



Position Fact Sheet

## California Grocers Association (CGA)

Chief Executive Officer

Sacramento, CA

May 29, 2026



Celebrating over 47 years of excellence

This Position Fact Sheet is intended to provide information about California Grocers Association (CGA) and the position of Chief Executive Officer. It is designed to assist qualified individuals in assessing their interest.



## THE ORGANIZATION

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### **California Grocers Association (CGA)**

*Advancing California's grocery industry and the communities it serves.*

The California Grocers Association (CGA) is seeking a dynamic, politically sophisticated, and highly strategic President & Chief Executive Officer to lead one of California's most established and influential business associations into its next chapter of leadership and impact, following the planned retirement of its long-time, highly respected President & CEO, Mr. Ron Fong.

This leadership transition comes at a consequential time for both the Association and the grocery industry it represents. California grocery retailers are navigating an increasingly complex and rapidly evolving operating environment, shaped by labor volatility, organized retail crime, escalating regulatory demands, sustainability expectations, shifting consumer behaviors, public health considerations, technology disruption, supply chain complexity, and intensifying political scrutiny.

At the same time, the grocery industry's importance has never been more visible. Grocery retailers serve not simply as commercial enterprises, but as essential infrastructure within California's communities, supporting food access, employment, health, economic stability, and local resilience. The next CEO will inherit a respected and high-functioning organization, but also an extraordinary opportunity to shape how the industry adapts, leads, and influences policy in the years ahead.

Founded in 1898, CGA has served for more than a century as the leading advocate and unifying voice for California's grocery industry. Today, the Association represents more than 300 grocery retailers operating over 6,000 stores statewide, ranging from independent, family-owned grocers and regional chains to some of the nation's largest food retailers, along with approximately 150 supplier companies supporting the grocery ecosystem. The Association has a \$5 million budget and an empowered staff of thirteen, all supporting a culture of servant leadership.

Over the past two decades, the organization has grown and now includes five companies in its portfolio: (1) CGA, the main focus, (2) the CGA Educational Foundation, (3) Aisle 3 LLC, formed to purchase a historic corner of downtown Sacramento, (4) Retail Marketing Solutions (RMS), a "for profit" company, and (5)





Circular CRV Association, CGA's recycling company. Each company has its own professional management, and the CGA CEO sits on each board.

Beyond advocacy, CGA delivers substantial member value through executive networking, educational programming, conferences, industry convenings, workforce initiatives, and the California Grocers Association Educational Foundation, which supports scholarships, leadership development, and career pathways into the grocery industry.

Headquartered in Sacramento in a downtown building it owns, CGA maintains a highly visible presence at the State Capitol and throughout California's business and policy communities. Governed by an engaged fifty-two-member Board of Directors comprised of respected grocery industry leaders, the organization operates in a highly relational, politically active, member-driven environment where credibility, responsiveness, and strategic influence matter deeply.

## **THE POSITION**

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Reporting directly to the Board of Directors, the President & Chief Executive Officer serves as the chief executive leader, strategic architect, enterprise steward, and principal public voice of CGA.

In furtherance of the organization's prioritized key initiatives, the new CEO shall:

### **Expand Government Relations Impact**

- Further elevate CGA's position as the preeminent and most influential voice for California's grocery industry among policymakers, regulators, coalition partners, members, and business leaders
- Expand CGA's advocacy impact through an increasingly proactive, politically sophisticated, and highly integrated government relations, political engagement, and public affairs strategy
- Anticipate, shape, and influence legislative and regulatory developments before they materially affect members, rather than reacting to them
- Deepen strategic relationships with key policymakers, regulatory leaders, statewide business coalitions, and influential external stakeholders
- Deliver measurable advocacy outcomes that strengthen member competitiveness, reduce business risk, and reinforce CGA's reputation for results

### **Accelerate Membership Growth and Member Value**





- Sharpen and expand CGA's already compelling value proposition to drive accelerated membership growth, deeper engagement, and stronger retention
- Increase penetration among eligible grocery retailers while strategically expanding into adjacent and complementary sectors that strengthen the Association's long-term influence and relevance
- Modernize and elevate member engagement, communications, service delivery, and relationship management to reflect evolving member expectations
- Further position CGA as an indispensable strategic partner to member executives navigating increasingly complex business, labor, regulatory, and competitive challenges

