

IMPPA & KAMP Cured Meat Championship Rules

2025 Rules

1. **ELIGIBILITY:** Competition is open to all meat processors who are members of the Indiana Meat Packers and Processors Association, Inc or the Kentucky Association of Meat Processors.
2. **ENTRIES:** Products can only be entered in one class. The same product cannot be entered in two different categories. Only one entry is allowed per processor, per class. All entries must be derived from inspected meat. The only variation from this rule is “game” categories.
3. **INGREDIENTS/ COOKING/ COOLING:** Each cured and smoked product must contain the correct amount of restricted ingredients according to the FSIS Directive 7620.3. Specialty non-meat ingredients, if allowed in class, include rice, cheese, jalapeños, mushrooms, fruits, vegetables, etc. The products must have been thermally processed according to compliance guidelines of USDA/FSIS Appendix A and cooled according to Appendix B of the Compliance Guidelines for Meeting Lethality Performance Standards. Any variations to this rule will be stated in the item descriptions. All pork products entered in the contest shall be subjected to one of the methods of eliminating trichina specified in FSIS Compliance Guideline for the Prevention and Control of Trichinella and Other Parasitic Hazards in Pork and Products Containing Pork, March 2016. **Ingredient statement or label must be provided for every entry.**
4. **IDENTIFYING MARKS:** Exhibitors are required to remove all identification marks branded or stamped on entries.
5. **JUDGES:** Entries shall be judged by judges who are particularly qualified in their respective fields. Judges shall be responsible for handling and cutting entries in the class they judge. It is the responsibility of the judges to disqualify any entry that does not meet any of the rules or requirements of the show. The judges shall refrain from discussing disqualified products during the awards session. Decisions of the judges shall be final. The Cured Meat Committee along with the Judges have the final say in all matters.
6. **RELEASING PRODUCTS:** The cured meat products in the show may be picked up following the close of the session on **Friday**. All product not picked up may be donated to a local food pantry.
7. **RESPONSIBILITY:** Although IMPPA and KAMP will exercise every reasonable precaution to protect and safeguard all cured meat product entries, it does not assume any responsibility for any entries; all cured meat products are entered solely at the risk of the owner. IMPPA and KAMP will not assume responsibility for sickness, illness, disease, infection, malady, or other affliction caused by ingestion, handling, or cooking of products entered.
8. **REGISTRATION:** No mail entries will be accepted. Operators who cannot attend the convention may enter cured meat products in the contest by sending them with another meat packer, provided that person assumes responsibility for the entries.
9. **SCORES:** Shortly after the convention, the scores of all winning products will be mailed to all exhibitors along with their individual scorecards.

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CLASS 1: NON-TRADITIONAL (FLAVORED) BACON

Production: To be eligible for this class, pork bacon shall be of standard approved trim with skin off (IMPS 409). This product must be a flavored type of bacon and must contain non-traditional flavoring and/or ingredients as stated in the product label name (i.e., Pepper Bacon, Maple Flavored Bacon, etc.). The product can be externally (i.e., topical spices or visual coatings) and/or internally flavored. Examples of external/internal non-meat ingredients include black pepper, crushed red pepper, ground cinnamon, parsley, fennel, oregano, maple flavoring, honey, etc. Incorporated flavorings must be predominant enough to define the product as flavored bacon. Incorporation of curing ingredients must be by either injection or massaging (tumbling).

Thermal Processing: This product does not have a USDA/FSIS thermal processing requirement since bacon is considered a heat-treated, not fully cooked meat product. Finished product cooked weight shall not exceed the weight of the fresh, uncured pork belly.

Product Entry: This product must be entered whole and shall not be cut nor sliced. Bacon must weigh a minimum of 8.0 lbs.

CLASS 2: TRADITIONAL BACON (Heavyweight and Lightweight)

Production: To be eligible for this class, pork bacon shall be of standard approved trim with skin on (IMPS 408) or off (IMPS 409). This product must be a traditional type of bacon and must not contain specialty non-meat ingredients on the exterior of the product entered (i.e., no topical spices and no visual coatings allowed).

