



# TENNESSEE'S BEST BAGGER

BEST BAGGER HANDBOOK 2026

TGEF

[www.TGEFonline.org/events](http://www.TGEFonline.org/events)

TGCSA

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# ABOUT TGCSA AND TGEF

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The Tennessee Grocers & Convenience Stores Association (TGCSA) is the only food trade association that represents all segments of Tennessee’s food market. Membership is comprised of retail grocery store and convenience store operations, as well as food industry wholesalers, manufacturers, distributors, and suppliers.

## TGCSA MISSION

To promote and support the growth and success of the food industry in Tennessee through advocacy, education, public relations, and networking.



Tennessee Grocers Education Foundation (TGEF) was founded in 1985 for the purpose of providing scholarships and promoting education throughout the food industry in Tennessee.

In 1980, the Tennessee Retail Grocers Association (TRGA), now Tennessee Grocers & Convenience Store Association (TGCSA), held a golf tournament in Smyrna as a networking event and raised an \$800 profit. The Board of Directors decided to set aside the money to begin a scholarship fund. September 19, 1985, Tennessee Grocers Education Foundation was established for the purpose of providing scholarships and promoting education throughout the food industry in Tennessee.

The association board created the foundation as and continues to be a value-add for TGCSA members. The TGEF Board of Trustees encourage all TGCSA member companies to take advantage of the unique program offered.

TGEF is a 501 (c)(3), a non-profit, tax-exempt organization which supports and provides educational opportunities for the food industry. Donations to the foundation are tax-deductible contributions.

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# INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY

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## TENNESSEE'S BEST BAGGER CHAMPIONSHIP

The first Tennessee Best Bagger contest was held in 1990. Each year TGCSA brings the state's finest baggers together to find a representative to represent Tennessee at the National Championship.

The proper bagging of grocers is an important part of the operation of a successful retail grocery business. Tennessee Grocers & Convenience Store Association in cooperation with The National Grocers Association and retailers endeavors to help grocers recognize this valuable customer service by conducting an annual state Best Bagger Championship. Tennessee's Best Bagger rules and regulations are modeled after The National Grocers Association's Best Bagger rules and regulations.

### 2026 TENNESSEE'S BEST BAGGER CHAMPIONSHIP

June 4, 2025

Renaissance Shoals Hotel & Spa

10 Hightower Place

Florence, AL 35630

## NATIONAL BEST BAGGER CHAMPIONSHIP

This is a yearlong competition in which the top grocery baggers in the country compete to be crowned the National Best Bagger Champion at NGA's annual convention, The NGA Show. Contestants are judged on speed, bag-building technique, weight distribution between bags, style, attitude, and appearance.

### 2027 NATIONAL GROCERS ASSOCIATION BEST BAGGER CHAMPIONSHIP

January 31 - February 2, 2027 - Las Vegas

MGM Grand Conference Center, Las Vegas, Nevada

# BEST BAGGER HALL OF FAME

## TGCSA WINNERS

YEAR	WINNER	STORE
1990	John Arnott	K-VA-T Food Stores
1991	Jon Matthews	White's Fresh Foods
1992	Danny Schafer	K-VA-T Food Stores
1993	Ben Bowman	K-VA-T Food Stores
1994	Ben Bowman	K-VA-T Food Stores
1995	William Watson	H.G. Hill Food Stores
1996	Todd Bumpas	Jim Adams IGA Stores
1997	Jason Story	K-VA-T Food Stores
1998	Matt Shell	K-VA-T Food Stores
1999	Kevin Sexton	K-VA-T Food Stores
2000	Chris Bain	Moser's Piggly Wiggly
2001	Jonathan Fields	Foodland-Scott's Hill
2002	Amanda Taylor	Kroger Memphis
2003	Randy Lee Eason, Jr.	Foodland-Scott's Hill
2004	Devin Coleman	K-VA-T Food Stores
2005	Mat Berry	K-VA-T Food Stores
2006	Casey Miller	Publix Super Markets
2007	Sarah Lytle	Publix Super Markets
2008	Corey Spearman	Bi-Lo
2009	Brittany Cavender	Kroger Nashville
2010	Colby Morgan	Kroger Memphis
2011	Alexis Jeup	Publix Super Markets
2012	Edith Sanchez	UGO/Bargain Barn
2013	Alexis Jeup	Publix Super Markets
2014	Lucas Mealer	Kroger Memphis
2015	Hayden Ragan	Kroger Nashville
2016	Hunter Wisecarver	K-VA-T Food Stores
2017	Hunter Wisecarver	K-VA-T Food Stores
2018	Erin Smith	Kroger Nashville
2019	Sabrina Martinez	Publix Super Markets
2020	Patrick Grove	Kroger-Nashville
2021	Brianna Shaw	HG Hill (S & C Foods)
2022	Alexis (Lexi) Gilliam	K-VA-T Food Stores
2023	Sarah Mehany	HG Hill (S & C Foods)
2024	Kobey Harris	K-VA-T Food Stores
2025	Sarah Mehany	HG Hill (S & C Foods)

