



**MINNESOTA GROCERS ASSOCIATION**

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# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **MINNESOTA GROCERS ASSOCIATION HOLDS 28th ANNUAL BEST BAGGER CONTEST**

St Paul, MN – August 26, 2016 - The Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) held its 28<sup>th</sup> annual statewide Best Bagger Contest on Saturday, August 20, 2016 at the Mall of America. The first place winner in the competition was Seth Allen of Chris' Food Center, Sandstone, winning \$500 cash, a trophy, and a trip to Las Vegas to represent Minnesota at the National Grocers Association Best Bagger Championship on February 13, 2017. Second place was awarded to Brandon Paulson of Teal's Market, Milaca, and third place was awarded to Norman Statz of Lunds & Byerlys, St. Cloud.

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: Almsted's Fresh Market, Crystal; Chris' Food Center, Sandstone; Coborn's, Clearwater; Fareway Stores Inc., Stewartville; Glen's Food Center, Luverne; Jubilee Foods, Mound; Kowalski's Market, White Bear Lake; Lunds & Byerlys, St. Cloud; Mackenthun's Fine Foods, Waconia; and Teal's Market, Milaca.

Four of the ten baggers were also given Bagger Excellence Awards. The "Traveler" award was granted to Jarod Berndt of Glen's Food Center, Luverne, for coming the longest distance. The "Balance" award was captured by Tyler Haselkamp of Coborn's, Clearwater, whose two bags had .97 pounds difference between them. Tyler Haselkamp of Coborn's, Clearwater also captured the "Spirit" award, with his many friends, family, and fans. Finally, the "Style" award was presented to Cole Sik of Mackenthun's Fine Foods, Waconia 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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