

NEWS RELEASE



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Minnesota Grocers Association Awards 16 Minnesota Companies for Efforts to Fight Hunger

MGA Hunger Campaign Donated Nearly 41 Million Meals Since 2008

St. Paul, MN – March 30, 2021 – The Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) has announced the Silver Plate Award winners of its 2020 Bag Hunger Campaign contest. The contest is part of a state-wide campaign coordinated annually by the MGA that engages Minnesotans in the fight to bag hunger in their neighborhoods. The 2020 Bag Hunger Campaign donated \$19,000 to Second Harvest Heartland and hunger relief partners across the state. In this year alone the organized efforts of the campaign and its participating companies collectively raised over 1.7 million meals. Since 2008, participants in the MGA’s hunger campaign programs have provided nearly 41 million meals to hungry families in Minnesota.

The Bag Hunger Campaign brought together numerous retail members, vendor partners, and community hunger relief partners to fill plates of those in need across the state. Participating stores and vendor locations offered multiple opportunities for consumers to contribute to the campaign. Some stores encouraged customers to donate grocery items in-store or round up their purchase totals at the register, contributing the price difference to feed local families. Others prominently displayed the names of customers who donated money on shopping list icons in their stores.

“The success of the Bag Hunger Campaign is driven by the exceptional efforts and generosity of our members, vendor partners, community food support agencies, and most significantly, Minnesota’s grocery customers,” said Jamie Pfuhl, president of the MGA. “The excitement and dedication demonstrated by all partners, participants, and community members is inspiring. Grocers are essential to the communities they serve and are proud to play a role in this collective effort to end hunger in Minnesota. Congratulations to our Silver Plate and Campaign Champion winners for their wonderfully creative, engaging, and effective efforts.”

The winners of the Silver Plate Awards created in-store displays that best depicted the campaign’s theme to bag hunger in their neighborhood and were required to use a combination of in-store advertising and vendor products. In addition to the award, each winning company will receive \$1,000 to donate to the food charity of its choice on behalf of the Bag Hunger Campaign.

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The **Best Creative Partnership** Silver Plates were awarded to a vendor and retailer who teamed up to create a display with central theme that educated consumers about the fight to end hunger. This year's winning teams were **Post Consumer Brands, Lakeville** and **Coborn's, Sauk Rapids; Old Dutch Foods, Inc., Roseville,** and **Radermacher's Fresh Market, Le Sueur;** and **Russ Davis Wholesale, Wadena** and **Kowalski's Market, Woodbury.**

The **Best Overall Program Support** Silver Plates were awarded to one vendor and one retailer that met the above requirements, as well as collaborated with other campaign participants. The retail award was presented to **Chris' Food Center, Sandstone** and the vendor award went to **KEMPS, St. Paul.**

The **Best Marketing Campaign** Silver Plate was awarded company-wide to **Cub Foods, Stillwater,** the **Best Social Media Campaign** Silver Plate was awarded to **Mackenthun's Fine Foods, Waconia,** and the **Best Community Hunger Support Partnership** Silver Plate was awarded to **Almsted's Fresh Market, Crystal.**

As part of the program's ongoing efforts to make meaningful impacts in the communities we serve, participating companies were also given the chance to be awarded Campaign Champions. These companies receive will receive \$500 to donate to the food charity of its choice on behalf of the Bag Hunger Campaign. This year's winning companies were **ALDI, Inc., Faribault; Cub Foods, Edina; Fareway Stores, Fairmont; Faribault Foods, Inc., Faribault; and Festival Foods, Hugo.**

"The COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on the economy has created a surge in hunger throughout Minnesota," said Allison O'Toole. "More than ever Second Harvest Heartland and partner hunger relief organizations depend on the support of our communities to keep up with demand. Minnesota's grocers, vendors, and their customers have proven that together, we can succeed in the fight to end hunger."

***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 120 years of advancing industry. We have over 300 retail, manufacturers, 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.*

***Second Harvest Heartland** is one of the largest, most efficient, and most innovative hunger relief organizations in the nation. In close partnership with a network of 360 food shelves and nearly 1,000 partner programs, Second Harvest Heartland supports the one in nine people in Minnesota and western Wisconsin facing hunger. On average, 84 percent of the food distributed by partners comes from Second Harvest Heartland, and in fiscal year 2020, we provided 105 million meals throughout our region. We will continue to leverage our unique position in the emergency food chain to advocate, educate and provide food until everyone in our service area has what they need to thrive. For more information, visit 2harvest.org or call 651-484-5117.*

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