### **Elevate the Brand and Strategic Influence**

- Further establish CGA as California's definitive grocery industry authority and the most respected voice on grocery retail policy, business, and consumer-facing issues
- Expand the Association's strategic visibility across California's business, political, media, and public policy ecosystems
- Build a more assertive external communications and thought leadership platform that proactively shapes industry narratives rather than responds to them
- Increase executive visibility for the Association and strengthen CGA's role as a sought-after convener, trusted resource, and influential business voice
- Ensure the CGA brand reflects the sophistication, effectiveness, and strategic importance of the organization it represents

### **EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FIRST YEAR**

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Major expectations in furtherance of the organization's prioritized key initiatives:

#### **Within the first 30 days the new President & CEO will:**

- Personally meet with Board leadership, key members, staff, strategic stakeholders, the contract GR team, and the new administration to begin establishing relationships and communication needs
- Gain a working understanding of CGA's governance structure, advocacy operations, membership composition, financial model, strategic priorities, and organizational culture



- Assess immediate advocacy priorities, external pressures, and member concerns. Share findings with the Board
- Establish an engaged, energized and visible leadership presence internally and externally

#### **Within the first 90 days:**

- Begin developing trusted working relationships with the new administration, key policymakers, regulators, member CEOs, coalition partners, and industry stakeholders
- Gain fluency in the Association's operating model, financial structure, membership revenue, strategic conference, and political infrastructure
- Evaluate CGA's advocacy model, membership engagement approach, communications effectiveness, and organizational capabilities, to include immediate opportunities and their related cost. Share findings with the Board, and begin to develop a plan

#### **By the six-month marker:**

- Will be executing enhanced strategies to aggressively strengthen advocacy impact, accelerate membership growth, satisfaction and retention, and organizational visibility
- Be viewed as a visible, credible, trusted, and highly effective leader by members, Board leadership, staff, and external stakeholders

#### **By the end of the first year:**

- Successfully transition into the role while accelerating organizational momentum and member confidence
- Deliver measurable, significant progress in government relations effectiveness, membership engagement/growth, and brand elevation
- Strengthen CGA's influence and visibility as the voice of California's grocery industry
- Build stronger, impactful relationships with policymakers, regulators, members, and key stakeholders
- Position the Association for sustained growth, relevance, and long-term impact





## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (in priority order)**

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- Fifteen plus years of progressively responsible executive leadership experience in a trade association, advocacy organization, relevant private sector enterprise (grocery or complementary), or similarly complex stakeholder-driven environment
- Demonstrated success in California government relations, advocacy, public affairs, regulatory strategy, or public policy leadership
- Experience working effectively with Boards of Directors (including multiple boards), executive committees, and volunteer leadership
- Strong business acumen and the ability to connect public policy outcomes to operational realities and the bottom line
- Experience leading organizational growth, strategic positioning, and external visibility initiatives
- Financial and staff leadership experience, including budget oversight and revenue stewardship, and staff development

## **COMPETENCIES (in priority order)**

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- Strategic and politically sophisticated leadership, committed to results
- High emotional intelligence and authentic servant leadership orientation
- Exceptional relationship-building capability and executive presence
- Commercially minded with strong business judgment
- Results-oriented leadership style with powerful execution discipline and accountability
- Ability to navigate ambiguity, urgency, and competing stakeholder interests
- Adaptable, pragmatic, and forward-looking

## **EDUCATION AND CREDENTIALS (in priority order)**

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- Undergraduate degree
- Advanced degree preferred (MBA, JD, MPA, or related discipline)
- Ongoing executive leadership development preferred



## **ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE & LEADERSHIP CONTEXT (in priority order)**

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- A high-visibility, relationship-driven, leadership role requiring credibility, responsiveness, and strategic influence
- A collaborative governance culture with engaged Board leadership and active member participation
- A fast-paced, externally focused environment requiring political sophistication, urgency, and results
- A service-oriented organization committed to delivering measurable member value, exceptional internal and external customer service, and advocacy results
- An organization seeking thoughtful modernization, stronger visibility and impact, and continued strategic growth

