

NEWS RELEASE



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Minnesota Grocers Association Presents Bipartisan Bag-Off Winner Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen with Donation to the Pine City Food Shelf

St. Paul, MN – November 12, 2021 – The Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) held its 2021 Bipartisan Bag-Off in August in conjunction with the MGA Best Bagger Contest. This event highlights the impact the Minnesota food industry has on serving consumers, providing careers, and investing in its communities. As this year's winner, Minnesota Department of Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen was awarded \$1,000 to donate to a food charity of his choice. Today, with Commissioner Petersen, the MGA presented the Pine City Food Shelf with the \$1,000 donation at the local grocery store, Chris' Food Center in Sandstone, MN.

The Bipartisan Bag-Off featured leadership from each of the four legislative caucuses and a member of the Governor's Administration. This year's contestants were Assistant Senate Majority Leader Zach Duckworth (R-Lakeville), House Assistant Majority Leader Heather Edelson (D-Edina), Senator Matt Klein (D-Mendota Heights), MN Department of Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen, and House Assistant Minority Leader Peggy Scott (R-Andover). A panel of industry leaders judged the contest based on speed, distribution of weight, proper bagging principles, along with style, attitude, and appearance. Department of Commerce Weights and Measure Division Director Greg VanderPlaats served as the official weigher. Commissioner Petersen won the competition for the first time and took home the trophy.

"The food industry is an important part of Minnesota, and I was incredibly proud to be part of an event that showcases the important job of bagging groceries," said Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen. "It was exciting to participate in this event and be able to present this donation to the Pine City Food Shelf. Partnerships like this bring home the value of the work we do together."

"Our annual Bipartisan Bag-Off is a great showcase of the outstanding work of the food industry of Minnesota. It also highlights our appreciation for the partnerships we value with our elected officials," said Jamie Pfuhl, President of the MGA. "This donation, made today on behalf of Commissioner Petersen is a positive example of what can happen for our communities when we all work together."

"The economic realities that face many Minnesota families today sometimes mean cutting corners and seeking help for our most basic needs," said Kathy Wills of Pine City Food Shelf. "More than ever, food shelves need the support of their communities to keep up with demand. We appreciate Commissioner Petersen and the Minnesota Grocers Association for their support of our community."

The Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) is the only state trade association that represents the food industry of Minnesota from farm to fork. We are a legacy organization, having served the industry for 125 years. We have over 300 retail, manufacturer, 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 food industry as a leader and advocate in government affairs.

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