## NGA WINNERS

YEAR	WINNER	STORE	STATE
1987	Jorge Baca	Fiesta Mart No. 4	Texas
1988	Kelly Larrabee	Raley's Supermarket	California
1989	Caren Callaghan	Olsen's Food Store	Washington
1990	Mark Custshall	Baker's IGA	Ohio
1991	Keith Palch	Hartsville IGA	Ohio
1992	Kris Gossett	Marsh's West Jackson Store	Indiana
1993	Bob Dropinski	Baker's Supermarket	Nebraska
1994	Jeff Stearns	Fareway Stores, Inc.	Iowa
1995	Bard Boudreaux	Rouses	Louisiana
1996	Mike Dahm	Fareway Stores, Inc.	Iowa
1997	Allen Weimerskirch	Fareway Stores, Inc.	Iowa
1998	Frank Urbanic	Tops Markets	Ohio
1999	Gwenn Honda	Ralph's Grocery Company	California
2000	Mike Mechura	Fareway Stores, Inc.	Iowa
2001	Micha Crapo	Smith's Food & Drug Stores	Utah
2002	Dawn Marshall	Pathmark Stores	Pennsylvania
2003	Darcie Berndt	Martin's Super Markets	Indiana
2004	Tina Tasso	The Kroger Co.	Georgia
2005	Emily Jensen	Macey's	Utah
2006	Jason Zitko	Dierbergs Central Office	Missouri
2007	Brian Bay	Macey's	Utah
2008	Erika Jensen	Macey's	Utah
2009	Francisco Palacios	Fry's Foods and Drug Stores	Arizona
2010	Kyle Perry	Martin's Super Markets	Indiana
2011	Krystal Smith	Hannaford Supermarkets	Vermont
2012	Stephanie Teteak	Larry's Piggly Wiggly	Wisconsin
2013	Andrew Boracchini	Metropolitan Markets	Washington
2014	Andrew Hadlock	Macey's	Utah
2015	David Tochinsky	Rousauers Supermarkets	Washington
2016	Candice Lastimado	Metropolitan Markets	Washington
2017	Brady Long	Buehler's	Ohio
2018	Trevor DeForest	Fareway Stores, Inc.	Iowa
2019	Dwayne Campbell	Hy-Vee	Iowa
2020	Nicole Cote	Hannaford Supermarkets	Maine
2021	Ben Miller	Hy-Vee	Iowa
2022	Alexa Sobsey	Nugget Markets	California
2023	Karli West	Macey's	Utah
2024	Madison Ireland	Harmons Grocer	Utah

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# SECTION 1: GENERAL GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS

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## OBJECTIVE

- To encourage the teaching and development of the particular knowledge and skills of successful bagging and customer service.
- To provide the opportunity for all supermarket operators to organize Best Bagger competitions, thereby promoting knowledge and interest in successful bagging and customer service skills.
- To promote good organization, fair competition, and good sportsmanship through friendly competition.
- To incorporate customer service knowledge and skills into the learning experience of bagging groceries.

Organizers should encourage staff that spends **at least 40%** of their time at work in the front-end, bagging customers' groceries to compete in the Best Bagger competition. A bagger's **primary duties must be classified as front-end staff and must have a non-managerial title, role, and set of responsibilities** in order to be eligible to compete. A Best Bagger competition has served its purpose **when baggers have learned better bagging techniques, sportsmanship, and customer service skills.**

These rules are intended to establish standards for Best Bagger competition while allowing flexibility in state and retailer level organizations. Any contingency not covered herein should be referred to the National Grocers Association Best Bagger Coordinator.

## FORM OF COMPETITIONS

1. Organizers are free to hold as many competitions as they wish.
2. Competitions may be organized over a period of one or two days if necessary.
3. Organizers are encouraged to hold competitions in "heats" with multiple baggers competing against each other at a time.
4. Organizers are required to hold a "Bag Off" contest if there are multiple winners in a state to determine who will represent the state at the National Best Bagger Championship.

## ELIGIBILITY

1. A baggers' primary duties must be classified as front-end staff and must spend at least 40% or more of their time at work bagging groceries.
2. To be eligible, all baggers must have a non-managerial title, role, and set of responsibilities.
3. There shall be only one Bagger allowed to compete from each state at the National Best Bagger Championship.
  - a. Organizers with store locations in multiple states may enter a Bagger from any state where their organization has locations.
  - b. Baggers do not have to hold residency within the state they are representing at the National Best Bagger Championship.
4. State Associations holding a state-wide contest shall only accept contestants from companies in their state.
5. All contestants must be of legal working age in their home state.
6. Previous National Best Bagger Champions are not eligible to compete.
7. Due to the location of the National Best Bagger Championship, baggers 20 years old or younger shall have at least one chaperone who must be at least 21 years of age.

# SECTION 2: THE COMPETITION

## DRESS

All contestants should present a neat appearance in uniform during a Best Bagger competition.

## THE PERFECT BAGGING LOCATION

When organizing a Best Bagger competition, it is important to have the competition space that fits the organizer. What may work for a state association may not work for a retailer- and that is OK! Make sure that you have a designated area for contestants to gather and wait their turn, ample space for the judges to weigh and calculate the heats, as well as an area for the audience to observe.

Below is a list of example locations and venue possibilities for competitions of all sizes.

- Store front parking lot
- State fair
- Church parking lot
- Local food bank
- Local high-school parking lot
- Store check stands
- Local mall parking lot or indoor space
- Convention center

## BEST BAGGER EQUIPMENT

The Tennessee Grocers & Convenience Store Association along with the National Grocers Association encourages every Best Bagger competition organizer to be creative with their contest while following the rules. Whatever an organizer decides to do must be the same for all contestants. Below is a list of required and optional equipment needed to host a Best Bagger competition.

