

Sonoma County Harvest Fair Presents
2026 Professional Food Competition

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Entries Open: May 1, 2026
Entries Close: Sunday, August 16, 2026, at 11:59 p.m.
Exhibits Received & Judging: See each section
Entry Fee: \$20.00 per entry
Judging Coordinator: Anne Vercelli, Healdsburg

RULES FOR JUDGING

- ◆ Only food prepared and produced by a Sonoma County-based licensed business is eligible for entry.
- ◆ Exhibitors may only enter items that are intended to be marketed and sold by their businesses. Exhibitors should strive to prepare entries beforehand and then deliver them to the judging site.
- ◆ **Please, put your name on your dishes.**
- ◆ Each entry must be arranged on a separate plate.
- ◆ Exhibitors may not view the judging. Food will be judged both on taste and presentation of entry.
- ◆ The food will be judged on the Danish system of judging with Double Gold, Gold, Silver, and Bronze awarded to the winners in each class. Best of Show winners are picked from the Double Gold medal winners.
- ◆ Results will be mailed to exhibitors.
- ◆ Awards (Double Gold, Gold, Silver & Bronze) are specific to the year the product/entry earned them and if used for personal promotion must be publicized/marketed appropriately.
- ◆ Double Gold, Gold, and Silver rosettes are available and can be picked up at the Administration Office following the judging. Medals can be purchased for an additional cost. Consult staff for details.
- ◆ **Alternative Food Products** may be used in any category in which a class is offered. The classes are for alternative food choices in lieu of traditional ingredients. Examples: soy, tofu, nuts, raw foods, vegan foods, etc. These classes are also intended for gluten-free foods.
- ◆ *Please refer to appropriate sections for specific rules if any.*
- ◆ **Entries completed online - Enter online by visiting our website at www.harvestfair.org**

EXHIBITOR ORIENTATION

If you are interested in gaining some informative tips for preparing your entries for the competition, please contact Anne Vercelli to make an appointment. Call Anne at (707) 953-0332

Please submit your electronic logo upon entry to harvestfair@sonomacountyfair.com for use in advertising and public relations.

Professional Food Competition

The Sonoma County Harvest Fair strives to create a premier showcase event celebrating Sonoma County's agricultural diversity. We focus on the locally produced distinctive artisan foods, microbrews/ciders, and premium wines that distinguish Sonoma County as a world-class destination for an amazing farm-to-table dining experience.

Everyone is invited to attend the one-night only event on Saturday, October 10th from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the Grace Pavilion at the Sonoma County's winning wines and culinary bites from top restaurants and food purveyors. They will also witness the unveiling of the coveted Sweepstake Wine Competition winners. Ticket price for attendees is \$100 per person.

The Harvest Fair Professional Food Competition is an opportunity for culinary creators and local makers to showcase and promote their products. Since 1975 the fair has recognized more than 100 wineries with its coveted sweepstakes awards and consistently showcased the very best Sonoma County chefs, winemakers, and food purveyors. The event has become a cornerstone of our community and offers an unequalled opportunity to generate awareness for your company.

We sincerely hope you will be able to join us to showcase your uniquely Sonoma County culinary creations!

Harvest Fair Gala Tasting and Awards Night October 10, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

- **Exhibitors winning a best of show will be required to provide samples of their winning entries during our Gala.**
- All exhibitors have the option to serve their award-winning products during the Gala in the Grace Pavilion. (Serving personnel must be 21 years old or older.)
- All exhibitors must fill out a "Tasting Sheet" indicating their intention of participation in the Gala.
- Exhibitors may sign up to participate, however, Harvest Fair will reserve the right to adjust the selection of food vendors to assure a balance of food choices is offered.
- Items prepared for serving must be in bite-size "tastes."
- Exhibitors must have their display completed and be ready to serve when doors open at 6:00 p.m.

THE HARVEST FAIR WILL PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:

1. Business Sign indicating the name of the Exhibitor
2. Serving Station (8-foot table)
3. Access to water and electricity (if needed)
4. White table covering on station top
5. All necessary food permitting requirements
6. Access to handwashing stations
7. Some serving supplies (cups, forks, napkins, etc.) we are striving for a "zero waste" event

FOOD PURVEYORS WILL PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:

8. Any additional table décor, marketing materials, etc., and serving supplies
9. All necessary equipment for maintenance of hot/cold food items
10. All necessary equipment for sanitary maintenance of station (as per health department regulations) we are striving for a "zero waste" event
11. Compostable serving supplies (we will work with you).

