

Customers remain happy, but family infighting keeps Market Basket in flux

By Terry Date | Staff Writer Dec 27, 2025



A sign with a photograph of ousted Market Basket CEO Arthur T. Demoulas is on display at the Market Basket store at Gloucester Crossing in August 2014. DeMoulas regained his position but was suspended this May and fired in September. He and family members are fighting in court over leadership of grocery chain. .

The traffic-packed North Andover Mall lot stood still at mid-afternoon the Monday before Christmas.

Business in the new 93,000-square-foot Market Basket at the mall's center teemed with customers

and employees.

Their chatter merged with the store's sleigh bell, holly jolly and home for Christmas music.

A day later, on Tuesday afternoon, 22 checkout lines hummed. They were bolstered by two mobile counters, all worked by cashiers — rivers of bread, milk and eggs, bustling with swiping hands and the rustle of brown bags.

As business boomed at one of the Market Basket flagships, and at the 90-store regional food empire with \$8 billion in annual sales and more than 30,000 employees, questions remain heading into 2026:

Will Arthur T. Demoulas, aka “Artie T,” regain his job as company CEO, after he was suspended in May and fired in September?

Will the Basket, apple of many a local food shopper's eye, continue to operate under the “More for Your Dollar” banner — and offer employees upward mobility, bonuses and profit sharing?

The first question's answer is expected early in 2026 from Vice Chancellor J. Travis Laster, who presided over a three-day Delaware Chancery Court trial ending Dec. 18. The governance case was in the state where Market Basket is incorporated.

The second question's answer is a longer wait.

The seven-month Market Basket food fight between its board of directors — Jay Hachigian, Steven Collins and Michael Keyes — and Arthur Demoulas was a major story in the Merrimack Valley.

It gathered additional attention in North Andover and Lawrence, where a new and expanded store along Route 114 opened in late August to draped bunting and deals after more than a year of construction.

The corporate fight and the new construction were both very public and drew customers and academics's attention.

The Market Basket infighting, which had simmered behind the scenes, broke into the open May 28 when the board accused Arthur Demoulas of planning a work stoppage and failing to share company budget and capital purchase information with them, as well as an attempt to steer leadership succession to two of his children.

Demoulas and supporters called his suspension, and his later firing, a coup designed to funnel more company profits to his sisters, Frances, Glorianne and Caren.

Arthur Demnoulas is a 28% minority owner in Market Basket, and his sisters, combined, hold the 60% majority share.

The remaining 12% of the company is held in trust for future generations.

Artie T and supporters, including fired executives Tom Gordon and Joe Schmidt, said changes in leadership do not bode well for the grocery chain's customers and employees.

Fireworks continued through the summer, fall and into winter with firings, board membership moves and court cases.

They included a restraining order that prohibited fired longtime executives Gordon and Schmidt from visiting Market Basket stores or the company headquarters in Tewksbury.

Bentley University marketing professor Ian Cross says there has been no winner in the court of public opinion over the Market Basket saga.

“It has been negative for both — the motives of greed by DSM (DeMoulas Super Markets) and a perceived arrogance by Artie to run the business as he likes without consulting the board.”

Cross says people, ultimately, want Market Basket's low prices and good, friendly, local service to continue.

“The bottom line is that most people in Massachusetts, and particularly the Merrimack Valley, are far more worried about rising prices, stagnant wages, job insecurity and keeping their families together and safe this holiday season,” Cross says.

“The outcome of DSM Holdco et al vs. Arthur T. Demoulas is not top of their concerns this year.”

UMass Lowell Business Policy and Strategy professor Scott Latham has said from the outset that Artie T, as a minority shareholder, lacks leverage, and, barring a Delaware ruling that finds the board acted without cause or in negligence, he will not prevail.

“Historically,” Latham said, “Delaware offers preferential treatment to majority shareholders.”

Furthermore, Latham expects Market Basket will be sold to a larger chain.

“Large supermarket chains can't merge due to trade concerns (see aborted Kroger/Albertsons merger), so now they buy regionals, like Market Basket,” Latham said. “Kroger or Albertsons will buy them. Or long shot they merge with Wegmans.”

Demoulas sisters Glorianne and Caren, who testified by video at the Delaware trial, said they do not intend to sell the company, according to a spokesperson for the Market Basket board.

If that comes to pass, that Market Basket remains Demoulas-family owned, a bargain and positive experience for shoppers, they will be happy.

Customers interviewed throughout 2025 said the grocery chain's lower prices and culture, including opportunities for working people, are important to them.

In a September interview at the North Andover Mall, after the board had fired Arthur Demoulas, customer David Whitney said he had been paying attention to Market Basket employees' responses to the Demoulas family infighting.

Whitney's son worked for Market Basket in 2014 when employees went on strike and customers boycotted the grocery chain.

"They all had very positive things to say about him and how he managed the company, treated the employees," Whitney said of Artie T.

This time employees continued working for the company despite the family feud, Whitney noted.

Will Artie T.'s firing cause Whitney to shop elsewhere?

"Probably not," Whitney said.

Business remains strong at Market Basket, but customers and those who study food shopping patterns will be watching, checking receipts and gauging the service.