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# News Release

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**N.G.A. CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD REAFFIRMS N.G.A.'S COMMITMENT  
COMMUNITY-FOCUSED RETAILERS AND WHOLESALERS**

At the Opening General session during the N.G.A. Annual Convention in Las Vegas, NV, N.G.A. Chairman of the Board Gary Phillips, president & CEO, Associated Wholesale Grocers of Kansas City, MO delivered a speech that outlined N.G.A.'s passionate commitment to the survival and the prosperity of the independent, community-based grocery system.

For over two decades, serving the interests of independent, community-focused retailers and wholesaler has been the singular mission of the National Grocers Association. Over this past year, N.G.A. has launched numerous successful governmental initiatives, educational and research projects, and operational services. For example, in 2004 N.G.A. has published four new research surveys, and in the area of Education and Research N.G.A. has provided over nine Share Groups and Conferences.

“When you look at all the outstanding educational and social programs along with vital government relations support N.G.A. offers, there is no question why independent, community-based retailers and wholesalers have chosen to so strongly back their association,” said Phillips. Phillips continued, “N.G.A. is bullish about the future of the independent community-focused retailer. We see it filled with growth opportunities, and we are confident that the best years are ahead.”

Additionally, the N.G.A. Board of Directors last year ratified a new Comprehensive Strategic Plan that reaffirms N.G.A.'s exclusive and historic commitment to independent community-focused retailers and wholesalers. Under the new Strategic Plan, N.G.A. will create a series of executive councils to ensure all N.G.A. constituencies a greater sense of ownership and participation.

In short, the new N.G.A. Strategic Plan reaffirmed that the definition of an independent operator is more about ownership and operating philosophy than number of stores or types of formats. It stressed the fact that independents are the true “entrepreneurs” of the grocery/food industry and are dedicated to their customers, associates, and suppliers, and communities.

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N.G.A. is the national trade association representing the retail and wholesale grocers that comprise the independent sector of the food distribution industry. An independent retailer is a privately owned or controlled food retail company operating a variety of formats. Most

independent operators are serviced by wholesale distributors, while others may be partially or fully self-distributing. Some are publicly traded but with controlling shares held by the family and others are employee owned. Independents are the true “entrepreneurs” of the grocery industry and dedicated to their customers, associates, and communities. N.G.A. members include retail and wholesale grocers, state grocers associations, as well as manufacturers and service suppliers. For more information about N.G.A. and the independent sector of the industry, see the N.G.A. website: [www.NationalGrocers.org](http://www.NationalGrocers.org).