PAYMENT FOR FOOD SAMPLES:

- Harvest Fair will reimburse food vendors for tastes.
- Exhibitors who want to participate will serve a minimum of 250 tastes
- Items prepared for serving must be in bite-size "tastes."
- Reimbursement will range from \$0.25 to \$1.00 per sample, based on the type of food being served.
- All exhibitors must fill out a "Tasting Sheet" indicating their intention of participation in the Grand Tasting.
- You will be contacted by staff in September to negotiate reimbursement based on the information you provide on the form.
- Work with staff to establish quantities and reimbursement.

Classes

APPETIZERS/HORS D'OEUVRES

SMALL PLATES

EXHIBITS RECEIVED: Friday, September 11 by appointment, Saralee Building, Sonoma County Fairgrounds

JUDGING: Friday, September 11, 12 noon.

PICK-UP DISHES: Tuesday, September 15th, 12 pm-4:00 p.m.

Awards Offered per Class

Double Gold, Gold, & Silver Rosettes

RULES: Entries should be prepared beforehand and delivered to the judging site. Finishing touches may be completed at the judging site, if necessary (to include proper plate presentation & garnishing of dish).

An appetizer/hors d'oeuvre refers to an individual bite-size piece. A small plate refers to the first course of a meal or a small savory dish. It should stimulate and excite the palate, not satiate the palate.

DIVISION 02 - HOT (To serve 8)

DIVISION 03 - COLD (To serve 8)

Dominant ingredient shall determine class.

Class

01 Pork	08 Bread specialty
02 Beef	09 Pizza
03 Lamb	10 Vegetable/Fruit
04 Poultry (chicken/ turkey/ duck)	11 Any Other
05 Any Other Meat	12 Cheese
06 Seafood	13 Alternative Products
07 Starch (polenta, rice, sushi)	

DIVISION 04 - SOUP (3 servings - not to exceed 12 oz.)

Class

01 Hot	03 Alternative Products
02 Cold	

YEARLY AWARDS:SPONSORS

Best of Show Appetizer Quince Family

2025 Winner: Varenna of Fountaingrove

Best Use of Cheese..... Crown Trophy Petaluma

Best Use of Beef..... Sonoma Marin Cattlemen's Assn.

Best Use of Poultry..... Petaluma Poultry Processors

Best Use of Seafood..... Debra Townsend

Best Use of Fruits or Vegetables..... Imwalle Gardens

Best Use of Lamb..... Cindy Crane

Best Use of Pork..... Kevin Howe

Best Use of Sonoma County Wine..... Wilbur-Ellis Co.

SCORECARD FOR PROFESSIONAL APPETIZERS

Appearance	40%
Flavor.....	40%
Originality.....	20%
TOTAL	100%

► Best of Show Appetizer and Sweepstakes Exhibitor will be selected from all Double Gold medal winners in every section.

Sweepstakes will be awarded based on the total number of points accumulated for the top five items entered and calculated as follows: Gold-5 points; Silver-3 points; Bronze-1 point. **A bonus of 1 point will be awarded when an entry has obtained gold by unanimous decision of judges (double gold).** Ties will be broken in the following manner: The exhibitor with the most double gold awards will be the winner. If no double golds are awarded, the exhibitor with the most golds will be the winner.

BREAD

EXHIBITS RECEIVED: Thursday, September 10 , 9:30-10:30 a.m., Saralee Building, Sonoma County Fairgrounds

JUDGING: Thursday, September 10, 12 noon

Awards Offered per Class

Double Gold, Gold, & Silver Rosettes

RULES: Each bakery may enter as many items as they like. This applies to any of the classes offered. The numbers listed below the section name refer to the quantities needed for each item entered.

- ◆ All entries must be delivered in bags with Division and Class clearly marked.
- ◆ Dough must be made on bakery premises

DIVISION 11 - SWEET FRENCH

DIVISION 12 - SOUR FRENCH

(1 loaf or baguette; 3 rolls)

Class

01 Loaf, any shape, 1 to 1 1/2 pounds
02 Rolls, up to 4 oz.
03 Baguette, 8 to 16 oz. or 18" or more in length
04 Rustic (ciabatta, pugliese, other wet-dough, large-holed bread)
05 Alternative Products (gluten-free, etc.)
06 Any Other

DIVISION 13 - SPECIALTY BREADS (1 loaf)

Note: Whole Grain is defined as 50% or more whole wheat or other grain

Class

01 Whole Grain or Multi-Grain loaf-pan style
02 Whole Grain or Multi-Grain hearth style
03 Flavored loaf-pan style (fruit, cheese, seed, herb, or spice)
04 Flavored hearth style (fruit, cheese, seed, herb, or spice)
05 Focaccia (any size, flavor, or shape)
06 Flatbread
07 Alternative Products (gluten-free, etc.)
08 Rolls
09 Any Other

