

THE VOICE

OF THE NEBRASKA GROCERY INDUSTRY



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THE INDUSTRY DURING GROCERS
DAY AT THE CAPITOL ON MARCH 31.**

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MILLION**

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MILLION**

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MILLION**

**\$247.0
MILLION**

2020

2021

2022

2023

NET SALES
(Consolidated)

**\$10.6
BILLION**

**\$10.8
BILLION**

**\$12.3
BILLION**

**\$12.4
BILLION**

2020

2021

2022

2023

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WHEN OUR
MEMBERS
*Succeed***

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KEITH MARTIN

828-228-4055 | keith.martin@awginc.com

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UPDATE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

WELCOME TO THE LATEST EDITION OF THE NEBRASKA GROCERY INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION'S QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

In the food industry landscape today, change isn't just constant – it's accelerating. From shifting federal policies and unpredictable state regulations, to variable economic forces and new interpretations of health and nutrition science, navigating the terrain can feel overwhelming. But now more than ever we must remind ourselves and those in our orbit: our food supply chain and those in it are smart, responsive, and resilient.

It's easy to get bogged down, but the Nebraska Grocery Industry Association (NGIA) is here to help you navigate changes at the local, state, and national levels. Whether it's understanding SNAP changes, managing the impact of tariffs, or preparing for new tax implications, we're working with our members and partners to lead on the issues. After all, one of the greatest strengths of the independent grocery industry is the ability of our owners and suppliers to communicate efficiently and react quickly.

With help from our industry partners, including the University of Nebraska Cooperative Development Center and the Center for Rural Affairs, NGIA will once again be hosting our Grocery Industry Summit on Aug. 21 in Kearney. Every year we bring new faces and ideas together to give our members new contacts and resources to upgrade technology, be thoughtful

about changing policies, and remain sustainable. In fact, the Rural Grocery Resources page (nebgrocery.com/rural-grocery-resources) of our website stemmed from exactly that – making it easier for our members to identify existing resources. This year will be no different.

Additionally, this summer, NGIA staff will once again hit the road, visiting stores and meeting with members in their communities. We serve lunch, and bring information about member services, educational opportunities, policy changes, networking events, and more.

In March, we had an opportunity to gather as industry leaders to lobby and dine with lawmakers, restating the importance of smoothing out looming labor mandates including paid family leave and minimum wage increases. We also had an opportunity to honor those who have gone above and beyond this year. Our annual Grocers Day at the Capitol, Legislative Dinner, and silent auction brings together a number of voices and is a reminder of the generosity and commitment from NGIA partners to good public policy and the next generation. You can see more starting on **Page 19**.

And more recently, NGIA, along with industry leaders from the Nebraska Beverage Association and Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association, penned a letter to Gov. Pillen about the proposed sugar-related SNAP restrictions, outlining

concerns from a variety of perspectives. Our groups copied members of our federal delegation, asking that our lawmakers focus first on repairing broken nutrition incentives in the Farm Bill. You can view a copy of the letter at bit.ly/3S2h20M.

It was only a few years ago, at the height of COVID, that grocery store owners and employees were heroes. Now, it seems, some have chosen to lay state and federal policy failures at the feet of retailers. Our work ahead requires more dialogue between local communities, policymakers, regulators, and industry leaders. It demands data sharing, storytelling, and a unified voice to advocate for a sustainable and resilient food supply that works top to bottom.

We welcome your feedback about NGIA's work to meet our mission. We strive to keep you well-informed and give you the tools you need to continue doing what you do best. If we can do anything more to be helpful, please reach out to me at afellers@nebgrocery.com or **308-631-2165**.

Angley Fellers

Executive Director,
Nebraska Grocery Industry Association



YOU'RE INVITED! "SAND BAGGERS" GOLF OUTING & NGIA MEMBERSHIP MEETING

TUESDAY, JUNE 24 AT IRON HORSE GOLF CLUB, ASHLAND, NE



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SCHEDULE



- 10 a.m. Shotgun Start
- Boxed Lunch on the Course
- 3:30 p.m. Meal at Clubhouse
- 3:45 p.m. Membership Meeting
- 4 p.m. Pin Prizes and Raffle Prizes Awarded

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NGIA 2025 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

As the premier trade association representing the food industry in Nebraska, the Nebraska Grocery Industry Association (NGIA) strives to be a valuable resource to help members become more organized, efficient, and profitable. One key benefit we deliver members is our legislative work.