Examples of specialty non-meat ingredients are black pepper, crushed red pepper, ground cinnamon, parsley, fennel, oregano, or any other exterior ingredients. Although incorporated flavorings (e.g., maple, brown sugar, etc.) are acceptable but not required, these flavorings are not to be predominant enough to define the product as a flavored bacon. Incorporation of curing ingredients must be by either injection or massaging (tumbling).

Thermal Processing: This product does not have a USDA/FSIS thermal processing requirement since bacon is considered a heat-treated, not fully cooked meat product. Finished product cooked weight shall not exceed the weight of the fresh, uncured pork belly.

Product Entry: This product must be entered whole and shall not be cut nor sliced. Bacon must weigh a minimum of 8.0 lbs.

Note: AAMP ACMC rules divide this class into two classes, IMPPA does not divide this class.

CLASS 3: BBQ PRODUCTS

Production: This class is restricted to only uncured boneless pork, beef, chicken, turkey, or buffalo. Meat may be injected, massaged, tumbled, etc., but are cooked back to or below the weight of the raw meat product (green weight).

To be eligible for this class product must meet standards for “BBQ Sauce with Meat”, as follows:

- meat products must contain at least 35 percent cooked meat and maximum of 65 percent sauce.
- poultry products must contain at least 15 percent cooked poultry and maximum of 85 percent sauce.

Product Entry: The total weight of the product must be a minimum of 2 lbs.

Note: AAMP ACMC does not have this class.

CLASS 4: BBQ RIBS

Production: This class is restricted to pork and beef only. Pork spareribs may be center cut (IMPS 416) or St. Louis style (IMPS 416A). Beef ribs must be short ribs (IMPS 123). The ribs may be presented with or without sauce, but sauce must not be excessive. Seasoning and cooking of the ribs are at the discretion of the entrant.

Thermal Processing: To be eligible for this class, the product must be fully cooked. Ribs must be heated to a minimum of 150 degrees F.

Product Entry: Product entered shall be whole, not cut nor sliced. The total product entered must not be less than one whole slab.

Note: AAMP ACMC does not have this class.

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CLASS 5: BRATWURST - COOKED

Production: This class is restricted to pork and beef only. This is a traditional uncured / non-smoked cooked Bratwurst. Product must be coarse ground (German style- 1/8" minimum). Emulsion type products are not eligible for this class. Product diameter must not exceed 40 mm. Product may be in edible casing, natural casings, or skinless product. This product must **not** contain specialty ingredients such as cheese or jalapeno. Product Entry: Product entered shall be whole links not cut nor sliced. The total product entered must weigh a minimum of 1.5 lbs.

Note: AAMP ACMC does not have this class.

CLASS 6: BRAUNSCHWEIGER

Production: To be eligible for this class, Braunschweiger entries must follow the standards of identity or composition outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations [9CFR319.182]. Liver sausage products containing variety meats are not eligible for this class. It must be finely ground or emulsified. This product must be sliceable and not spreadable (i.e., no pâté entries). No natural casings are allowed. Liquid smoke or smoke flavorings are permitted. This product must be stuffed in an artificial casing (colored or uncolored). This product must be traditional Braunschweiger and must not contain specialty non-meat ingredients.

Product Entry: This product must be entered as a complete sausage and shall not be cut or sliced. The amount of product entered must weigh a minimum of 2 pounds (entry may be in 1 or more uncut pieces).

CLASS 7: FRANKS / WIENERS (COARSE & EMULSIFIED)

Production: To be eligible for this class, frankfurters/wieners can be coarse ground, finely ground or emulsified and seasoned with typical frankfurter/wiener seasonings. This product must be a traditional type of frankfurter and must not contain specialty non-meat ingredients. Products will consist of beef, pork and beef or pork. The product may be in a natural casing, edible casing, or skinless product. No colored casings are allowed. The diameter of the casing should be consistent with small diameter cooked and smoked sausage.

Product Entry: The amount of product entered must weigh a minimum of 1½ pounds.

Note: AAMP ACMC have these as separate classes.

CLASS 8: HAM, BONE-IN

Production: To be eligible for this class, pork bone-in hams (IMPS 401 or IMPS 402) must contain the following bones: aitch bone (ischium), leg bone (femur), and a portion of the shank bones (tibia and fibula). Incorporation of curing ingredients must be by either injection or massaging (tumbling).

This product is smoked.