DIVISION 14 – MORNING PASTRIES (3 each)

01 Muffins
02 Danish
03 Scones
04 Any Other

YEARLY AWARDS:

SPONSORS

Best of Show Professional French Bread..... Ross & Jane Liscum

2025 Winner: Nightingale Breads

Best of Show Professional Specialty Bread..... Debra Townsend

2025 Winner: Frost Bake Co.

SCORECARD FOR BREADS

ASPECT	50%
Bloom, Crust, Dome, Crumb	
FLAVOR and TEXTURE	50%
Taste, appropriately soft or chewy mouthfeel, Aroma	
TOTAL	100%

Classes

CAKES & PASTRIES

EXHIBITS RECEIVED: Wednesday, September 9, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. in the Saralee Building, Sonoma County Fairgrounds

JUDGING: Wednesday, September 9, 1:00 p.m.

Awards Offered per Class
Double Gold, Gold & Silver Rosettes

RULES: Cake will be tasted on the top layer only. Please list the flavor of filling used. All cakes must be on disposable under-liners.

DIVISION 22 - CAKES (minimum 4" whole item)

Class

- 01 Cheesecake
- 02 Torte
- 03 Chocolate
- 04 Any Other (please describe)

DIVISION 23 - PASTRIES (minimum 4" whole item)

Class

- 01 Tart
- 02 Pie
- 03 Any Other (please describe)

DIVISION 25 - ALTERNATIVE PRODUCTS (GLUTEN-FREE, ETC) (minimum 4" whole item)

Class

- 01 Any Cake or Pastry

YEARLY AWARDS: SPONSOR

Best of Show Cake / Pastry.....Marilyn & Kip Herzog

2025 Winner: Dry Creek Kitchen

SCORECARD ICE CREAM

Flavor	60%
Body Texture	35%
Color/Appearance	5%
Total	100%

SCORECARD FOR CAKES , PASTRIES

Appearance	30%
Texture.....	35%
Flavor.....	35%
TOTAL	100%

SCORECARD FOR DESSERTS

Appearance/Presentation	25%
Flavor	35%
Plating.....	10%
Texture.....	30%
Total	100%

DESSERTS & ICE CREAM

EXHIBITS RECEIVED: Tuesday, September 15, 11:30a.m. - 1:30 p.m., Saralee Building, Sonoma County Fairgrounds

JUDGING: Tuesday, September 15, 3:00 p.m.

PICK UP DISHES: Wednesday, September 16; 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon
** Any unclaimed dishes will be donated to a local charity.*

Awards Offered per Class
Double Gold, Gold & Silver Rosettes

RULES: Each entry must be arranged on separate(real) plates.

DIVISION 41 – INDIVIDUAL DESSERTS (submit 4)

Class

- 01 Fruit
- 02 Pastry (napoleon, eclair, pate a' choux, etc.), (please identify)
- 03 Ice Cream
- 04 Cupcakes
- 05 Alternative Products (Gluten-Free
- 06 Any Other (mousse, pot de crème, frozen, etc.), (please identify)
- 07 Chocolate (anything but candy)

DIVISION 42 – COOKIE (submit 8)

Class

- 01 Biscotti
- 02 Molded/pressed
- 03 Rolled & Cut
- 04 Drop
- 05 Brownies
- 06 Alternative Products (Gluten-free, etc.)
- 07 Any Other (please identify in description)

DIVISION 43 – CANDY (submit 8)

Class

- 01 Marshmallows, Nougats, Torrones
- 02 Caramels
- 03 Brittles & Toffees
- 04 Nuts & Sweet Snacks
- 05 Any Other (please identify)

DIVISION 84 – ICE CREAM Full Fat

DIVISION 85 – ICE CREAM Reduced Fat

Class

- 01 Vanilla
- 02 Chocolate
- 03 Other Flavor
- 04 Any Other Frozen Product

YEARLY AWARDS: SPONSOR

Best of Show Individual Dessert..... Annette O'Kelley

2025 Winner: Nom Nom Cakes

Best of Show Cookie Marilyn & Kip Herzog

2025 Winner: Nom Nom Cakes

Best of Show Candy Annette O'Kelley

2025 Winner: Sonoma Cakes

Best of Show Ice Cream..... Annette O'Kelley

2025 Winner: Dave's Gourmet Ice Cream

Classes

CHARCUTERIE & DELI

EXHIBITS RECEIVED: Wed., September 16, 10:00 a.m.- 12:00 noon,
Saralee Building, Sonoma County Fairgrounds
JUDGING: Wednesday, September 16th, 1:00 p.m.

Awards Offered per Class
Double Gold, Gold Silver Rosettes

RULES: All Items must be delivered in disposable containers.

