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MN Grown Retailer of the Year Recipients Announced Grocers promoting locally grown products recognized with in-person visits

St. Paul, MN: Minnesota grocers recognized for promoting locally grown products and farms will be rewarded with the 2022 Retailer of the Year award from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's (MDA) Minnesota Grown program, in conjunction with the [Minnesota Grocers Association](#) (MGA).

"Grocers and their employees have come through repeatedly for Minnesota communities in recent years," MDA Commissioner Thom Petersen said. "One of those ways is by promoting fresh, nutritious, locally grown foods, and we want to recognize how significant their contribution is."

MDA and MGA staff will be presenting the awards in-person at each of the stores this summer. The retailers in their respective regions will receive a commemorative plaque and exclusive rights to use the "Minnesota Grown Retailer of the Year 2022" logo in their ads and displays. They included:

- Northeast: Chris' Food Center, Sandstone, MN
- Northwest: Lueken's Village Foods North, Bemidji, MN
- Southeast: Kowalski's Markets, Woodbury, MN
- Southwest: Mackenthun's Fine Foods, Waconia, MN

"Grocers are essential to the communities they serve and are incredibly proud of our innovative local partnerships – farm to fork," said MGA President Jamie Pfuhl. "The success of the Minnesota Grown program is driven by the exceptional efforts of all in the food industry. We are proud to play a role in this collective effort that showcases and celebrates innovative partnerships and brings wonderful local products to our customers."

Judges' scores were based on several factors – including the number of Minnesota Grown products and the number of Minnesota Grown farmers that the grocer carried. Judges also looked at how the grocer used ads, displays, social media, and other events to promote Minnesota Grown items to customers.

The 2022-2023 contest opens on August 1, 2022 and runs through September 30, 2022. Information about how to participate will be updated when available on the Minnesota Grown Retailer of the Year webpage.

The [Minnesota Grown Program](#) is a statewide partnership between the MDA and Minnesota producers of specialty crops and livestock. It was created over 30 years ago by specialty crop growers to differentiate their produce from produce grown thousands of miles away.

The Minnesota Grocers Association is the only state trade association that represents the food industry of Minnesota from farm to fork. It has served the industry for over 125 years, with over 300 retail, manufacturer, and wholesale members supporting nearly 1,300 locations statewide. MGA member companies employ over

150,000 union and non-union Minnesotans. It actively advances 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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