

NEWS RELEASE



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MINNESOTA GROCERS ASSOCIATION HOLDS 37th ANNUAL BEST BAGGER CONTEST

St Paul, MN – November 11, 2025 - The Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) held its 37th annual statewide Best Bagger Contest on Saturday, November 1 at the Mall of America in Bloomington, 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 thirteen 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 Laura Sergeant of Kowalski's Markets, Grand Avenue winning \$600 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 Cole Helgeson of Mackenthun's Fine Foods, Waconia.

Two of the thirteen baggers were also given Bagger Excellence Awards, and a cash prize. In addition to winning third place, the "Balance" award was granted to Olivia Harrell with only a .4 oz. between her two bags. Erika Henke of Coborn's, Inc., Sauk Rapids impressed all by winning the "Speed" award. She bagged her two reusable bags in :49.65 seconds.

Thank you to all of our 2025 Best Bagger contestants for their outstanding efforts, Caden Cook and, Gavin Anderson from Coborn's, Inc., Mora & Otsego location, Cassidee Thorvig from Chris' Food Center, Sandstone location, Carlene Hand, Tristan Hollister and, Mario Martinez from Fareway Meat and Grocery, Fairmont, Owatonna and Worthington location, Konstantin Brekke and, Izak Johnson from Kowalski's Markets, Oak Park Heights and, Edina location, and, Anthony Sisneros from Mackenthun's Fine Foods, Minnetrista location.

For the first time ever, the Best Bagger competition also included local media personalities where each contestant raised money for their favorite charities. Thank you to included Karla Hult of KARE 11, Tom Hauser of KSTP 5, Amy Hockert of FOX 9, and Caroline Cummings of WCCO 4.

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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