

NEWS RELEASE



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Minnesota Grocers Association Holds Its Second Annual Bipartisan Bag-Off

St Paul, MN – March 7, 2018 – The Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) hosted its second Annual Bipartisan Bag-Off on Tuesday, March 6 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, Laura Bakk filling in for her husband, Senator Tom Bakk (D-Cook), House Minority Leader Melissa Hortman (D-Brooklyn Park), Representative Ron Kresha (R-Little Falls), and Senator Jeremy Miller (R-Winona), who competed with Minnesota's 2017 Best Bagger Caleb Meyer of Kowalski's Market, Oak Grove Heights.

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 members judged the five contestants based on speed, distribution of weight between the bags, proper bagging technique, along with style, attitude, and appearance. Keeping the trophy in his caucus, Representative Kresha won the competition with speed and 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 2017 Minnesota Best Bagger winner Caleb Meyer competed at a slight disadvantage, as he could only use one hand. Meyer represented Minnesota at the National Best Bagger Championship in Las Vegas in February where he placed fourth.

The Minnesota Grocers Association was also pleased to donate \$12,500 on behalf of its 2017 Bag Hunger Campaign to Second Harvest Heartland, which was accepted by Rob Zeaske, Chief Executive Officer of 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 MGA is a state trade association representing the food industry since 1897. We have over 200 retail members serving over 1,100 locations statewide, as well as over 100 distributors, manufacturers, and wholesale partners. 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 of Minnesota as a civic leader and advocate.

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Photo: Caleb Meyer, Minnesota Best Bagger; Representative Ron Kresha (R-Little Falls), House Minority Leader Melissa Hortman (D-Brooklyn Park), Laura Bakk, Jamie Pfuhl, MGA President; Department of Commerce Commissioner Jessica Looman, MC Tom Hauser, KSTP, and Senator Jeremy Miller (R-Winona).