

NEWS RELEASE



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MINNESOTA GROCERS ASSOCIATION HOLDS 36th ANNUAL BEST BAGGER CONTEST

St Paul, MN – August 21, 2024 - The Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) held its 36th annual statewide Best Bagger Contest on Saturday, August 17 at the MGA office in St. Paul, MN. Contestants came from all across the state to compete for the title of Minnesota’s Best Bagger.

This is a fun, fast-paced, and entertaining contest that is important to the MGA and its membership as it showcases the talents of one of the industry’s key employees. Baggers are the people responsible for the last experience customers have in a store, and this contest truly exemplifies the food industry’s dedication to customer service.

The seven participating contestants were judged on speed, style, attitude, proper bag-building technique, and weight distribution between the bags. Contest attendees witnessed the art of “bagging” by some of Minnesota’s best. To showcase the food industry’s commitment to consumer choice and the well-being of the communities we serve, baggers used the ever-popular reusable bag.

The first place winner in the competition was Cole Helgeson of Mackenthun’s Fine Foods, Waconia winning \$500 cash, a trophy, and a trip to Las Vegas, NV to represent Minnesota at the National Grocers Association Best Bagger Championship in February 2025. Second place receiving a trophy and cash prize was awarded to Dominic Fortuna of Kowalski’s Markets, Woodbury.

Three of the seven baggers were also given Bagger Excellence Awards, and a cash prize. In addition to winning first place, the “Balance” award was granted to Cole Helgeson with only a .19 oz. between his two bags. Nickolas Dixon of Chris’ Food Center, Sandstone impressed all by capturing both the “Travel” and “Speed” award. He bagged his two reusable bags in :55.28 seconds and traveled the longest distance to the contest, over 80 miles.

Thank you to all of our 2024 Best Bagger contestants for their outstanding efforts, Chandler Apling from Fareway Foods, Faribault, Olivia Luc from Coborn’s, Buffalo, Nicholas Lugos from Jerry’s Foods, Edina and, Cruz Vasquez from Lunds & Byerlys, Uptown Minneapolis.

The Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) is the only state trade association that represents the food industry of Minnesota from farm to fork. We are one of the oldest trade associations in the state, celebrating over 125 years of advancing industry. We have over 300 retail, manufacture, and wholesale members supporting nearly 1,300 locations statewide. Our member companies employ over 150,000 union and non-union Minnesotans. We actively advance the common interest of all those engaged in any aspect of the retail food industry as a leader and advocate in government affairs.

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