Product Entry: This product must be entered whole and shall not be cut nor sliced. Netting must be removed.

Note: AAMP ACMC rules divide this class into two classes, IMPPA does not divide this class.

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CLASS 9: HAM, BONELESS, WHOLE MUSCLE OR SECTIONED AND FORMED

Production:

Whole Muscle: To be eligible for this class, boneless hams must contain whole boneless ham muscles (i.e., hams should not contain ground, chunked, flaked, or reconstituted meat). The boneless ham must contain at least three (3) specific muscles (inside cushion, outside cushion, and eye). Use of the knuckle and/or sirloin muscle is optional. Hams may be shaped, formed, or pressed. Incorporation of curing ingredients must be by either injection or massaging (tumbling).

Boiled hams and cuts other than pork hams are specifically excluded. This product is smoked.

Product Entry: This product must be entered whole and shall not be cut nor sliced. The casing or net must be removed. This product must weigh a minimum of 7 pounds.

Sectioned and Formed: To be eligible for this class, boneless hams must be manufactured from whole muscle pieces, chunked pieces, and/or ground or emulsified pieces of the wholesale cut of the ham. Whole muscle pieces are allowed. Hams may be shaped, formed, or pressed. Incorporation of curing ingredients must be by either injection or massaging (tumbling).

Boiled hams and cuts other than pork hams are specifically excluded. This product is smoked.

Product Entry: This product must be entered whole and shall not be cut nor sliced. The casing or net must be removed. This product must weigh a minimum of 5 pounds.

Note: AAMP ACMC rules divide this class into two classes, IMPPA does not divide this class.

CLASS 10: JERKY, WHOLE MUSCLE

Production: To be eligible for this class, jerky must be made from one whole piece of beef, pork, or poultry.

Product may be seasoned according to the discretion of the entrant. Topical spices (i.e., black pepper, etc.) are allowed, but are not required. This product should meet moisture: protein ration of 0.75:1.

Thermal Processing: This product must have been thermally processed so that it does not require refrigeration and is ready to eat with a water activity of 0.87 or less.

Product Entry: The amount of product entered must weigh a minimum of 1/2 pound.

CLASS 11: LUNCHEON MEAT / BOLOGNA, LARGE DIAMETER

Production: To be eligible for this class, large diameter luncheon meat may be coarse ground, fine ground or emulsified. Products will consist of beef, pork and beef or pork. Exterior spices (i.e., black pepper, etc.) and incorporated non-meat ingredients (i.e., cheese, olives, etc.) are allowed in this class, but are not required. The product should be stuffed in a clear casing or an uncolored cloth bag. No colored casings are allowed. Casing must be left on the product. The diameter of the casing must be a minimum of four inches (4") in diameter.

Product Entry: This product must be entered as a complete sausage and shall not be cut or sliced. The entry must be a minimum of twelve inches (12") long.

Note: AAMP ACMC does not allow coarse ground product in this class.

CLASS 12: SMOKED SAUSAGE

Production: To be eligible for this class, smoked and cooked sausage must be coarse ground (1/8" minimum) and consist of beef and/or pork. Emulsion type products are not eligible for this class. This product must be a traditional type of small diameter smoked sausage and must not contain specialty non-meat ingredients. The product may be in a natural casing, edible casing, or skinless product. The casing size cannot exceed 40 mm. No colored casings are allowed.

Product Entry: The amount of product entered must weigh a minimum of 1½ pounds.

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CLASS 13: SNACK STICKS

Production: To be eligible for this class, meat snack sticks must be made from portions of beef, pork, buffalo, lamb, veal, poultry, or any combination of these. This product must be a traditional type of meat snack stick and must not contain specialty non-meat ingredients or flavorings (i.e., jalapeños, cheese, hot, Cajun, teriyaki, etc.). Product may be skinless, in a clear casing or in a colored casing. It must meet the labeling requirements: pH of 5.0 or less and a moisture: protein ratio of 3.1 to 1 or less.

Thermal Processing: This product must have been thermally processed so that it does not require refrigeration and is ready to eat with a water activity of 0.87 or less.

Product Entry: The amount of product entered must weigh a minimum of 1/2 pound.