### REQUIRED EQUIPMENT



Tables or Check Stands for each bagger in a heat



Microphone and sound/PA system



Racks to hold bags open



At least two electronic scales



At least two calculators



A stopwatch for each timer



Score Sheets



Reusable bags for heat



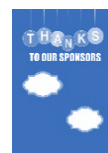
Two complete sets of groceries per Check Stand



Grocery item labels for each Check Stand

### OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

- Whistle
- Decorations
- Contest t-shirts/uniforms for the organizers Best Bagger team
- Signs acknowledging event sponsors



# SECTION 2: THE COMPETITION

## CHECK STAND SET-UP

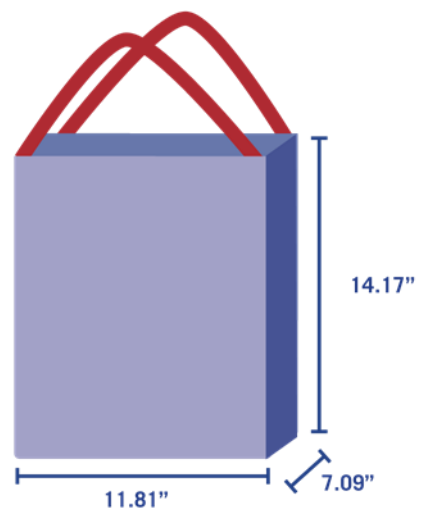
**Best Bagger Organizers must do the same check stand set-up for each contestant.** Each contestant will bag identical grocery orders consisting of 30 to 38 commonly purchased items. A recommended grocery list is provided for you in this handbook on page 17. Below you will find an example of a proper check stand set-up of grocery items with labels.



## BAGS

Organizers may choose to do two rounds each with different types of bags, plastic and reusable, to determine which Bagger is the winner of their competition. **It is highly encouraged to use only reusable bags at all levels of Best Bagger Competitions since reusable bags are used at the National Best Bagger Championship.** The dimensions of the bags used at the National Best Bagger Championship are 14.17 x 11.81 x 7.09 - length x width x side gusset.

Once a winner has been determined to represent your state at the National Best Bagger Championship, it is the state's or sponsoring store's responsibility to contact NGA for official competition bags to practice with for the National Best Bagger Championship.



# SECTION 2: THE COMPETITION



## EXCEPTION TO RULES

It is recognized that some limitations may from time to time exist, which make it impossible or impractical for a Best Bagger competition to fully comply with the rules set forth in this handbook. In such cases, the organizer of a Best Bagger competition shall make every effort to comply with the intent of these rules if an exception must be made. The organizer should use restraint in making “house rules” and do so only if it is in the best interest of the baggers and the event.

## TIME

How quickly a bagger bags their grocery order properly is an important factor in determining a winner of a Best Bagger competition. No heat should last longer than two minutes.

A timer shall begin the stopwatch when the Emcee starts the heat with a verbal command and stop the stopwatch when the bagger has raised his/her above his/her head. Once the bagger has raised their hands above their head, the time will stop, and they will not be allowed to touch the check stand or bags. If a bagger partially raises their hands not above their head the time will continue, and they can pick up any missed items and place them in a bag, and then raise their hands above their head stopping the time.

Below you will find a broken-down list of average time per possible points. This is also located in the back of this handbook on the Best Bagger Individual Score Sheet.

TIME	POINTS
00:00 – 53:00 seconds	10
53:01 – 57:00 seconds	9
57:01 – 61:00 seconds	8
61:01 – 65:00 seconds	7
65:01 – 69:00 seconds	6
69:01 – 73:00 seconds	5
73:01 – 77:00 seconds	4
77:01 – 81:00 seconds	3
81:01 – 85:00 seconds	2
85:01 or more seconds	1



## TIES

A tie score situation is relevant in two situations.

### 1. Preliminary Heat Tie

***When two or more baggers are tied for the finals.***

- Total points the baggers earned for speed will determine the winner.  
(Should a tie remain at this point)
- The bagger with the most points for building technique will be declared the winner.  
(Should a tie remain at this point)
- The two baggers must bag again in a tie-breaker heat for final elimination.

### 2. Final Heat Tie

- Should there be a tie for first place, those baggers who are tied would take part in a tie-breaker heat. The tie-breaker heat would follow all procedures as in any other heat.
- Should there be a tie for second and third place, follow the steps mentioned above under Preliminary Heat Tie.

# SECTION 2: THE COMPETITION

## SCORING

The bagger who scores the most points shall win the contest. Baggers are awarded points based off speed, proper bag building technique, distribution of weight between bags, style, attitude and appearance. Below you will find a breakdown of points for each category. A Best Bagger Individual Score Sheet can be found on page 22.

