

FAB

Cookbook

Bill's Methods and Tips for KCBS-Style Beef, Chicken, Ribs and Pork

FAB is the choice of champions

FAB users have won too many competitions to list, but we wouldn't give away their secrets, anyway! They include 1st Place calls and the elusive "180" in all KCBS categories, including Grand Champions at the American Royal, Jack Daniels, British BBQ Society UK Championship, and numerous regional events.

FAB was designed by Food Technologist Joe Ames, Sr. to:

- Make meats taste meatier
- Enhance flavors
- Retain juices for better yield
- Improve texture for better slicing
- Use no added salt

Ask about products for catering

If you do catering or vending, note that **FAB** holds in juices, which are actually bonded to the meat, increasing your yield by as much as 10% in our tests. This is not water that will simply boil away or evaporate. It's locked in. This added moisture also helps the natural glycerin stay where you want it, giving an improved mouth feel. FAB'ed meat will hold at serving temperature for a long, long time. It even re-heats better. This saves both time and money, and your customers get a better product.

Overall Concepts

Your goal is to get **FAB** to penetrate evenly, and to have it distributed throughout the meat. This can be done through injection, tumbling or soaking.

Commercially, they use banks of needles to inject, then they tumble under a vacuum. You probably don't have a vacuum tumbler, but you can inject and then massage the meat, flexing it back and forth to get rid of little pockets of liquid. This is particularly effective with beef brisket flats. The longer you do this, the more even the distribution. If you get carried away, though, you'll tear the meat apart. Use your judgement and you'll be fine in most cases.

Regarding seasonings, the thing to remember is that **FAB** doesn't add flavors...it enhances the natural flavor of meat, but it's not a flavor system itself. So, you still need to season as you would otherwise.

FAB doesn't have any added salt, but it does enhance salt, so watch the salt content in your rubs, brines, etc. If

you find things are a little saltier than usual, just back off a bit. This will be consistent, so you can adjust your tried and true recipes to compensate.

Also, do not add “soup base” or any kind of store-bought artificial flavors, like beef or chicken broth—it’s redundant, and they probably use the same kinds of things that are in **FAB** anyway, just cheaper. Remember, it’s the goal of a mass-marketed product to be as affordable as possible.

If you don’t think there’s enough meat flavor in your finished product, just use a stronger concentration of **FAB**, or add beef/pork/chicken extract. That’s a little hard to find, and it’s expensive, but it’s natural, and it’s the strongest meat flavor you’re going to find. Read the labels on anything you add. Avoid anything that has hydrolyzed vegetable protein (HVP)—that’s going to make things taste metallic, because most manufacturers use the cheap HVP they get from China. We don’t. Those cheaper ingredients are likely to add a strange flavor. **FAB** uses the highest quality ingredients available, in fact, they are a **FAB** exclusive.

Beef Brisket

Your mileage may vary, but here’s how I cook up my own brisket using **FAB**.

I use brisket flats from Sam’s Club because they are readily available and generally of pretty good quality. You may have your own butcher or provider, but the better the quality of the meat, the better the finished product. I try to get the biggest flats I can find, but they’re usually around 5-8 pounds, I trim as much fat off as I can. Fat prevents smoke and **FAB** from penetrating the meat.

Use one cup of **FAB B** or **FAB B lite** per quart of liquid, and mix it in a two-quart jar or similar container. You can adjust this to your own personal preference. Some folks go stronger, some dilute it by as much as 6:1. I inject the hell of out my briskets, at least every inch—slowly. Watch your syringe so you don’t leave big holes in the pieces you’re going to turn in.

I prefer a big needle with holes facing different directions, while some competitors use small syringes like 30-50cc farm hypodermics that you can get at any farm supply store. Using a smaller needle will help avoid holes in your turn-ins, but it will take a lot longer to get the job done. Find what works for you. If you use a smaller needle, you’ll need to make a lot more injections. If you see “streaking”, it’s because the **FAB** isn’t getting evenly distributed. **FAB B lite** minimizes this effect, but you do want **FAB** throughout the meat, not just in pockets. If you see streaking, those lighter areas are not getting the benefit of **FAB**.

Here’s a little video with some injection basics: http://www.theingredientstore.com/hintsandtips/marinade_injecting

I wouldn’t recommend any fruit juice in a brisket. As a judge, I don’t want to taste fruits in my brisket—just beefy goodness with a great texture. I want the meat to cube in my mouth. It shouldn’t be mush, but I shouldn’t be picking it out of my front teeth, either.

Things you *can* add are anything that goes well with beef! Onion, garlic, pepper...they just have to be powdered and small enough to fit through your syringe. Liquids work well, too, for example, strain the oil off of that jar or minced garlic you already have. I use a spice grinder when I want to add mix-ins, but be careful, because they may collect in little pockets inside the meat, and that’s not going to score well. It certainly tastes good, though! You can always add spices, etc. to the soak after you inject, in essence, marinating it. I always inject, then soak.

I usually don’t add anything to the injection except about a tablespoon of salt and a little fine grind white or cayenne pepper, but be careful with pepper or other spices, as they’ll tend to form little pockets in the meat, as I said earlier.

After injecting, I put it in the fridge with a big ziploc bag with a couple of quarts of **FAB** and some powdered onion. I'll give it a shake every couple of hours, or whenever I walk past. I usually let mine go overnight. Longer won't hurt, and will probably help. You can go as long as a week, but you need at least six hours, bare minimum, unless you have a vacuum tumbler.

