



MINNESOTA GROCERS ASSOCIATION

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# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## MINNESOTA GROCERS ASSOCIATION HOLDS 29th ANNUAL BEST BAGGER CONTEST

St Paul, MN – August 23, 2017 - The Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) held its 29<sup>th</sup> annual statewide Best Bagger Contest on Saturday, August 19, 2017 at the Mall of America. The first place winner in the competition was Caleb Meyer of Kowalski's Market, Oak Park Heights, winning \$500 cash, a trophy, and a trip to Las Vegas to represent Minnesota at the National Grocers Association Best Bagger Championship on February 12, 2018. Second place was awarded to Tyler Haselkamp of Coborn's, Clearwater, and third place was awarded to Alex Brink of Brink's Market, Chisago City.

This contest is important to the MGA and its membership because it is a fun, fast-paced, and entertaining competition, but most importantly, this event 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 the contest's focus on these top baggers truly exemplifies the food industry's dedication to customer service.

The ten 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 bags!

Contestants came from the following participating companies: Brink's Market, Chisago City; Chris' Food Center, Pine City; Coborn's, Clearwater; Fareway Stores, Inc., Faribault; Jerry's Foods, Woodbury; Jubilee Foods, Mound; Kowalski's Market, Oak Park Heights; Lunds & Byerlys, Minneapolis; Mackenthun's Fine Foods, Waconia; and Teal's Market, Spicer.

Four of the ten baggers were also given Bagger Excellence Awards. The "Traveler" award was granted to Chris Peterson of Teal's Market, Spicer, for traveling the longest distance to the contest, nearly 100 miles. The "Balance" award was captured by Ashley Hohenstein of Jerry's Foods, Woodbury, whose two bags had .17 pounds difference between them. Kyle Ouverson of Chris' Food Center, Pine City captured the "Spirit" award, with his many friends, family, and fans cheering him on. Finally, the "Style" award was presented to Gunnar Grimsley of Jubilee Foods, Mound who best exemplified the image and style of the baggers in the contest.

*The Minnesota Grocers Association is a state trade association representing the food industry since 1897. We have over 200 retail members with nearly 1,100 stores statewide, as well as approximately 100 manufacturers and distributors. Our member companies employ over 125,000 union and non-union Minnesotans. We actively advance the common interest of all those engaged in any aspect of the food industry as a leader and advocate in government affairs.*

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