



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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N.C. Mountain State Fair announces winners in beef and pork cooking contests

FLETCHER – Winners were announced in beef and pork cooking contests held during the 2019 N.C. Mountain State Fair. The fair runs through Sept. 15 at the WNC Agricultural Center in Fletcher.

Three Buncombe County residents placed in the N.C. Cattlemen’s Beef Championship on Sunday afternoon. Mary Alice Ramsey earned \$200 and a blue ribbon for her recipe for Tailgate Taco Soup. Sharon Gates placed second and earned \$150 for her BBQ Meatball Cupcakes recipe. In third place, Susie Zuerner’s Tasty Steak Tailgate Sandwiches earned her \$100.

On Monday night, the N.C. Pork Council sponsored the Tar Heel Double Pork Challenge. Susie Zuerner earned a blue ribbon and \$200 for her Prodigious Pork Volcano recipe. Sharon Gates came in second place with Smoky Stuffed Pork Chops and earned \$150. Justin Pegg of Buncombe County rounded out the finalists with his Bacon Wrapped Stuffed Tenderloin recipe and earned \$100.

Following are the winning recipes from each contest:

TAILGATE TACO SOUP

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 cup onions, chopped
2 pounds ground beef
2 cans pinto beans
1 can red kidney beans
1 can whole kernel corn
2 cans diced tomatoes
1 can diced tomatoes with mild green chilies
1 packet original ranch dressing mix
1 packet original taco seasoning mix
Grated cheese
Chopped green onions
Saltine crackers

-more-

In a 12-inch frying pan, sauté onion in oil on medium heat until translucent. Remove onion to 6-quart soup pot. Using the same frying pan, brown ground beef. Remove to drain.

In soup pot, add beans, corn and tomatoes. Add ground beef, ranch mix and taco seasoning mix and stir. Over medium-high heat, bring soup to boil stirring occasionally. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 1 hour.

Top with grated cheese and green onions. Serve with saltines.

PRODIGIOUS PORK VOLCANO

16 ounces sliced bacon
1 pound bratwurst
6 large baking potatoes
2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
1 cup sour cream
1/2 cup sweet onion diced
5 tablespoons butter
1/2 cup barbecue sauce
2 tablespoons garlic chives
Salt
Pepper
Toothpicks

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Slice the bottom off each baking potato so that it will stand squarely on its end. Pierce each potato with a fork several times. Wrap the outside of each potato with bacon (2 to 3 slices) and secure bacon with toothpicks. Cover baking sheet with parchment paper and stand bacon-wrapped potatoes on end.

Bake for 1 hour. Baste bacon with barbecue sauce 2-3 times while the potatoes are cooking. Remove from oven and let cool for 15 minutes.

Place butter in bottom of mixing bowl. Remove tops from potatoes and scoop out as much pulp as you can. Place pulp in mixing bowl on top of butter. Finely chop bratwurst into mixture. Combine a cup and a half of cheese, onions and sour cream into the mixture. Salt and pepper to taste and beat until smooth.

Place mixture into plastic bag and cut hole in bottom corner of bag. Squeeze contents back into potatoes, filling completely. Top with generous amounts of cheddar cheese. Return to oven and bake until cheese is melted. Garnish with chives and serve.