



### Larry Williams

**McKim's IGA**  
Mt. Vernon, IN

**Department: Meat**

**Difficulty: Easy**

**Store Specs**  
10,000 sq. feet

## BEST PRACTICES

# RIB FEST BRINGS GOOD PROFIT FOR A GOOD CAUSE

### STRATEGY

“When my son Matthew first approached me with the idea of holding a rib fest, I was a bit skeptical because I was afraid that we would end up with a lot of ribs leftover. But after a good bit of persuading, we decided to order ten cases and try it out. Because we didn't have a lot of resources to spend on the event, we reached out to local non-profits with an offer to share part of the profits in exchange for a couple volunteers to help us serve. Initially, we decided to sell slabs of ribs for \$10 and give \$1 for every slab to the non-profit. We used pre-cooked Kretschmar ribs and seared them on a 6-foot concession stand grill that we use for cooking hamburgers during the year. Soon, we had to buy another grill, and then we quickly outgrew that one. We have since purchased a grill made out of a 500 lb. propane tank that allows us to cook 60-80 slabs of ribs at a time, for a total of 1,000 slabs a year. We now hold one event every month from April to October with a different featured non-profit each month. After our distributor raised our prices, we raised the price for a slab to \$15 and we now give the charity \$2 per slab. We promote the events in the Quick and Easy section in our ads, as well as on our marquee, on Facebook, and in bag stuffers. Our customers love the event and we love that we get to give back to our community.”

# 1,000

SLABS OF RIBS SOLD  
PER YEAR

# \$2

PER SLAB FOR CHARITY

# 7

YEARLY EVENTS

### WHY IT WORKS

#### For Our Shoppers

##### Convenient

The rib fest is a quick and easy way for shoppers to get in and get out with a great meal.

##### Supporting a Good Cause

Customers love that they get to help out their community while enjoying a delicious meal.

##### Good Value

Customers can spend \$5-7 on a nice salad, a few bucks on soft drinks, and \$15 for ribs. This is enough food for a few people.

#### For Our Store

##### Consistent With Messaging

The rib fest really ties in to the “Quick and Easy” program we rolled out a few months ago.

##### It's a Lot of Fun

We have a good time serving the ribs and working with the local non-profits. Community events like this are a great opportunity to show our shoppers that, unlike the big chains in our region, we are truly a part of the local community.

##### Increases Sales

Not only do we make a profit on the ribs, but most people come in to the store to buy sides from the deli, bags of chips, and drinks to go with their ribs.

## PRICING

A slab of ribs sells for \$15.

## TACTICS

- 1.** Work with the non-profit to presale ribs. The more they sell before the event, the better your turnout will be. Encourage the non-profits to also spread the word about the event using their social channels, newsletters, etc.
- 2.** Set up your cooking space. We keep the grill on-site with a metal canopy over the top, so getting set up is a relatively easy process. We also put out a 10x10 tent to shade ourselves from the sun, and a few tables for the cashiers. You will also want to place a big fan next to the grill to try to keep the chefs cool.
- 3.** Thaw the ribs the night before. We start cooking the ribs about 1 PM. The event lasts from 3-6 PM.
- 4.** After the ribs come off the grill, wrap them up and place them in coolers so they are ready to go.
- 5.** Be sure to post about the event in progress on Facebook. This is especially important later in the day. If you still have slabs, you can help sell them with a well-timed post.

## PRO-TIPS

Keep the product consistent. We use the same process and the same BBQ sauce every event so that our customers know they will love the ribs each time.

Keep good records of what you are cooking and what you don't get rid of so that you will have a better idea as to how much you should order. Any ribs that we don't sell on the day of the event can be sold in the deli case the next day.

When you cut the check to the non-profit, be sure to take a picture and share it on your social media channels to raise awareness.