### SPEED = 10 POINTS TOTAL

### PROPER BAG BUILDING TECHNIQUE = 10 POINTS TOTAL

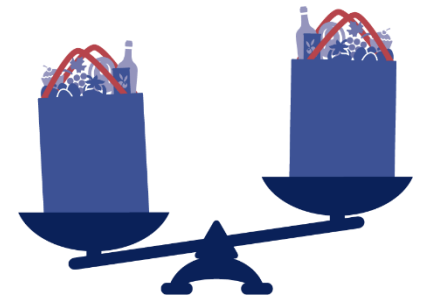
1. Cans and jars on the bottom of the bags (no cans on top of cans, jars on top of cans or other jars)
2. Boxes on the sides or walls of the bags (cannot be lying flat)
3. Crushable items on top of the bag
  - a. Eggs
  - b. Bread
  - c. Chips
4. "Filler" items are in spaces between items
  - a. Bag of sunflower seeds
  - b. Seasoning package
  - c. Jell-O boxes
5. No glass bottles next to each other (filler item separating them)
6. Bottles and other glass-encased items are in the center of the bag
7. Items are damaged (bent, torn, or dented)
8. Bags are disorderly (items are just thrown in the bag)
9. Items left on the check stand (one point deducted from bag building technique for each item left on the check stand)
10. Bag or bags left on the rack(s)



### DISTRIBUTION OF WEIGHT BETWEEN BAGS = 5 POINTS TOTAL

To calculate the score, weigh each bag, and record the weight. Subtract your lightest bag weight from your heaviest bag weight. Then subtract the difference you just found from the total possible points.

- Example: the heaviest bag weighs 13.15 pounds. The lightest bag weighs 12.05 pounds. The weight difference between the two bags is 1.1 pounds. Subtract this difference from the total possible points ( $5.00 - 1.1 = 3.9$ ). The total points to be awarded is 3.9.



### STYLE ATTITUDE AND APPEARANCE = 5 POINTS

All contestants should present a neat appearance, be polite, and convey a customer-oriented attitude. Contestants will be judged in part on their composure and self-confidence.

## DROPPED ITEM DURING HEAT

A bagger must pick up any dropped item. The one exception is when an item falls from the stage. In the interest of safety, we do not want the bagger diving after the item. In this case, an automatic one-point deduction will be taken from the "Bag Building Technique" score for that heat.

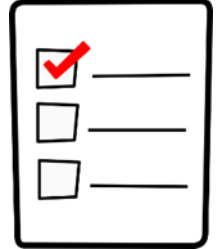


# SECTION 3: BEST BAGGER OFFICIALS

To ensure the organizer has a successful Best Bagger competition, it is important to have a reliable Best Bagger team to help you. Below you will find a list of positions you will need to fill to create your Best Bagger team. These are the positions used by TGCSA.

## 1. ORGANIZER

- a. An organizer is the Best Bagger competition coordinator. An organizer is responsible for all aspects of the Best Bagger competition that is being held.
- b. Duties of an organizer may or may not include:
  - i. Appoint a Best Bagger team and make sure they are familiar with the rules
  - ii. Find a location for the Best Bagger competition
  - iii. Oversee the budget plan
  - iv. Obtain sponsorship if necessary
  - v. Provide a handbook to all contestants
  - vi. Turn in the appropriate forms to TGCSA found on their website and the back of this book
  - vii. Determine prizes and awards
  - viii. Market the competition
  - ix. Recruit baggers to compete
  - x. Provide equipment necessary to host a Best Bagger competition
  - xi. Collect entry forms from each contestant prior to the Best Bagger competition
  - xii. Provide TGCSA with the total number of contestants competing in your competition



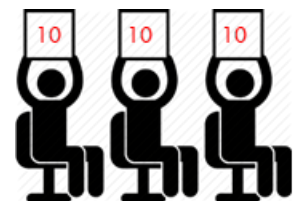
## 2. EMCEE

- a. The perfect person for an Emcee position is someone who enjoys speaking in front of a group. An ideal candidate might be a senior official in the organization, someone involved in the community, a local radio host, or a Member of Congress.
- b. Duties of an Emcee are:
  - i. Explain the purpose of the Best Bagger competition
  - ii. Review the judging criteria
  - iii. Introduce each bagger
  - iv. Provide running entertainment commentary during the Best Bagger competition
  - v. Interview the baggers after each heat
  - vi. Make sure the judges, timers, and baggers are ready before beginning each heat
  - vii. Start each heat with a verbal command
    - I. Example: "Ready! Set! Bag!"
    - II. **Must start each heat exactly the same.**



## 3. JUDGES

- a. You will need two judges for your contest. Judges must be fair, consistent, and impartial. An ideal candidate might be someone who has bagging experience. Do not have a judge for each check stand.
- b. Duties of a judge are:
  - i. Complete the **bagging technique** section on the score sheet
  - ii. Move on to the next check stand until all three stands are judged



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# SECTION 3: BEST BAGGER OFFICIALS

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## 4. TIMERS

- a. You will need one timer per check stand. Timers are responsible for keeping time of each heat, moving groceries to be weighed, and help re-set groceries for the next heat.
- b. Duties of a timer are:
  - i. Check stopwatches (It is important to reset stopwatches for each heat)
  - ii. Double check judging sheet; make sure the correct name of the contestant is on the top of the sheet before the heat starts
  - iii. Timers start the stopwatch when the emcee gives the verbal command
  - iv. Timers stop the stopwatch when the contestant has raised his/her hands above their head
  - v. When the heat is completed, the timer writes down the baggers time on the score sheet
  - vi. Do not move or touch bags until the judges have completed the bag building technique section of the score sheet
  - vii. After the judges have completed scoring help move bags and score sheets to the scales and weigh each bag
  - viii. Return weighed bags to check stand and re-set groceries for the next heat
- c. Return to #1 and repeat (It is important to reset stopwatches for each heat)