Vinegar entered must be custom-made by the processor to be eligible.
Grapes must have been grown in California.

DIVISION 31 - CHARCUTERIE (to serve 8)

List predominant ingredients in the description field

Class

- 01 Dry Cured
- 02 Smoked
- 03 Pâté/Terrine

DIVISION 32 - DELICATESSEN (to serve 8)

List predominant ingredients in the description field

Class

- 01 Cheese
- 02 Meat
- 03 Vegetable
- 04 Seafood
- 05 Combination
- 06 Any other (please describe)
- 07 Alternative Products (please list)

DIVISION 33 – SANDWICHES (to serve 4)

Class

- 01 Meat
- 02 Vegetarian

DIVISION 34 – SALADS (to serve 8)

Class

- 01 Fruit
- 02 Vegetable
- 03 Grain
- 04 Starch
- 05 Other

PANTRY

DIVISION 35 – OTHER (Minimum – 8 oz container)

List predominant ingredients in the description field

Class

- 01 Granola
- 02 Snack Foods (Popcorn, Etc.)
- 03 Any Other (please describe)

DIVISION 36 - PANTRY (Minimum - 8 oz container) Note: No vehicle to which sauce/topping is applied may accompany entry during judging. Fair will provide appropriate accompaniment.

Class

- 01 Salad Dressing
- 02 Seasoning/Spice
- 03 Seasoning/Spice – Hot /Spicy
- 04 Condiments
- 05 Pickled
- 06 Vinegar
- 07 Preserves
- 08 Preserves – Hot/Spicy
- 09 Any Other (please describe)
- 10 Savory Sauces – (Pasta, Tomato, Pesto)
- 11 Savory Sauces – (Pasta, Tomato, Pesto) – Hot/Spicy
- 12 Savory Sauces – (BBQ)
- 13 Savory Sauces – (BBQ) – Hot/Spicy
- 14 Salsa (Mild)
- 15 Salsa (Hot)
- 16 Sauces/Sweet (Chocolate, Caramel, Etc.)

SCORECARD for CHARCUTERIE/DELI/PANTRY

Appearance.....	30%
Flavor	30%
Originality	20%
Texture	20%
TOTAL.....	100%

YEARLY AWARDS:

SPONSOR

Best of Show Deli, Charcuterie, Sandwiches & Salads..... Debra Townsend

2025 Winner: Costeaux

Best of Show Pantry..... Max & Joni Mickelsen

2025 Winner: Harvest Spice Co.

Sonoma County Harvest Fair Presents
Professional Food Judges

The Harvest Fair would like to thank our:

2026 PROFESSIONAL FOOD JUDGES

APPETIZERS

Kathie King, Owner, Kathie King Catering, Healdsburg
Jim May, Chef, Papapietro Perry Winery, Cloverdale
Patrick Mukaida, Events Director, Orsi Winery, Healdsburg

BREAD

Steve Hartz, Owner, Sweet Hartz Handcrafted Cheesecakes, Guerneville
Shane McAnelly, Executive Chef, Dry Creek Kitchen, Healdsburg
Mariah Allbritton, Coffee Bar Manager, Taylor Lane Coffee, Rohnert Park

CAKES & PASTRIES

Timothy Go, Food Technologist, Brioche Pasquier, Galaxy Desserts, Richmond
Casey Stone, Chef, Wit and Wisdom, Santa Rosa
Heather Irwin, Dining Editor, Press Democrat, Santa Rosa

DELI/CHARCUTERIE & PANTRY

Jorge Flores, Executive Chef, Costeaux Bakery, Healdsburg
Emily Ash Lamb, Host, The Good Food Hour, Santa Rosa
Craig Truesdell, Mercato Manager/ culinary Director, v. Sattui Winery, St. Helena
Cass Nall, Catering Manager, Big John's Market, Healdsburg
Hugh Gyer, Executive Chef, Healdsburg Bar & Grill, Windsor
Steve Garner, Host, The Good Food Hour, Santa Rosa

DESSERTS & ICE CREAM

Anthony Bonviso, Owner, Fiorello's Gelato, San Rafael
Jean-Yves Charon, Pastry Chef, Galaxy Desserts, Richmond
Bruce Johnstone, Pastry Chef, Insalata Restaurant, San Rafael
Taylor Kelley, Pastry Chef, Dry Creek Kitchen, Healdsburg
Karah Williams, Pastry Chef, Dry Creek Kitchen, Healdsburg
Jennifer Graue, Food Writer, Press Democrat, Santa Rosa

OLIVE OIL

Julie Menge, Sacramento
Bill Traverso, Santa Rosa
Louie Gonzalez, El Sobrante