

NEWS RELEASE



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Minnesota Grocers Association Holds Its Seventh Annual Bipartisan Bag-Off

St Paul, MN – March 6, 2024 – The Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) hosted its seventh Annual Bipartisan Bag-Off on Tuesday, March 5 at the Minnesota State Capitol. This event highlighted the Minnesota food industry and its impact on serving consumers, providing careers, and investing in its communities. The Bag-Off featured representation from each of the four legislative caucuses and a member from the governor's administration; House Minority Leader Lisa Demuth, Senate Minority Leader Mark Johnson, Senator Aric Putnam, Representative Samantha Sencer-Mura, and Minnesota Department of Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen.

Baggers truly exemplify the food industry's dedication to customer service. They are 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, weight distribution between the bags, proper bagging technique, style, attitude, and appearance. Chief of Staff, Hali Kolkind, of the Minnesota Department of Commerce served as the official bag weigher. Each contestant received a \$500 donation to be presented to a food charity in their district.

In a tight competition, this year's Bipartisan Bag-Off winner was House Minority Leader Lisa Demuth. She was presented a trophy and \$1,000 to donate to a food charity of her choice within her district.

The MGA was also pleased to donate \$2,000 on behalf of its 2023 Bag Hunger Campaign to Second Harvest Heartland, which was accepted by Elizabeth Cooper, Chief External Relations Officer of Second Harvest Heartland. Cooper expressed her thanks for the exceptional partnership throughout the years. The MGA Bag Hunger Campaign has raised over \$44 million since 2008.

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 for making this event a huge success!

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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Photo1: House Minority Leader Lisa Demuth with the 2024 Bipartisan Bag-Off Champion trophy

Photo2: Minnesota Department of Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen

Photo3: Senator Aric Putnam

Photo4: Senate Minority Leader Mark Johnson

Photo 5: Representative Samantha Sencer-Mura

Photo 6: Minnesota Department of Commerce Chief of Staff, Hali Kolkind

Photo 7: Jamie Pfuhl, MGA President and Elizabeth Cooper of Second Harvest Heartland