## 5. SCOREKEEPER

- a. You will need at least two scorekeepers (if manually calculating scores). Scorekeepers are responsible for assisting the judges with tallying up the final scores.
- b. Duties of a scorekeeper are:
  - i. Fill out a score sheet for each bagger and place it at the check stand prior to the beginning of each heat.
  - ii. Add up the total points on the score sheet after the judge turns them in and check the scores with the other scorekeepers
  - iii. At the end of preliminary heats, the scorekeepers present the three highest scores to the emcee, so the baggers can be announced to “Bag Off” in the final heat
  - iv. TGCSA uses an Excel Spreadsheet that automatically calculates scores (if you would like to obtain a copy, please contact Us by email [Scholarships@TNGrocer.org](mailto:Scholarships@TNGrocer.org))



## 6. RE-SETTER

- a. This is an optional position. You will need one person per check stand to assist the timer and judges when it comes to re-setting the grocery order for the next heat.
- b. Duties of a re-setter are:
  - i. Assist with weighing bags and resetting groceries on the check stand for the next heat.
  - ii. Exchange any damaged groceries as needed in the grocery order before each heat
  - iii. Arrange all groceries on the check stand according to the same schematic.
  - iv. Do not move or touch bags until the judges have completed the bagging building technique section of the score sheet.
  - v. After judges have completed judging move bags and score sheets to the scales and weigh each bag.
  - vi. Return weighed bags to check stand and re-set groceries for the next heat.
  - vii. Repeat process for each heat.



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## SECTION 4: BEST BAGGER PRIZES

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Awards for preliminary and state competitions are very flexible. Ideally, the winners should have the opportunity to advance to the next stage of the competition such as the state or national competition.

### PRIZES CAN INCLUDE

- Cash
- Best Bagger t-shirt
- Ribbon
- Trophy
- Travel expense to Tennessee's Best Bagger Championship

### TENNESSEE PRIZES

- Expense paid trip to NGA's Best Bagger Championship for the contestant and one guest
  - Round trip airfare for two, two nights hotel stay and \$500 spending cash
- Statewide Recognition
- First Place Trophy
- Scholarships
  - Runner-up: \$1,000 scholarship from TGEF
  - State Champion: \$2,000 scholarship and \$250 cash from NGA

### NATIONAL PRIZES

The winner from every state will receive on-site a certificate and cash prize of \$250 from the National Grocers Association. Cash prizes for the National Best Bagger Championship winners are awarded on-site in the amounts listed below:

- National Champion: \$10,000
- First Runner-Up: \$5,000
- Second Runner-Up: \$1,000
- Third Runner-Up: \$1,000
- Fourth Runner-Up: \$1,000

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## SECTION 5: BEST BAGGER SPONSORSHIP

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Whether you are organizing a local level competition or a state-wide competition sponsorship opportunities are mutually beneficial. A sponsor benefits from either advertising, public awareness, product sales or some combination of these and you will benefit by having the burden of expenses lifted. Below you will find a guide for obtaining the appropriate type of sponsorship for your event.

1. The first step an organizer should take in planning a Best Bagger competition is figuring out the overall budget. What will it cost, or what items will you need to organize a successful competition? Once you have a budget set in place, then you can determine just how much you will need from a sponsor or combination of sponsors.
2. Create a list of target sponsorship prospects. This could be compiled of former contestants, local connections such as radio station, and wholesalers.
3. Once you have a target list, plan what you are committing in return to your potential sponsor. This could be anything such as product placement, signage, logos in a program or on the website/through social media. Customize your commitment appropriately to fit the sponsor.
4. Create a compelling sponsor proposal. Make sure this letter/email contains the story behind your organization and the Best Bagger competition. As well as the sponsor benefits, your marketing plans, media opportunities, and the sponsor fees.
5. Customize each sponsor proposal to fit the intended audience.
6. Always thank your sponsors during and after the competition.
7. After the competition, be sure to ask for their commitment to sponsor next year's competition too!

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## SECTION 6: MEDIA COVERAGE

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The National Grocers Association highly recommends that you tell your story to local newspapers, tv stations, and local radio stations. Local news outlets are easier to obtain coverage, as they focus on such a niche area, and your story involves the community relevant to their audience. To ensure coverage, contact at least fifteen to twenty media outlets-TV, newspapers, online news, and radio stations are all great places to start with. The more people you pitch to, the more likely you are to have your competition covered.

Items that can be helpful if you want media coverage for your Best Bagger competition are listed below.

1. Media Advisory
  - a. A media advisory alerts the media to upcoming events. This is an invitation that answers only the important questions: Who, What, When, Where, and Why
  - b. Make sure you include contact information in your media advisory for the reports to get more information for their pieces and the contact information you would like to be published
  - c. Submit a media advisory two to four days prior to your Best Bagger competition
2. Press Release
  - a. A press release should read like an article, with quotes and facts, to stimulate possible pick-up by small papers and to generate print and broadcast reports at larger outlets
  - b. A press release creates an image and story that journalists can use alone or use as a background when writing a story
  - c. Submit a press release the day after your Best Bagger competition

The National Grocers Association has provided templates to use when contacting your local media. You can find these at the end of the Best Bagger Handbook on pages 18 & 19. If you need help with social media, contact the National Grocers Association for assistance at [bestbagger@nationalgrocers.org](mailto:bestbagger@nationalgrocers.org) for assistance.

