

# PNWBA WORKING WITH PNWBA COMMENT CARDS



When comment cards are utilized, they provide judges feedback to the cooks. Cards allow judges to make notes specifically explaining the basis of their scores.

After the table captain collects score cards at the end of a category, judges should discuss just-scored entries with others at table. A few minutes of discussion can be very beneficial to newer judges (as well as those with more experience). It lets you find out if others tasted what you did, or looked at the entry the same as you – it's a great way to see if you are on the same wavelength as your fellow judges.

After the comment cards are collected, they are separated and sorted into envelopes to be provided to the cooks, along with the contest report print-out, at the end of the event.

## GOOD COMMENT WRITING

While you are looking at a BBQ entry or putting it into your mouth, you are telling yourself something about the appearance or taste. Those first, notable impressions are what we're trying to capture on comment cards to provide specific, helpful information to the cooks, telling them what they've done right and/or what could be improved.

## BE BRIEF

Good comments are CONCISE. In the small amount of room allotted for your notes, a few well-chosen words are perfect. No one expects, nor is there time for, elaborate sentences.

## BE SPECIFIC

Rather than general statements, give the cooks information they can use by writing down exactly what prompted your scores for Appearance, Texture or Taste.

## BE POSITIVE, WHEN POSSIBLE

Remember that each entry coming to your table represents a lot of hard work on the part of a cooking team who gave it their best effort. The goal of critiquing is to be helpful, not hurtful. Newer teams are often the recipients of negative comments; if you can say anything good about an entry along with the bad, it can be less discouraging for the cooks. Be honest, but do not be unnecessarily harsh.

**HELP PROCESSING THE COMMENT CARDS IS ALWAYS APPRECIATED!**

## PROCEDURE

Complete your comment card and then transfer the number scores over to the scorecard.

*Be sure you enter the correct scores with each box.*

- ➔ You are to provide a comment for each of the three elements: Appearance, Texture and Taste.
- ➔ You are to complete a card for EACH entry.

After the last entry, review both your score cards and comment cards to be sure that the scores appear on both, before handing score card to table captain. Do not leave the table until the Table Captain has reviewed your scorecard. Comment cards will be collected before judges leave the table.

## EXAMPLES

It makes the most sense to the reader if the comments for each element are written on the lines next to that particular score (i.e., texture comments next to texture score)

BOX #	<b>PORK BUTT</b>
13	
Appear	Looks moist, nice arrangement
10	of shredded meat & slices
Texture	Slices were perfect tender,
8	shredded meat felt mushy
Taste	Good balance & a little heat!
9	



## JUDGING SLIP

- CHECK CATEGORY:**
- |                                  |                                  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brisket | <input type="checkbox"/> Salmon  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chicken | <input type="checkbox"/> Sausage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pork    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tri-Tip |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ribs    | <input type="checkbox"/> Dessert |
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## CIRCLE YOUR POINT RATING:

Entry No.		Good	Average	Faulted	DQ
13	Appear	10	9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2	1	
	Texture	10 9 8	7 6 5 4 3 2	1	
	Taste	10 9	8 7 6 5 4 3 2	1	
	Appear	10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2		1	
	Texture	10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2		1	
	Taste	10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2		1	

Before turning in your score card and comment card, be sure that all numbers are written in or circled, and that they match!

# Examples of Bad Comments

DO NOT:	EXAMPLES	BECAUSE...
COMMENT ON THE CHOICE OF MEAT	<i>"You should turn in both sliced pork and shredded"</i> <i>"Baby back ribs are better than spareribs"</i> <i>"I like all chicken thighs, not mixed pieces"</i>	No choice of meat is considered intrinsically "better" or more right or worthy of higher scores than another. Your personal preference is put aside, each entry is to be fairly evaluated as submitted.
COMMENT ON THE AMOUNT OF MEAT	<i>"The thighs were too small"</i> <i>"The box wasn't full enough"</i>	We judge our meats based on QUALITY, not QUANTITY. Base your score on the sample you've been given, not on the amount of leftovers you'll be taking home with you..
COMMENT ON THE GARNISH	<i>"There was no greenery"</i> <i>"I think a bed of parsley looks better as a garnish"</i> <i>"The lettuce was wilted-looking"</i>	Appearance refers to how the MEAT looks; we don't judge the garnish (or the box). Garnish is not required for the competition meats.
COMMENT ON THE WRONG THINGS	<i>"Brisket didn't have a smoke ring"</i> <i>"Pork slice didn't stretch"</i> <i>"Sauce smudge on inside of box lid"</i>	Make sure that your comments do not directly contradict your CBJ training. Smoke ring isn't considered for appearance; stretching pork isn't a test (nor is it the only test for brisket); box lid may have been clean when turned in.
TELL THEM HOW TO COOK	<i>"You should use more sauce on your pork"</i> <i>"Try using Paul Kirk's rub"</i> <i>"Needs to be wrapped in foil and held longer"</i>	Entries need not conform to your personal preferences. All entries are to be judged based on how they were submitted.
BE RUDE	<i>"Tastes like crap" (actual comment)</i> <i>"Have you ever cooked before?"</i> <i>"This is the worst brisket I've ever had"</i>	Offensive or profane language has no place among our comments (nor does it provide specific, useful feedback).
COMPARE WITH ANYTHING	<i>"Last week's chicken was better overall"</i> <i>"Great, compared to our first entry"</i> <i>"Looks like Famous Dave's ribs"</i>	Each entry is judged on its own merits. Do not compare an entry with anything other than standards of BBQ excellence.

## ADDITIONAL TIPS

### BE CREDIBLE

First and foremost, your comments must match your scores! A "perfect texture" comments should be matched with a score of 10. "The sauce overpowered the meat flavor" means the taste score would NOT be a 10. Your comments should show the cooks that you know what you're talking about.

### CREATIVE WRITING NOT NECESSARY

Remember that comments need not be unique; the words "Nicely arranged" may apply to several entries.

### ABOUT BRISKET AND PORK BUTT

If these meats were offered in multiple ways in the entry box, your number score reflects the average of your evaluations, but your comments can specify what you did/didn't like.

### ABOUT CHICKEN

If the entry contained mixed pieces, mention which piece you selected and are commenting on.

### ABOUT RIBS

When considering rib appearance, look for a clean cut. If the rib bones aren't straight, the pieces may not be uniformly rectangular, but cuts should be evenly spaced from the bone.

### ABOUT SPECIAL CATEGORIES

If open garnish was specified for the category, remember that the appearance score is still about the food. Do not comment on the serving vessel. It's not a contest for expensive trays or tureens; clamshell boxes are acceptable for special category turn-ins. Make your comments about the food.