I rub a little salt, black pepper and cayenne pepper about a half hour before I'm ready to cook. I cook mine right out of the fridge, because I want the maximum smoke ring. The warmer the meat, the smaller the smoke ring. Once the meat gets warm enough, the juices will not allow any more smoke penetration. I like apple wood or hickory mixed in with Kingsford charcoal. I don't like oak for brisket, but that's just me.

I start cooking at about 225, then let it rise to about 275 over the next couple of hours. I baste after the brisket starts to get some color, then I wrap it in foil when I like the looks of it. Once it hits 195, I test the texture with an instant-read thermometer to see if it goes in without too much force, then I hold it at 180 for another couple of hours—this makes a big difference in texture. I let it rest for a half hour or so before slicing. Total time is usually around 5-6 hours.

Pulled Pork

Pulled pork is a lot like brisket, but you don't need to be careful at all when injecting with **FAB P**, because holes aren't really a problem, except maybe in the "money muscle".

I mix about two cups of **FAB P** with two quarts of water for my pulled pork. I inject every inch I can, then I put the shoulder in a big ziploc bag to soak for a day or more, agitating from time to time. This ensures complete penetration into the meat.

Before cooking, I sprinkle a healthy dose of salt and pepper everywhere I can, then I put it on the smoker cold. I start cooking around 225 for an hour or two, then I bring it up to 250-275 until it gets a nice color.

I don't baste my pork shoulders, but you might want to in order to get a softer bark. As soon as I see the color I like (a nice red, mahogany tone) I wrap them in foil and cook until the internal temperature hits 195, then I hold them at around 180 for a couple of hours, just like brisket. I've held it for as long as five hours, and it comes out great. Before pulling, I let them rest for about 45 minutes to an hour. Total cooking time can be as much as 10-12 hours.

Ribs

Ribs are really easy...and they benefit quite a bit from **FAB!**

After trimming the fat and getting rid of any membrane, I just soak my ribs in a big ziploc bag for a day in a couple of quarts of **FAB P**. Pressed for time, and if the ribs are particularly meaty, I'll inject in between every bone, then let it soak. Four hours is the bare minimum, but overnight is better, unless you have a vacuum tumbler.

To cook, I rub lightly with a modified BRITU, but I cut the salt back to 1/4 of the original recipe. I cook at 225-250 and wrap when the color looks good, then I increase the temperature to 275 to finish. I continue cooking until the bones pull back 1/2 inch or so, basting from time to time with a mixture of honey, water and cayenne pepper. This usually takes 4-5 hours.

Chicken

FAB C works great on white meat and wings, while the new **FAB C dark** is designed for competition thighs. Since thighs don't need any much added moisture, we've adjusted the formula accordingly. Both methods are the same.

For chicken, injection usually isn't required. When I do inject thighs or drumsticks, I use a smaller needle, like the kind you can get from a farm supply store, like Tractor Supply.

Chicken really needs a lot of help if you're buying from a grocery store or Sam's Club. Range-fed organic birds have a little more flavor. Be careful when you buy, though, because most chicken, even at Sam's Club, has already been injected with phosphates, and important ingredient in *FAB*. This will diminish the effect of FAB, so it's not recommended. Any chicken with added phosphates will be labeled as "marinated" or they'll list the particular phosphate, usually sodium tripolyphosphate.

I mix a couple of quarts of *FAB C* or *FAB C dark* and let the chicken soak for three-four days, using 1-2 cups of *FAB* per quart of liquid. For smaller batches, I use a one-gallon jar, and for larger batches, I usually use a big XXL ziploc bag.

Can't soak it for four days? Use a vacuum sealer! For smaller batches, or when time is an issue, I use a gallon jar and put a vacuum on it with my Tilia Foodsaver, then inject and let it soak as long as I can, shaking occasionally.

I cook hot, around 350 degrees for a couple of hours, until the internal temp hits 170. For breasts, I let them rest 30 minutes before slicing. If you take the skin off of your chicken, you won't need such high temperatures, and you can get more smoke penetration and natural curing from nitrates in the smoke.

FAB C holds in juices of white meat, so after letting it rest, it will still be moist and tender. Many KCBS competitors shy away from white meat because it's so hard to hold. With *FAB C*, you can turn in all white meat, or add white meat to your box and still get moist, tender turn-ins.

Chicken really benefits from mix-ins, and I like adding a tablespoon each of turmeric, cayenne pepper and onion powder to the liquid before soaking. Sometimes I'll add a little extra salt to add more of a brine. You can try adding soup flakes to your soak, or anything you would add to chicken soup. Pulverize them in a spice grinder or with a mortar and pestle, first.

Conclusion

FAB was designed to improve on the flavor and texture of meats, while increasing yield and providing better slicing. Barbecue is a highly competitive world, and everybody is looking for an edge. Remember that the judges are only taking one bite, so that bite has got to be impressive.

Like working with any new ingredient, using FAB takes some practice. While no two cuts of meat are the same, we recommend using a scientific approach. Use small batches of FAB on small cuts of meat to determine your own preferences. Try different mix-ins or dilutions.

If you have any questions or comments, please send us a note through the "contact us" form on our web site at www.theingredientstore.com or like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/theingredientstore