NGIA monitors legislation introduced at the state and federal levels and maintains open lines of communication with elected officials in Lincoln and in Washington, D.C. We actively support reform which could have a positive effect on our industry, and lobby against harmful changes. NGIA members have a number of opportunities to connect with elected leaders and are kept up to date through proactive reports.

NEBRASKA STATE LEGISLATURE UPDATE*

Paid Sick Leave and Minimum Wage

- **Situation:** On the statewide ballots in 2022, Nebraskans saw an increase to a \$15 minimum wage, with an automatic increase starting in 2027. In 2024, voters pass mandatory paid family leave, including requirements for businesses of all sizes.
- **NGIA position and efforts:** NGIA priorities for this session include passage of **LB 415**, **LB 698**, and **LB 258** to provide some amount of certainty to employers. Collectively, these bills would cap the minimum wage increase at 1.5%; establish a youth wage for 14-15-year-olds and a 90-day training wage for 16-19-year-olds; exempt from the paid leave mandate owner/operators, independent contractors, businesses with 10 or fewer employees, seasonal workers, and 14,15-year-olds; clarify paid sick leave does not have to be paid out upon termination; and eliminate the provision which would allow workers to sue employers for possible violations for up to four years after employment ends. See our action alert at actnow.io/UYbodwb.

Sales Tax Increases

- **Situation:** Lawmakers are once again considering expanding the sales tax base to include a number of services and certain groceries. **LB 170**, as drafted, would tax sugar-sweetened snacks and beverages. **LB 169**, to tax services like dry cleaning and travel, was amended to include an increase in the cigarette tax, along with a distinction in both the definition and tax of “heat” vs. “burn” cigarettes. **LB 650**, moving through the legislature now, would roll back the increased sales tax allowance secured by the industry several years ago, to help compensate retailers for credit card fees paid and dollars lost on the sales tax portion of a transaction.
- **NGIA position and efforts:** NGIA has been actively working to oppose such bills given they would inevitably lead to significant price increases for consumers and impact the bottom lines of our retailers, who already operate on incredibly thin margins. Arbitrary changes could not only raise operational costs but also drive customers across state lines.

Pharmacy

- **LB 118**, to increase the pharmacist to technician ratio to 4:1, up from 3:1, has been signed into law and will take effect Oct. 1, 2025.

**This is a summary of where each of these issues stands at time of print. In odd years, the Nebraska legislature runs 90 days, into early June. A final summary of state legislative actions and changes will be included in the summer edition of The Voice.*

FEDERAL POLICY UPDATE

Refrigerants

- **Situation:** At the end of the Biden administration, the EPA issued the HFC Management Rule. This burdensome rule requires any business using 15 pounds of HFC refrigerant or more to take steps to monitor their equipment and report to the EPA, and prevents adding refrigerant unless reclaimed, even though that would, in most cases, require the equipment itself be replaced.
- **NGIA position and efforts:** NGIA and our federal partners are working to pass bills in both the U.S. House and Senate to overturn this significant and burdensome EPA regulation.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

- **Situation:** The Farm Bill, which was last reauthorized in 2018, contains a number of food assistance programs, including SNAP (formerly food stamps). Efforts to change eligibility and restrict certain SNAP purchases are under consideration. Nebraska was one of the handful of states to announce intent to restrict SNAP purchases at the state level. These changes could affect the number of SNAP retailers, consumer purchasing power, sugar growers, and the variety of products offered in stores.
- **NGIA position and efforts:** NGIA and partners recently sent a letter to Nebraska Gov. Jim Pillen and copied our federal delegation, outlining the shortsightedness of SNAP purchasing restrictions and encouraging lawmakers to instead focus on streamlining nutrition incentives. See a copy of that letter at bit.ly/3S2h20M.

CONTINUED LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS

NGIA continues to monitor and advocate on the following issues:

- Monitor implementation of data privacy rules to ensure industry compliance and fight undue liability.
- Seek funding for independent grocers and food security initiatives.
- Support federal passage of the Credit Card Competition Act to reduce swipe fees.
- Fight unlawful trade practices, primarily from dollar stores.
- Work with our federal delegation on transparency in the WIC program, specifically infant formula.
- Tackle ongoing workforce and supply chain challenges.

