, Oklahoma and Illinois. Rice said team signup is slower than in past years. In checking with other contests, they are experiencing similar problems, according to Rice.

Rice said he believes a lot of the problem is the high cost of fuel, meat and supplies for the contest. Teams often cook a couple of briskets, three or four racks of ribs, several chicken thighs and breasts and a pork shoulder or two.



“Those costs add up quickly and these guys buy the best cuts for every contest,” Rice explained. “Briskets sometimes cost as much as \$100 for one.”

Rice has received many favorable comments concerning the United Wireless Five State Fair Contest with encouragement to continue even if 25 teams cannot be reached.

“All replies were very positive with a great many compliments to our sponsors, he said. “We are an exception to the rule, as other contests would give anything to have the level of sponsor support we have.”

Rice said, “Due to popular demand, barbecue will be available from vendor/contestants on Friday evening.”

Teams including Rubbed Rite BBQ, Smokeaholics and Uncle Bubbas Rib House BBQ have agreed to provide the public with some of their great barbecue. Rice said he is not sure what their menu will be.

“We have left it up to the cook teams to serve whatever they like and charge accordingly,” he said. “That has been the biggest complaint for the last two years, where can we get some of their barbecue?”

This year, that question has an answer, just go to the barbecue area south of the Activity Center.

“Just follow the smoke,” Rice added with a laugh.

New additions for this year’s contest include a dessert class. All desserts must be made on-site, the choice has been left up to the cooks. The addition of the dessert class brings total prize money to more than \$8,000 this year.

Rice encourages everyone to come out on Friday evening, look around, check out some of those BBQ smokers and talk with cook team members and enjoy some great Kansas City BBQ.

“Remember these vendors are required to compete in the contest Saturday, so you will have the opportunity to try some real barbecue from a real cook team competitor,” Rice said.

All Judges and Table Captains have been secured and 100 percent are Certified BBQ Judges. This is the second year the contest has obtained all CBJ’s.

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