CLASS 14: VENISON SALAMI & SUMMER SAUSAGE

Production: To be eligible for this class, product must contain a minimum of 2/3 meat derived from any meat source other than that defined as animal for mandatory inspection. Only beef and / or pork may constitute the other 1/3 of the meat block. This product must be coarse ground and may contain non-meat additives. The use of a starter culture, encapsulated citric acid, encapsulated lactic acid, or other methods to reduce the pH of the final product is acceptable. The diameter of the casing must be 2" to 4". Casings must be left on the product. No colored casings or spice-coated casings are allowed in this class.

Thermal Processing: This product must have been thermally processed so that it is ready to eat and does not require additional heating or cooking. This class may be smoked.

Product Entry: Product must be whole, not cut or sliced. Product must weigh a minimum of 2 pounds.

CLASS 15: SUMMER SAUSAGE, COOKED

Production: To be eligible for this class, summer sausage must be a coarse ground sausage consisting of beef and / or pork. This product must be a traditional type of summer sausage and must not contain specialty non-meat ingredients. A fermented or tangy-flavored product is expected, but not mandatory. This may be achieved using a starter culture, encapsulated citric acid, encapsulated lactic acid, or other methods to reduce the pH (increase the acidity) of the final product. The diameter of the casing must be 2" to 4". Casing must be left on the product. No colored casings or spice-coated casings are allowed in this class.

Product Entry: Product must be whole, not cut or sliced. Product must weigh a minimum of 2 pounds.

CLASS 16: TURKEY BREAST, BONELESS, SMOKED

Production: To be eligible for this class, turkey must be boneless and can consist of only turkey breast with or without tender, no rib meat allowed. Breasts may be shaped, formed, or pressed. Incorporation of curing ingredients must be by either injection or massaging (tumbling). This is a traditional flavored product without honey or specialty non-meat ingredients on the exterior of the product entered (i.e., no topical spices and no visual or smoked coatings casings allowed). This product is smoked.

Product Entry: This product must be entered whole and shall not be cut nor sliced. The casing or net must be removed. This product must weigh a minimum of 5 pounds.

Note: AAMP APMC has this product in the Cured Specialty Meats Products.

FEATURED CLASS 17: SPECIALTY PATTIES

Production: To be eligible for this class, the patties must be coarse ground (1/8" minimum) and consist of beef and/or pork. Emulsion type products are not eligible for this class. This class is for any inspected protein with non-meat additives such as mushrooms, onions, cheese, peppers, bacon, etc. Product must be in patty form, but may either be handmade or machine made. Bulk packaged product will not be accepted.

Product Entry: Product will be entered raw (fresh or frozen). Judges will judge product raw and cooked. Judges will cook product to 158°F. The total product entered must weigh a minimum of two pounds.

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BEST OF SHOW

This award will honor the “best of the best” product, which will be chosen from the Grand Champion-winning products entered in this year’s competition.

TOM KATEN CURED MEAT EXCELLENCE AWARD

This award is designed to acknowledge the processor from Indiana whose products have ranked the best overall in the competition. Each processor having placed in the top four of a class will be awarded points based on their placing: Grand Champion = 4 points; Reserve Grand Champion = 3 points; Champion = 2 points; and Reserve Champion = 1 point. The processor with the highest total points is awarded the “Tom Katen Cured Meat Excellence Award”.

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FEATURED CLASS

ANDOUILLE

Production: Andouille is a Cajun smoked sausage more highly seasoned than other smoked sausages. Traditionally, an Andouille sausage is used as a flavoring ingredient in other food products, such as jambalaya, gumbo, and other Cajun rice dishes. Currently, some processors are making an Andouille-flavored smoked sausage. These products are intended to be consumed as is typical with other smoked sausage products. To be eligible for this class, Andouille will consist of coarse ground beef and/or pork. Some meat processors prefer to cube the meat rather than coarse grind it. Emulsion type products are not eligible for this class. The diameter of the casing for Andouille must be a minimum of 32 mm and be stuffed in a natural or artificial casing. No colored casings are allowed.

Product Entry: This product must be entered in a rope or link form. Product will not be downgraded if ends are cut. The amount of product entered must weigh a minimum of 1½ pounds.