2025 NEBRASKA LEGISLATURE ROSTER



1
Bob
Hallstrom
Syracuse
402-471-2733



2
Robert
Clements
Elmwood
402-471-2613



3
Victor
Rountree
Bellevue
402-471-2627



4
R. Brad von
Gillern
Elkhorn
402-471-2621



5
Margo Juarez
Omaha
402-471-2710



6
Machaela
Cavanaugh
Omaha
402-471-2714



7
Dunixi Guereca
Omaha
402-471-2721



8
Megan Hunt
Omaha
402-471-2722



9
John Cavanaugh
Omaha
402-471-2723



10
Wendy DeBoer
Bennington
402-471-2718



11
Terrell
McKinney
Omaha
402-471-2612



12
Merv Riepe
Ralston
402-471-2623



13
Ashlei Spivey
Omaha
402-471-2727



14
John Arch
La Vista
402-471-2730



15
Dave
Wordekemper
Fremont
402-471-2625



16
Ben Hansen
Blair
402-471-2728



17
Glen Meyer
Pender
402-471-2716



18
Christy
Armendariz
Omaha
402-471-2618



19
Robert Dover
Norfolk
402-471-2929



20
John
Fredrickson
Omaha
402-471-2622



21
Beau Ballard
Lincoln
402-471-2673



22
Mike Moser
Columbus
402-471-2715



23
Jared Storm
David City
402-471-2719



24
Jana Hughes
Seward
402-471-2756



25
Carolyn Bosn
Lincoln
402-471-2731



26
George Dungan
Lincoln
402-471-2610



27
Jason Prokop
Lincoln
402-471-2632



28
Jane Raybould
Lincoln
402-471-2633



29
Eliot Bostar
Lincoln
402-471-2734



30
Myron Dorn
Adams
402-471-2620



31
Kathleen Kauth
Omaha
402-471-2327



32
Tom Brandt
Plymouth
402-471-2711



33
Dan Lonowski
Hastings
402-471-2712



34
Loren Lippincott
Central City
402-471-2630



35
Dan Quick
Grand Island
402-471-2617



36
Rick Holdcroft
Bellevue
402-471-2642

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16.

2025 NEBRASKA LEGISLATURE ROSTER (CONT.)



37
Stan Clouse
Kearney
402-471-2726



38
Dave Murman
Glenvil
402-471-2732



39
Tony Sorrentino
Elkhorn
402-471-2885



40
Barry DeKay
Niobrara
402-471-2801



41
Dan McKeon
Amherst
402-471-2631



42
Mike Jacobson
North Platte
402-471-2729



43
Tanya Storey
Whitman
402-471-2628



44
Teresa Ibach
Sumner
402-471-2805



45
Rita Sanders
Bellevue
402-471-2615



46
Danielle Conrad
Lincoln
402-471-2720



47
Paul Strommen
Sidney
402-471-2616



48
Brian Hardin
Gering
402-471-2802



49
Bob Andersen
La Vista
402-471-2725



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GET INVOLVED! Join NGIA in advocating for the industry by engaging with your legislators on issues that impact your business and community.

Contact NGIA Executive Director Ansley Fellers with any questions or feedback at afellers@nebgrocers.com or 308-631-2165. 📞



Thank you to the members who joined us to advocate for the industry. Pictured from left: Steve Cahoy, Cahoy's General Store; Dan Cahoy, Cahoy's General Store; Alex Byrnes, Hy-Vee, Inc.; Angie Fitzgerald, Fareway Stores, Inc.; Shannon McCord, Ideal Market, Superior; Kathy Gunlock, Core-Mark; Kyle May, Reynolds American; Michael Peterson, Fresh Seasons Market, Gothenburg; and Doug Beech, Casey's General Stores.

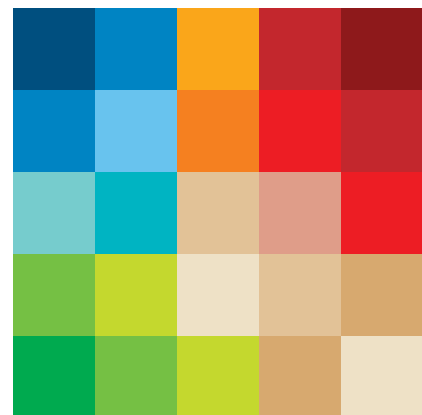
GROCERS DAY AT THE CAPITOL

On March 31, Nebraska Grocery Industry Association (NGIA) members gathered at the state capitol in Lincoln to discuss the state of policy and politics, speak to state senators, and have lunch with the Speaker of the Legislature. They conveyed a message about the cost of new wage and labor mandates as well as the implications of tax increases.