## **ADDITIONAL ROLE PARAMETERS**

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- Sacramento region based or willing to relocate to the region
- First year significant in-state travel is expected to support member engagement, advocacy, and stakeholder relationship-building, with annual travel thereafter estimated at 20%

## **THE COMMUNITY**

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This position is located in Sacramento, the capital of California and the county seat of Sacramento County. Sacramento is located at the confluence of the Sacramento and American Rivers and is connected to the San Francisco Bay by a channel through the Sacramento River Delta. The Mediterranean climate is characterized by damp, mild winters and hot, dry summers.

The city of Sacramento is the cultural and economic center of the Sacramento metropolitan area; with nearly 2.5 million people, it's the fifth largest in California and the 28th largest in the United States. Local universities include California State University, University of the Pacific's McGeorge School of Law, and the University of California in nearby Davis. The UC Davis Medical Center, a world-renowned research hospital, is one of more than a dozen hospitals in the Sacramento region. University of the Pacific is opening new schools to train dentists and physician assistants, as well as nursing and pharmacy students. And





the private California Northstate University Medical Center is planning to open a 350-bed teaching hospital north of downtown in 2029.

Sacramento has been recognized as a great place to live, earning top rankings from various publications. In 2023, Forbes named Sacramento the best place to live in California. Money Magazine included Sacramento in its list of the 50 best places to live in the United States. Forbes highlighted Sacramento's low unemployment rate, family-friendly environment, and access to outdoor activities and cultural attractions. Money Magazine emphasized Sacramento's vibrant cultural scene, including the Farm-to-Fork Festival, the Crocker Art Museum, and Broadway Sacramento.

As part of the agriculturally rich Central Valley, Sacramento is considered at the forefront of the Farm-to-Fork food movement and is home to more than 40 local farmers' markets. Sacramento is also home to a growing technology startup community, whose innovative nature is being quickly embraced by businesses and nonprofits alike.

The city hosts the NBA Sacramento Kings, the Sacramento River Cats (San Francisco's AAA baseball team), the Sacramento Republic FC (a USL Professional soccer team), and, for the next 2-3 years, the Major League Baseball Athletics. Downtown, the Golden 1 Center, a basketball and entertainment arena, is considered the most technologically advanced stadium in the NBA, and the Sacramento Republic FC has broken ground on a new soccer stadium, expected to open in 2027.

The Crocker Art Museum was the first public art museum founded in the Western United States and is now one of the leading art museums in California. The metropolitan area boasts more than 200 parks and four public golf courses. Sacramento has long been known as the "City of Trees," owing to its abundant urban forest. The city has more trees per capita than any other city in the world. To enjoy the 250 days of sunshine each year, one can bike or walk along the scenic American River Parkway, kayak or paddleboard at Lake Natoma, or stroll along the Sacramento River.

San Francisco, Lake Tahoe, and more than a dozen ski resorts are less than a two-hour drive from Sacramento and the world-renowned Napa Valley is less than an hour away. Sacramento International Airport handles non-stop flights to and from roughly 40 North American destinations including Hawaii, Mexico, and Canada.



For executives engaged in public policy, advocacy, and statewide leadership, Sacramento offers a uniquely strategic professional setting.

## **COMPENSATION AND INTERVIEW PROCESS**

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The compensation package is competitive and will be commensurate with experience. It includes a base salary of \$475,000 plus up to a 20% bonus, along with a comprehensive benefits package.

Selected candidates will be invited to interview with the Search Committee in Sacramento on Monday, August 3, 2026, with second interviews for finalists the following morning.

## **PROCEDURE FOR CANDIDACY**

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For confidential consideration before COB on Monday, June 29, 2026, please submit a chronological resume to:

[CGA-CEO@wilcoxcareer.com](mailto:CGA-CEO@wilcoxcareer.com)

## **WILCOX MILLER & NELSON CONTACT**

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