COUNTRY BACON, DRY CURED

Production: To be eligible for this class, bacon shall be of standard approved trim with skin on or off. This product must be a traditional type of bacon and must not contain specialty non-meat ingredients on the exterior of the product entered (i.e., no topical spices and no visual coatings allowed). Examples of specialty non-meat ingredients are black pepper, crushed red pepper, ground cinnamon, parsley, fennel, oregano, or any other exterior ingredients. Incorporated flavorings (e.g., maple, brown sugar, etc.) are acceptable, but are not required. Incorporation of curing ingredients must be by either dry curing or a combination of emersion and dry rub methodology to ensure good keeping quality without refrigeration, smoked sufficiently to give a rather dry surface and firm feel. Finished product cooked weight shall not exceed the weight of the fresh, uncured pork belly.

Thermal Processing: This product does not have a USDA/FSIS thermal processing requirement since bacon is considered a heat treated, not fully cooked meat product.

Product Entry: This product must be entered whole and shall not be cut nor sliced.

CURED SPECIALITY MEAT PRODUCTS

Production: Due to popular demand, this class was developed to not exclude meat products from competition that cannot be entered in other available competition classes. An example would be a. This class is open to cured red meat and poultry products. Some examples might be Summer Sausage with Pepper Jack Cheese, Westphalian Ham, Black Forest Ham, Prosciutto Ham, Pancetta, Corned Beef, ~~Cured Turkey Breast~~, Hard Salami, Pepperoni, and the Smoked/Unsmoked Country Hams. If casings are used, no colored casings are allowed.

Thermal Processing: With the exception of bacon or bacon-type items, this product must have been thermally processed according to compliance guidelines of USDA/FSIS Appendix A (e.g., meet lethality performance standards for certain meat and poultry products). This product must have been cooled according to the compliance guidelines of USDA/FSIS Appendix B (e.g., meet cooling standards of heat-treated meat and poultry products).

Product Entry: The amount of product entered must weigh a minimum of 1/2 pound.

DRIED BEEF

Production: To be eligible for this class, beef shall be from a beef round (IMPS 169A, 171B or 171C) or a beef clod (IMPS 114). The products entered must be made from a single muscle piece of the beef round or of the beef clod and shall not be a sectional or flaked and formed product. Incorporation of curing ingredients must be by either injection or massaging (tumbling). This product should meet moisture: protein ration of 2.04:1.

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Thermal Processing: This product must be thermally processed so that the product may be eaten without further cooking but may require refrigerated storage with a water activity of 0.92 or less. This product may be thermally processed with or without smoke.

Product Entry: This product must be entered whole and may not be cut or sliced.

HAM, SEMI-BONELESS

Production: To be eligible for this class, semi-boneless ham (IMPS 401A & 402C) must contain the leg bone (femur). The shank bone and aitch (ischium) shall be completely removed. Incorporation of curing ingredients must be by either injection or massaging (tumbling). This product is smoked.

Product Entry: This product must be entered whole and shall not be cut nor sliced. This product must weigh a minimum of 10 pounds.

JERKY, RESTRUCTURED

Production: To be eligible for this class, jerky must be ground and formed from beef, pork, or poultry. Product may be seasoned according to the discretion of the entrant. Topical spices (i.e., black pepper, etc.) or incorporated flavorings are allowed, but are not required. This product should meet moisture: protein ratio of 0.75:1.

Thermal Processing: This product must have been thermally processed so that it does not require refrigeration and is ready to eat with a water activity of 0.87 or less.

Product Entry: The amount of product entered must weigh a minimum of one-half pound.

SNACK STICKS, FLAVORED

Production: To be eligible for this class, flavored snack sticks must be made from portions of beef, pork, buffalo, lamb, veal, poultry, seafood, or any combination of these. This product must be a non-traditional type of meat snack stick and must contain specialty non-meat ingredients or flavorings (i.e., jalapeños, cheese, hot, Cajun, teriyaki, etc.). Product may be skinless, in a clear casing or in a colored casing. It must meet the labeling requirements: pH of 5.0 or less and a moisture: protein ratio of 3.1 to 1 or less.

Thermal Processing: This product must have been thermally processed so that it does not require refrigeration and is ready to eat with a water activity of 0.87 or less.

Product Entry: The amount of product entered must weigh a minimum of 1/2 pound.

