

History

In 1992, the first Baron H. Galand Culinary Knowledge Bowl competition was held at the ACF national convention in Washington, DC. The competition was based on the brainchild of Carol Kelly, a member of ACF Nation's Capital Chefs' Association and a culinary instructor. She used the competition format as a way of testing her vocational high school students. The competition was patterned after the popular 60's TV show GE College Bowl. As the competition became more popular, it was suggested to name the event after the former ACF president and longtime advocate of apprentices and junior members, Baron H. Galand, CEC, AAC, HOF. Beginning in 1998, teams were awarded ACF competition medals to recognize the dedication and knowledge required to compete successfully in this event.

ACF Culinarian's Code

As a proud member of the American Culinary Federation, I pledge to share my professional knowledge and skill with all culinarians. I will place honor, fairness, cooperation and consideration first when dealing with my colleagues. I will keep all comments professional and respectful when dealing with my colleagues. I will protect all members from the use of unfair means, unnecessary risks and unethical behavior when used against them for another's personal gain. I will support the success, growth, and future of my colleagues and this great federation.

Eligibility

- Team members and coaches must be active ACF members.
- Team members must be current students or recent graduates in a culinary, baking, food/ beverage, or hospitality program.
- The team can consist of a maximum of five (one being an alternate), but no less than three active student culinarian level members, at the time of application and throughout the competition. Any exceptions must be pre-approved by the ACF knowledge bowl taskforce.
- If there are less than five members, all will participate in the competition; there will not be an alternate.
- During the competition, no team member can play on more than one team.
- Each team is responsible for its own expenses to compete in the knowledge bowl competition.

Rules and Guidelines

- All competitors, coaches, institutional representatives, and other persons associated with a team are bound by the ACF Culinarian's Code to behave responsibly and ethically. All teams are expected to be professional in every regard. All teams should arrive at the competition site at least thirty (30) minutes before start time. Team members who do not meet this standard will not be allowed to compete and/or asked to leave the competition area.
- All team members are required to attend the competitor's briefing. Any absence must be approved by the lead judge prior to the briefing. During this meeting, the moderator will review the rules and team captains will pull their number for placement on the bracket.
- During the competition, all competitors must be dressed in professional chef's attire. Professional chef's attire is defined as standard black checkered or solid black chef's pants, black chef shoes with black socks, and a clean, pressed white chef's coat. Culturally sensitive alternatives will be accepted. Team members who do not meet these guidelines will not be allowed to compete.

Competition Format

- Each round, excluding the final round, will consist of five categories, with four questions in each category. Each answer is worth 10, 20, 30, or 40 points, respectively. The final round will consist of five categories with five questions. Each answer is worth 10, 20, 30, 40, or 50 points, respectively. A coin toss will determine which team goes first in each round. The team who correctly answers the question will choose the next category and question.
- One team member should be designated the captain and will remain captain throughout the competition. If the team captain can no longer participate, another team member will be identified to take his/her place, and the alternate will join the team.
- The team captain can buzz in and request to replace a team member with the alternate before the next category is selected. If an alternate is asked to join the team, they must remain on the team for the remainder of the competition. Teams can make one replacement only during the competition.
- Each competitor will have a buzzer and light system placed on the table in front of them. Any member of the team may buzz in, but the team captain is the only one who may relay the answer to the judges. The first competitor to buzz in deactivates all other buzzers from being able to do so.

Baron H. Galand Culinary Knowledge Bowl

– 2026 Regional Competition Rules and Guidelines

- Each question is read aloud by the moderator without being displayed. Once the moderator has finished reading the question, it will be displayed on the screen and both teams will have ten (10) seconds to buzz in. Competitors may buzz in at any time after the moderator begins to read the question. Do not attempt to give an answer until recognized by the lead judge or moderator.
- Once acknowledged by the lead judge or moderator, the first team has a total of ten (10) seconds to completely answer the question. If the first team answers incorrectly, the opposing team will have five (5) seconds to buzz in after the moderator has finished reading the question, and five (5) seconds to give an answer.
- The judges will accept the first answer attempted by the team captain. Once words are spoken as part of an answer or the entire answer, they cannot be changed.
- To receive credit, a response must indicate exact and unambiguous knowledge of the correct answer. If a team captain gives an answer that demonstrates knowledge but is ambiguous, the lead judge will prompt the team captain for more information. A plausible or phonetic pronunciation is usually acceptable unless it demonstrates a fundamental lack of understanding about the correct answer. A team captain so prompted may quickly check with teammates for additional information. There cannot be any intentional delay. Such a delay, as determined by the sole discretion of the lead judge, shall negate the prompt and only the incomplete answer will be considered.
- The moderator will wait for the judges to signal the given answer as correct or incorrect before continuing the competition.
- Should a team member accidentally call out an answer, and the team captain neglects to say the answer, the judges will ignore the answer until the team captain gives the correct answer or time has been called.
- Should the team captain wish to challenge a judgment made by the judges, he/she should do so during that round. The team captain should buzz in between questions if the next question has not been selected to be recognized by the judges and ask the judges to verify their judgment. Challenges must come immediately following the judges' decision to be better able to adjust scores as needed. There is no penalty for a challenge that is lost. In the event a question is challenged, and the answer is still deemed incorrect by the judges, play continues, and the opposing team will have the opportunity to buzz in and give an answer. Judges will only accept answers from the textbooks authorized for the competition. No outside sources will be accepted. The judges' decisions are final.

Baron H. Galand Culinary Knowledge Bowl

– 2026 Regional Competition Rules and Guidelines

- Two “Daily Double” questions have been added to each game at various point levels. The team who selects the question is the only team who can answer the question. The moderator will let the teams know it is a “Daily Double” before the question is read. Teams are encouraged to buzz in and be recognized by the moderator before answering the question to keep in the habit of buzzing. Questions answered correctly will be worth double the original point value of the question. If the question is answered incorrectly, the team will lose double the points. There is no “Daily Double” in a tie-break game.
- Following double-elimination guidelines, play will continue until only one team remains. In the final round, if a team loses for the first time in the competition, the teams will play a tie-break game.

Topics and Reference Books

Topics include, but are not limited to:

- Preparation Methods
- Ingredient, Tools and Equipment Identification
- Flavor Development
- Global Cuisines
- Safety and Sanitation
- Culinary Nutrition
- Training and Management

Reference Books:

- [Professional Cooking, 9th edition](#)
- [Professional Baking, 8th edition](#)
- [The World of Culinary Management, 6th edition](#)
- [ServSafe Manager, 7th edition](#)

Competition Awards

- 1st Place: Gold and 18 CEHs
- 2nd Place: Silver and 12 CEHs
- 3rd Place: Bronze and 6 CEHs
- All Other Competitors: 3 CEHs