

NEWS RELEASE



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Minnesota Grown Retailer of the Year Winners Announced

Minnesota grocers recognized for promoting locally grown products

November 20, 2024 - Eight Minnesota retailers who demonstrate excellence in locally grown and produced products have been named a 2025 Minnesota Grown Retailer of the Year by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's (MDA) Minnesota Grown program, in partnership with the Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA). Along with awards given by region, a new beer, wine, and spirits award was given to recognize excellence in liquor stores.

This year's winners include:

- Northwest: Hugo's Family Marketplace, Thief River Falls
- Northeast: Super One Foods, Duluth Miller Hill
- Central: Chris' Food Center, Sandstone
- Southwest: Jim's Market, Canby
- Southeast: Rushford Foods, Rushford
- Twin Cities: Lunds & Byerlys, Apple Valley
- People's Choice: Festival Foods, Andover
- Beer, Wine, & Spirits: Mackenthun's Fine Foods, The Cove Wine & Spirits, Minnetrista

"We applaud these grocers and their employees for their leadership in offering Minnesota grown foods and products," said MDA Commissioner Thom Petersen. "When shoppers have access to more foods grown and raised by their neighbors, it's a win for everyone - Minnesota's farmers, grocers, and communities alike."

Each winner receives exclusive rights to use their regional Minnesota Grown Retailer of the Year branding in their ads and displays, and will be recognized by their peers at an MGA event in the spring. "Grocers are at the heart of the communities they serve, and we are so proud of the innovative partnerships between grocery stores, distributors, and farmers that are showcased in this contest," said MGA President Patrick Garofalo. "We are thrilled to play a role in this effort celebrating the vital work of bringing fresh, healthy, and delicious local products to Minnesotans across the state."

Awards are determined by multiple factors, including the number of local products offered and the number of Minnesota farmers and producers the grocers purchased from. The review panel also looked at use of ads, displays, social media, and events to promote Minnesota grown items to customers. More information can be found on the Minnesota Grown Retailer of the Year webpage.

"Grocers who participated this year reported seeing a significant increase in their sales across multiple departments, from fresh produce to the meat section, which was incredibly exciting to see," reported Minnesota Grown Marketing Manager, Rachel Wandrei. "The stores went all out this year, from creating recipes with local foods on their social media channels, to hosting events where shoppers can meet their local farmers. By highlighting these local products, they are not only strengthening their bottom line, they are also supporting farmers and boosting their local economy, all while giving customers the high-quality local foods they are looking for."

The Minnesota Grown Program is a statewide partnership between the MDA and Minnesota agricultural producers with a mission to promote Minnesota grown products for the mutual benefit of consumers and producers.

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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