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OLD WORLD DRIED FERMENTED SAUSAGE

Production: To be eligible for this class, the dry sausage must be a coarse ground (1/8" minimum) sausage consisting of beef, pork, lamb, and/or poultry. Examples of products entered in this class include pepperoni, hard salami, genoa salami, etc. A mild to tangy fermented product aroma and flavor is expected. This must be achieved using a starter culture and fermentation. The product should exhibit a characteristic firm and dry texture and should be shelf stable. Casing must be left on the product. No colored or spice-coated casings are allowed in this class. Casings may be natural, collagen, or fibrous and may contain a traditional (white) mold coating on the external surface of the casing. The diameter of the casing must be at least 40 mm.

Thermal Processing: These products are uniquely different than most other sausages, as they are not traditionally heated to as high of an end-point temperature.

Product Entry: The total amount of product entered must weigh a minimum of 2 lbs. and can include multiple pieces to achieve the weight specification. This product must be entered as a complete sausage and should not be cut or sliced.

RING BOLOGNA

Production: To be eligible for this class, ring bologna must be made with beef and/or pork. This product must be traditional ring bologna and must not contain specialty ingredients. Ring bologna meat may be coarse ground, fine ground, emulsified, or a combination of particle sizes. The product must be stuffed in a casing with a minimum diameter of 32 mm at the bottom of the ring and entry must be submitted in one ring. No colored casings are allowed.

Product Entry: This product must be entered as a complete sausage and shall not be cut nor sliced.

SEMI-DRIED SAUSAGE, COOKED, NON-FERMENTED

Production: To be eligible for this class, semi-dried sausage must be coarse ground summer-style sausage consisting of beef, pork, lamb, and/or poultry. Emulsion type products are not eligible for this class. This product must be a traditional type of semi-dried sausage and must not contain specialty non-meat ingredients. A fermented or tangy-flavored product will be downgraded. The diameter of the casing must be 2" to 4". Casing must be left on the product. No colored casings are allowed. No spice-coated casings are allowed in this class.

Product Entry: This product must be entered as a complete sausage and shall not be cut or sliced.

HOT LINKS, SMALL DIAMETER

Production: To be eligible for this class, the Hot Link cooked sausage must be coarse ground (1/8" minimum) and consist of beef and/or pork. Emulsion type products are not eligible for this class. Hot Links are a traditional Southern U.S. cooked sausage that have a distinctive spicy, hot flavor. Hot Links are sometimes referred to as "Red Hots". This product is unsmoked and must not contain specialty non-meat ingredients. Product may be skinless or stuffed in an edible casing and the casing size cannot exceed 40 mm. The product must have a distinctive red external color expected for a product in this product category.

Product Entry: The amount of product entered must weigh a minimum of 1½ pounds.

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SMOKED TURKEY

Production: To be eligible for this class, the whole skin-on turkey must be cured. Incorporation of curing ingredients must be by either injection or cover curing. Boneless turkey products are not eligible for this class. This product is smoked.

Product Entry: This product must be entered whole and shall not be cut nor sliced. Netting, if used, must be removed.

SMOKED COOKED SAUSAGE, SMALL DIAMETER, FLAVORED

Production: To be eligible for this class, smoked and cooked sausage must be coarse ground (1/8" minimum) and consist of beef and/or pork. Emulsion type products are not eligible for this class. Product may be skinless or stuffed in an edible casing and the casing size cannot exceed 40 mm. No colored casings are allowed. This product must be entered as a link form (i.e., no rope sausage allowed). This product must be a non-traditional type of small diameter smoked sausage and must contain specialty non-meat ingredients.

Product Entry: The amount of product entered must weigh a minimum of 1½ pounds.

SPECIALTY PATTIES

Production: To be eligible for this class, the patties must be coarse ground (1/8" minimum) and consist of beef and/or pork. Emulsion type products are not eligible for this class. This class is for any inspected protein with non-meat additives such as mushrooms, onions, cheese, peppers, bacon, etc. Product must be in patty form, but may either be handmade or machine made. Bulk packaged product will not be accepted.

Product Entry: Product will be entered raw (fresh or frozen). Judges will judge product raw and cooked. Judges will cook product to 158°F. The total product entered must weigh a minimum of two pounds.