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# SECTION 7: MOCK BEST BAGGER EVENT TIMELINE

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A key element in planning a successful, stress-free Best Bagger competition, is allowing enough time for both preparation and execution. What may work for a large State Association may not work for a retailer, so below you will find a sample time schedule that will serve as a guideline for both. Don't forget that one of the main points of this competition is to have fun – so make this competition your own!

## TWO TO THREE MONTHS BEFORE THE COMPETITION

1. Choose a location for your competition
  - a. You will need ample space for all the following:
    - Equipment – tables, products, etc.
    - Contestants
    - Emcee
    - Timers/Re-Setters
    - Scorekeepers
    - Judges
    - Cheerleaders/Spectators
  - b. Example locations:
    - State Fairs
    - Parking Lots
    - Convention Centers
    - Community Theaters
    - Warehouse
2. Announce the competition to your employees via flyers or internal memos
  - a. Include:
    - Rules
    - Judging Criteria
    - Entry Form (for internal competitions)
    - Any incentives you may have as a prize for the winner
3. Turn in the appropriate Best Bagger competition form to Tennessee Grocers & Convenience Store Association's Best Bagger coordinator at [Scholarships@TNGrocer.org](mailto:Scholarships@TNGrocer.org).

# SECTION 7: MOCK BEST BAGGER EVENT TIMELINE

## SIX WEEKS BEFORE THE COMPETITION

1. Encourage your employees who spend at least 40% of their time bagging to enter the competition
  - a. Having trouble getting employees excited? Check out the following ideas to help gather support:
    - Prize for the winner
    - Give your contest a theme
    - Add a “spirit” award
    - Remind your employee that they can compete at Tennessee’s Best Bagger Championship to win \$2,000 plus a paid trip to the NGA National Best Bagger Championship and vie for \$10,000.00 in prize money!
2. Begin recruiting your Best Bagger team
  - a. You will need the following:
    - One Emcee
    - Two Judges
    - One Person as a timer/re-setter per check stand (You may need to wait until a week prior to the competition, so ask for volunteers for this role later since it depends on how many baggers you have competing per heat)
    - Two Scorekeepers (Again, you may need to wait until a week prior to the competition, so ask for volunteers for this role later since it depends on how many baggers you have competing per heat)
3. Publicize your Best Bagger competition to the press and advertise on social media platforms. Need help? Let us know! TGCSA and NGA are happy to assist you with marketing initiatives.

## FOUR WEEKS BEFORE THE COMPETITION

1. Announce your Best Bagger competition to your customers
  - a. NGA is more than happy to assist you in creating promotional items for you to use in your store and/or on social media platforms
2. Invite your local and state representative to come to your Best Bagger competition
3. Double check that you have all that you need to run a successful Best Bagger competition



## ONE WEEK BEFORE THE COMPETITION

1. Send out media advisories and press releases to your local media
2. Send rules and judging instructions to Judges
3. Double check that you have everything you need to run a successful and fun Best Bagger competition

## TWO HOURS BEFORE THE COMPETITION

1. Set up your Best Bagger competition space
  - a. Don’t forget your product labels!
  - b. See page 7 of the Best Bagger handbook for examples of proper set-up
2. Check to make sure that all equipment works properly

## ONE HOUR BEFORE THE COMPETITION

1. Best Bagger team arrives
2. Go over the rules with your Best Bagger Team
3. Do an example heat so that your Best Bagger Team knows what to expect

## THIRTY MINUTES BEFORE THE COMPETITION

1. Baggers arrive
2. Review the rules with your Best Bagger contestants
3. Most importantly....Have fun!

## SECTION 8: GROCERY ORDER

Each contestant will bag identical grocery orders consisting of 30 to 38 commonly purchased items. Feel free to use this list or make up your own. **No advance grocery order will be available for either State or National Best Bagger Championship.**

ITEM	QUANTITY
13 oz. glass jar of jelly/jam	2
16 oz. glass jar of pickles	1
6 oz. box of Crunch'n Munch	1
17.4 oz. box of popcorn	1
7.3 oz. box of Instant Hot Cocoa	1
11.7 oz. box of crackers	1
20 oz. box of cereal	1
6 oz. can of cooking spray	1
15 oz. cans of Chef Boyardee	2
6 oz. can of tomato paste	2
15 oz. cans of soup	2
28 oz. cans of corn/peas	2
14.5 oz. can of Chef Boyardee Spaghetti & Meatballs	1
12 oz. plastic container of mustard	1
7 oz. can Reddi Whip	1

ITEM	QUANTITY
Loaf of bread	1
8 oz. bag of pretzels	1
11.3 oz. can of coffee	1
96 oz. mini 8 pack of soda	1
16 oz. bag of chips	1
Large eggs	1 dozen
16.3 oz. plastic bottle of Wesson Oil	1
6.41 oz. container of Pringles	1
1.62 oz. packet of seasoning	2
6 oz. bag of sunflower seeds	1
Slim Jim Beef Stick	1
Roll of paper towels	1
18 oz. package of cookies	1
Box of Jell-O pudding	2
2.46 oz. container of oatmeal	1



# SECTION 9: FORMS

## MEDIA ADVISORY TEMPLATE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: CONTACT:

[DATE]

[CONTACT INFO]

### MEDIA ADVISORY

**[STATE ASSOCIATION/STORE NAME] to Hold [STATE/AREA]'s Best Bagger Competition**

*Winner will compete for \$2,000 scholarship and trip to National Championship*

**WHAT:** [STATE ASSOCIATION/STORE NAME] will host the [STATE/AREA]'s [XX]th annual Best Bagger Competition for supermarket employees, demonstrating a superior core customer service skill in a friendly competition.