Following our day at the capitol, members walked to the Scottish Rite Ballroom for a refreshment prior to the NGIA Legislative Dinner with awards and a silent auction. ➡

NGIA members wave at state senators after being recognized by the Legislature. ➡





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NGIA LEGISLATIVE DINNER & AWARDS

We had an incredible evening at the Nebraska Grocery Industry Association (NGIA) Legislative Dinner on March 31! It was an opportunity to gather and celebrate our collective impact and honor the changemakers in our industry.

The evening included our annual awards recognition and an inspiring keynote from Maggi Thorne, a motivational speaker and American Ninja Warrior competitor, as well as a successful silent auction fundraiser to benefit the NGIA scholarship program.

We appreciate our board members, sponsors, grocers, and supporters who made this event possible. Your continued dedication strengthens our industry and our communities! 📌



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GROCERY INDUSTRY SUMMIT

Thursday, August 21

📍 Younes Conference Center, Kearney, NE

Join the Nebraska Grocery Industry Association along with the Nebraska Cooperative Development Center, and Center for Rural Affairs for our third-annual Grocery Industry Summit. The event is designed to be an opportunity for grocers, wholesalers, vendors, policymakers, and others to learn about, discuss, and seek to address the many challenges facing the industry today.

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Q: WHAT DO YOU FIND MOST VALUABLE ABOUT BEING A PART OF THE NGIA?

A: As proud members of the Nebraska Grocery Industry Association, we're excited to collaborate with like-minded businesses who are equally invested in growing the local economy and supporting their communities.

Q: WHAT SETS YOUR PRODUCT APART?

A: J&J delivers unparalleled quality to our partners, including the latest regulated skill games, to top-performing titles, detailed reporting, and customized marketing strategies – all backed by 24/7 customer support. What sets us apart is our team's unmatched industry knowledge and commitment to innovation, helping licensed locations drive revenue while staying compliant in regulated markets.

Q: WHO SHOULD GROCERS CONTACT IF THEY'RE INTERESTED IN USING OR SELLING YOUR PRODUCT/SERVICES?

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NGIA MEMBER NEWS

Gary's Grocery Stores Sold to New Owners: Fresh Foods

APRIL 1, 2025

The Gary's grocery store chain now has new owners, Ben and Kerri Dishman of Gering, Neb., who will rename the stores, Fresh Foods. It is a homecoming of sorts for them. Ben is a 1993 graduate of North Platte High. He worked at the Westfield grocery store while in high school and at Sixth Street, USave and SunMart through



the years. Kerri grew up in Farnam and worked at a gas station and convenience store in high school. Later, she gained retail experience by working at Hirschfeld's in North Platte from 1998-2003.



Read more at northplattebulletin.com.



Jane Raybould Announces Retirement

MARCH 26, 2025

Jane Raybould, Vice President of B&R Stores, Inc., has announced her retirement after 22 years

of dedicated service to the company. She officially retired at the end of March. "It is with a great deal of excitement that I look forward to this next chapter of spending more time with family, especially my granddaughters, and continuing my work in the legislature," she shared. "I grew up in the grocery business by starting in the fireworks tent at 8 years old, then in the bakery department frying donuts, and throughout high school and college as a cashier and administrative support. Grocery people are the best people."



Read more at brstores.com/newsroom.

New Super Saver in Columbus Opened March 15

MARCH 11, 2025

Super Saver announced the opening of its new Columbus store on Saturday, March 15. The new location, situated directly behind the current building at 3318 23rd St., offers expanded space, additional products, and a more convenient shopping experience for customers. The new store boasts 13,000 square feet of additional space, enabling expanded departments and an increased selection of 5,000 more items throughout the store. Shoppers will enjoy larger bakery, produce, and deli departments, enhancing their grocery experience with greater variety and convenience.



Read more at brstores.com/newsroom.



Fareway Bagger Competes in National Competition

FEBRUARY 24, 2025

Austin Kollasch represented Fareway Stores Omaha and the state of Nebraska during the National Best Bagger Competition on Feb. 24 in Las Vegas. Hosted by the National Grocers Association, elite baggers from across the country vie for the championship title and a \$10,000 cash prize during the evening event. Kollasch qualified during the statewide Nebraska Best Bagger Competition held by the Nebraska Grocery Industry Association last fall.

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NGIA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Nebraska Grocery Industry Association's Scholarship Program recognizes and aids deserving students who are related to the food industry. High school seniors, undergraduate college students, and non-traditional students are invited to apply for the \$1,500 scholarship opportunity.



Find more details and application forms at nebgrocery.com/membership/member-programs/scholarship-program/.



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