

NEWS RELEASE



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MN GROWN RETAILER OF THE YEAR CONTEST KICKS OFF AUGUST 1

July 31, 2023 - Minnesota Grown and the Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) announce the start of the 2023 Minnesota Grown Retailer of the Year contest, an annual statewide contest to recognize retail grocery and liquor stores that offer products from Minnesota Grown farmers and producers, including fresh fruits and vegetables, meat and poultry, cheese and dairy, packaged goods, wine, cider, beer, and spirits.

“We’re proud to collaborate with and celebrate the grocers that are so crucial in getting local foods in the hands of consumers,” says Rachel Wandrei, marketing manager for Minnesota Grown. “Minnesotans love the quality and freshness of local food as well as supporting the farmers in their community. Making local products available to consumers where they regularly shop — at their neighborhood store — is a significant contribution that grocers and their employees make to their communities.”

The contest period kicks off August 1 and runs through September 29, a time when local farms have a wide variety and abundant volume of products to offer. Each retailer chooses a one-week showcase during the contest period for a focused promotional effort in their store and other related marketing activities. Upon contest completion, regional awards are given as well as a “People’s Choice” photo contest winner determined through social media votes.

Award judging criteria includes:

- Number of Minnesota Grown farms and products for sale
- Use of the Minnesota Grown logo in innovative promotional displays and experiences
- Social media, print, and other marketing activities highlighting Minnesota Grown products

A recent consumer survey showed that 80% of consumers recognize the Minnesota Grown brand and associate it with freshness, quality, community, and health. By participating in the contest, retailers can boost sales while giving their customers access to quality local products. Participating stores also value building relationships with farmers in their community and engaging their employees in creative ways to promote fresh, nutritious, locally grown foods.

“We encourage shoppers to look for the Minnesota Grown logo over the next few months and use their buying power to support local farms and the retail stores that carry local products,” Wandrei adds.

“Grocers are the foundation of the communities they serve and are incredibly proud of our innovative local partnerships from farm to fork,” said MGA President Jamie Pfuhl. “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.”

Minnesota Grown is a program of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture to promote products grown and raised in Minnesota. The program has connected consumers with local farmers, farmers’ markets, and other producers of agricultural products near them for over 35 years.

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 over 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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