**WHEN:** [DATE] at [TIME]

**WHERE:** [STATE ASSOCIATION/STORE NAME]

[ADDRESS]

**WHO:** Best Bagger competitors representing large regional food retailers as well as small local operators from throughout the state will vie for a chance to face-off against other Best Baggers from across the state and claim the title of the Tennessee's Best Bagger Champion.

**CONTACT:** [NAME], [EMAIL], [PHONE NUMBER]

**DETAILS:** In addition to a year's worth of "bagging rights," [STATE/AREA]'s crowned Best Bagger will go on to compete at the national championship, held in February/ 2026, in Las Vegas, Nevada for a \$10,000 grand prize.

For more information on Tennessee's Best Bagger Competition, visit [www.tgefonline.org/best-bagger-championship.html](http://www.tgefonline.org/best-bagger-championship.html)

# SECTION 9: FORMS

## PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE

[INSERT STATE ASSOCIATION/HOST NAME] Holds [INSERT STATE] Best Bagger Competition

*Winner will compete for \$10,000 Grand Prize at the NGA Best Bagger Championship*

[CITY, STATE] – Competing against [##] other competitors from across the state, [NAME] of [STORE] in [CITY, STATE] took home first place of the [INSERT STATE] Best Bagger Championship.

[NAME] will go on to compete at the National Grocers Association (NGA) Best Bagger Championship, at NGA’s annual convention, The NGA Show, held February 2026, in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Contestants are judged by speed of bagging, proper bag-building technique, weight distribution in the bag, as well as style, attitude and appearance.

In addition to taking home “bagging rights” for the year, the national winner will be awarded with the \$10,000 grand prize. The runner-up bagger receives \$5,000, while third to fifth place contestants each win \$1,000 cash prizes.

The NGA Best Bagger Championship, generously sponsored by PepsiCo, is the culminating event of a yearlong nationwide contest, in which the winning contestant from each participating state is eligible to compete in the annual national Best Bagger Championship.

### **About NGA**

NGA is the national trade association representing the retail and wholesale grocers that comprise the independent sector of the food distribution industry. An independent community grocer is a privately owned or controlled food retail company operating a variety of formats. The independent grocery sector is accountable for more than 1 percent of the nation’s overall economy and is responsible for generating \$250 billion in sales, 1.1 million jobs, and \$36 billion in wages. NGA members include retail and wholesale grocers, state grocers associations, as well as manufacturers and service suppliers. For more information about NGA, visit [www.nationalgrocers.org](http://www.nationalgrocers.org).

# SECTION 9: FORMS

## BEST BAGGER HOST ENTRY FORM



Please complete the form below with details regarding your company Best Bagger competition. If you have any questions, please contact Us at (615) 889-0136 or email [Scholarships@TNGrocer.org](mailto:Scholarships@TNGrocer.org).

### COMPANY SPONSORING CONTESTANT

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contest Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, we plan on holding a Best Bagger Contest this year. Our contest is scheduled for the following date and location.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

No, our company will not host a Best Bagger competition this year.

PLEASE EMAIL THIS FORM BACK TO TENNESSEE GROCERS & CONVENIENCE STORE ASSOCIATION, [SCHOLARSHIPS@TNGROCER.ORG](mailto:Scholarships@TNGrocer.org).

# SECTION 9: FORMS

## 2026 TENNESSEE'S BEST BAGGER CHAMPIONSHIP ENTRY FORM



(To be completed by Main Contest Company Coordinator of the Best Bagger Champion)

### COMPANY SPONSORING CONTESTANT

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contest Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

What prize does your company give the winner? \_\_\_\_\_

### BEST BAGGER CONTESTANT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of years bagging: \_\_\_\_\_

Percentage of time bagging: \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Job title and percentage of time bagging verification: \_\_\_\_\_

Year in high school: \_\_\_\_\_ Year in college: \_\_\_\_\_

Contestant fun fact: \_\_\_\_\_

**Why are you passionate about becoming the Best Bagger, and how do you plan on preparing for the championship?** Information provided may on this form may be used for press releases, website announcements, marketing materials, and social media posts.

