

2021 IAFE Sponsorship Awards Program



Wilson County Fair-Tennessee State Fair – Division 3 *Category 1 – Sponsor Innovation*

Where's the Beef?

Objective: We found the Beef at our 2021 Wilson County Fair-Tennessee State Fair! Celebrating the Year of Beef was certainly elevated to a new level when Burger Republic partnered with our Fair to find the most delicious burger and ribeye steak cooked by amateur cooks. When determining how Burger Republic could play a larger role in our Fair than just a concessionaire (all be it providing the #6 burger in the nation!), they truly stepped into a new arena becoming the presenting sponsor of the Big Beef Showdown. This competition was previously known as the Cook-off and to increase participation and update the competition, it was renamed and presented by a new sponsor Burger Republic.

Execution: How could a burger joint really play a key role in updating a traditional cook-off competition? They quickly decided to bring in another key player, the World Food Championship (WFC) to take the competition to a more prestigious level. Burger Republic had competed in the World Food Championship with their famous Tennessee Burger and scored the #6 burger in the world in the 2019 competition. Burger Republic knew that the World Food Championship was an expert in running a cooking competition, and they could lend their expertise to our Fair's Big Beef Showdown.

Planning the Big Beef Showdown was a great team effort. We partnered our Fair volunteer committee chair with the owner and marketing leads of Burger Republic and the World Food Championship.

Together they created the overall structure for the competition that included the rules and logistics, the marketing and branding for engaging competitors and a marketing campaign that included press releases, social media and specific branding ideas to make the Big Beef Showdown an enticing competition. Burger Republic provided the winning premiums through their sponsorship as well as the opportunity for the winning burger to be featured on their menu for up to a month after the Fair. The

World Food Championship offered the winners a coveted Golden Ticket to compete in the national World Food Championship to be held in Dallas, TX, in November of 2021.

Outcome and Evaluation: The number of teams who competed in each category (burger and ribeye steak) could consist of up to 4 members. There were 21 teams who competed as they cooked in 10' x 10' spaces on the Fair's site. Teams turned in 6 entries (burgers or ribeye steaks) for judging. The WFC had a team of trained judges along with five celebrity judges who scored each entry. Burgers were judged first then ribeye steaks were judged in taste, use of ingredients, recipe, creativity and overall presentation. An awards ceremony was held in the afternoon at one of the Fair's entertainment stages (the Opry Stage) to give out the cash prizes and the Golden Tickets to the winning teams.

Category Specifics: The real innovation in the sponsorship agreement was realized when brainstorming a new name for the competition. Rather than just a cook-off, the team decided that the entire state of Tennessee should be represented and encouraged to participate. The overall name of the competition became the Taste of Tennessee's Big Beef Showdown. The team has future plans to expand the competition to include up to four categories (as part of the Taste of Tennessee) so our Fair's event can become a Super Regional for qualifying to the World Food Championship. Needless to say, these plans committed the entire team to future partnerships and solidified the sponsorship of Burger Republic for multiple years.



Above Left: New logo that Burger Republic's graphic design artist created for the competition.

Above Right: World Food Championship trained up to 50 judges for the competition. Five of those judges included some celebrities pictured here: Lance Pekus-Beef Council spokesperson known as the Cowboy Ninja Warrior, local beef producer from the Bradshaw Farms, the Wilson County Fair-Tennessee State Fair Livestock chairman, Tennessee Farm Bureau's president and a representative from a local TV station.

Wilson County Fair - TN State Fair
Jul 16 · 🌐

GRILL MASTERS: Come compete at the fair in the Big Beef Showdown sponsored by [Burger Republic](#). Categories are ****Best Burger**** and ****Best Ribeye****. The winner gets their burger featured on the menu for a month at Burger Republic AND a Golden Ticket to compete at the World Food Championships in Dallas, Texas in November 2022!

Must register by August 1. Details and entry form here: <https://www.wilsoncountyfair.net/p/competitions-exhibits/tennessee-state-competitions/food-competitions1/cookoff>

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10 likes

tnstatefair Thank you to Burger Republic for sponsoring our Taste of Tennessee, Big Beef Showdown today! We can't wait to see who will win the best burger and steak cook-offs and earn a Golden Ticket to the World Food Championship in Dallas, TX. Craving a delicious burger? Stop by Burger Republic in Mount Juliet and try the tastiest burgers in town! #burgerrepublic

August 14

Above Left: Facebook post advertising competition and sponsors along with link for entry.

Above Right: Instagram post highlighting Burger republic sponsorship of the Fair and the competition.



Liked by chickfilalebanon and 340 others
 wilsoncountyfair IT'S DAY THREE! Here's a taste of what is scheduled for today. Gates open at 10a. The first two days featured gorgeous, cool weather. Come experience fun for all ages! It's @tnlottery Day at the Fair. There's the Big Beef Showdown sponsored by @burger_republic. Armwrestling Championship. Clogging Competitions. Talent Shows. And SO much more! #wilsoncountyfair #tnstatefair

Above Left: Instagram post showcasing daily happenings on the day of the Big Beef Showdown so fairgoers could watch the activity.

Above Right: Teams plated and arranged their 6 individual entries for judging. Five of the entries were taste tested and one was used for presentation judging.

Below Left: Winning team for the best burger who received their Golden Ticket to the World Food Championship. Owner of Burger Republic and Big Beef Showdown volunteer chairman were excited to be pictured with this team.

Below Right: Winning team for the best ribeye steak received their Golden Ticket on one of the Fair's entertainment stages during the Awards Ceremony of the Big Beef Showdown.

