



MINNESOTA GROCERS ASSOCIATION

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# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## MINNESOTA GROCERS ASSOCIATION HOLDS ITS FIRST BIPARTISAN BAG-OFF

St Paul, MN – January 25, 2017 – The Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) hosted its first Annual Bipartisan Bag-Off on Wednesday, January 18 at the Minnesota State Capitol. This event highlighted the Minnesota food industry and the impact it has on serving consumers, providing careers, and investing in its communities. The Bag-Off featured four legislators, Senate Minority Leader Tom Bakk (D-Cook), Speaker of the House of Representatives Kurt Daudt (R-Crown), Representative Mike Freiberg (D-Golden Valley), and Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka (R-Nisswa), who competed with Minnesota’s 2016 Best Bagger Seth Allen of Chris’ Food Center, Sandstone.

Baggers truly exemplify the food industry’s dedication to customer service. They are the people responsible for the last experience customers have in a store, and the contest provided an insider look at the importance of this role to industry. Additionally, the contest used the ever popular reusable bag, which demonstrates the food industry’s commitment to consumer choice and the well-being of the communities we serve.

A panel of MGA Board members judged the five contestants based on speed, distribution of weight between the bags, proper bagging technique, along with style, attitude, and appearance. Speaker Daudt won the competition with speed and perfect weight distribution. He was presented a trophy and \$1,000 to donate to a food charity of his choice within his district. It should be noted that the 2016 Minnesota Best Bagger winner Seth Allen competed at a slight disadvantage, as he could only use one hand. Allen will be representing Minnesota at the National Best Bagger Championship in Las Vegas in February.

The Minnesota Grocers Association was also pleased to donate \$15,000 on behalf of its 2016 Bag Hunger Campaign to Second Harvest Heartland, which was accepted by Rob Zeaske, Chief Executive Officer, Second Harvest Heartland.

The MGA would like to extend a special thanks to the legislators, volunteers, MGA Board of Directors, and MC Tom Hauser for their time and making this event a success!

*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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**Photo 1:** Representative Mike Freiberg (D-Golden Valley); Seth Allen, Minnesota Best Bagger; Speaker of the House of Representatives Kurt Daudt (R-Crown); Jamie Pfuhl, MGA President; Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka (R-Nisswa); Senate Minority Leader Tom Bakk (D-Cook); and MC Tom Hauser, KSTP.

**Photo 2:** Rob Zeaske, CEO Second Harvest Heartland and Jamie Pfuhl, MGA President.