**SUBMIT FORM BY May 25, 2026 TO [SCHOLARSHIPS@TNGROCER.ORG](mailto:SCHOLARSHIPS@TNGROCER.ORG).**

# SECTION 9: FORMS

## INDIVIDUAL SCORE SHEET

Contestant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Check Stand # \_\_\_\_\_

Store Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Round: Preliminary/Final 1

Skill	Possible Points	Points Awarded																																							
<p><b>SPEED TIME:</b> _____</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Time</th> <th>Points</th> <th>Time</th> <th>Points</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0:00 - 53:00 seconds</td> <td><b>10</b></td> <td>73:01 - 77:00 seconds</td> <td><b>5</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>53:01 - 57:00 seconds</td> <td><b>9</b></td> <td>77:01 - 81:00 seconds</td> <td><b>4</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>57:01 - 61:00 seconds</td> <td><b>8</b></td> <td>81:01 - 85:00 seconds</td> <td><b>3</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>61:01 - 69:00 seconds</td> <td><b>7</b></td> <td>85:01 - 89:00 seconds</td> <td><b>2</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>69:01 - 73:00 seconds</td> <td><b>6</b></td> <td>89:01 or more seconds</td> <td><b>1</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Time	Points	Time	Points	0:00 - 53:00 seconds	<b>10</b>	73:01 - 77:00 seconds	<b>5</b>	53:01 - 57:00 seconds	<b>9</b>	77:01 - 81:00 seconds	<b>4</b>	57:01 - 61:00 seconds	<b>8</b>	81:01 - 85:00 seconds	<b>3</b>	61:01 - 69:00 seconds	<b>7</b>	85:01 - 89:00 seconds	<b>2</b>	69:01 - 73:00 seconds	<b>6</b>	89:01 or more seconds	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>																
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<p><b>STYLE, ATTITUDE, AND APPEARANCE</b></p> <p>All contestants should present a neat appearance, be polite and convey a customer-oriented attitude. Contestants should be judged in part on their composure and self-confidence.</p>	<b>5</b>																																								
<p><b>PROPER BAG BUILDING TECHNIQUE</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Judge</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>One point for each Yes circled</b></p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Cans and jars on the bottom of the bags (no cans on top of cans, jars on top of cans or other jars)?</td> <td>Y</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Boxes on the sides or walls of bags (cannot be lying flat)?</td> <td>Y</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Placed crushable items, such as bread, eggs, bag of chips on top of the bag?</td> <td>Y</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"Filler" items in spaces between items (e.g., bag of sunflower seeds, seasoning package, Jell-O Box)?</td> <td>Y</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No glass bottles next to each other (filler item separating them)?</td> <td>Y</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bottles and other glass-encased items are in the center of the bag?</td> <td>Y</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>Yes Total</b></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;"><b>One point for each No circled</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Items are damaged (bent, torn, dented)?</td> <td>Y</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bags are disorderly (items were just thrown in the bag)?</td> <td>Y</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Item(s) left on the check stand? (1 point deducted for each item left on check stand) <i>insert # items in blank</i></td> <td>Y</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bag or bags left on the rack(s)?</td> <td>Y</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>No Total</b></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Cans and jars on the bottom of the bags (no cans on top of cans, jars on top of cans or other jars)?	Y	N	Boxes on the sides or walls of bags (cannot be lying flat)?	Y	N	Placed crushable items, such as bread, eggs, bag of chips on top of the bag?	Y	N	"Filler" items in spaces between items (e.g., bag of sunflower seeds, seasoning package, Jell-O Box)?	Y	N	No glass bottles next to each other (filler item separating them)?	Y	N	Bottles and other glass-encased items are in the center of the bag?	Y	N	<b>Yes Total</b>			<b>One point for each No circled</b>			Items are damaged (bent, torn, dented)?	Y	N	Bags are disorderly (items were just thrown in the bag)?	Y	N	Item(s) left on the check stand? (1 point deducted for each item left on check stand) <i>insert # items in blank</i>	Y	N	Bag or bags left on the rack(s)?	Y	N	<b>No Total</b>			<b>10</b>	
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<p><b>DISTRIBUTION OF WEIGHT BETWEEN BAGS</b></p> <p>Weight will be calculated by the scorekeeper.</p> <p>Weigh each bag and record each weight on this form. Take the heaviest bag weight, minus the lightest bag weight and subtract the difference from the total possible points.</p> <p>EXAMPLE</p> <table border="0"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Heaviest bag</td> <td>13.15 lbs.</td> <td>Total possible points</td> <td>5.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lightest bag</td> <td><u>12.05 lbs.</u></td> <td>Weight difference</td> <td><u>-1.10</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Weight difference</td> <td>-1.10</td> <td>Total points to award</td> <td>3.90</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Heaviest bag	13.15 lbs.	Total possible points	5.00	Lightest bag	<u>12.05 lbs.</u>	Weight difference	<u>-1.10</u>	Weight difference	-1.10	Total points to award	3.90	<b>5</b>																												
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<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>30</b>																																								

# SECTION 9: FORMS

## MASTER SCORE SHEET

	Heat	Score
<b>Name:</b> _____ <b>Store:</b> _____	Preliminary	
	Final	
	Tiebreaker	
<b>Name:</b> _____ <b>Store:</b> _____	Preliminary	
	Final	
	Tiebreaker	
<b>Name:</b> _____ <b>Store:</b> _____	Preliminary	
	Final	
	Tiebreaker	
<b>Name:</b> _____ <b>Store:</b> _____	Preliminary	
	Final	
	Tiebreaker	
<b>Name:</b> _____ <b>Store:</b> _____	Preliminary	
	Final	
	Tiebreaker	
<b>Name:</b> _____ <b>Store:</b> _____	Preliminary	
	Final	
	Tiebreaker	
<b>Name:</b> _____ <b>Store:</b> _____	Preliminary	
	Final	
	Tiebreaker	
<b>Name:</b> _____ <b>Store:</b> _____	Preliminary	
	Final	
	Tiebreaker	

