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# **FAVORITE FOOD-ON-A-STICK DECIDED WITH A 53% MAJORITY OF SUPPORT**



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

September 3, 2004 – St. Paul, Minnesota  
Minnesotans decide their favorite food-on-a-stick by submitting ballots at the Green Party Fair booth, using Instant Runoff Voting (IRV).

Though “favorite food-on-a-stick” polls have taken place in the past, winners were likely determined using the plurality system common to mayoral, gubernatorial and presidential elections in American politics. However, under that system any food like pickle-on-a-stick could win with less than a majority of support.

“Imagine something as important to Minnesota as its favorite food-on-a-stick being determined by less than 50% of the vote count,” said Green Party volunteer Ken Pentel. “If a better system exists to more accurately reflect the will of the voters, why not use it?”

The system of Instant Runoff Voting is currently used throughout the world in non-food-related elections such as Ireland’s president, London’s mayor, and this fall, San Francisco’s mayor.

Instant Runoff Voting is as easy as 1-2-3. Voters rank their choices in descending order, with their favorite candidate as number one. When the ballots are counted, if any candidate has received over 50% of first choice votes, that candidate is the winner. If no one reaches 50%, the candidate with the least support is eliminated, and for those that voted for the eliminated candidate as their highest preference, their next candidate preference is counted in the future tabulations. This continues instantaneously until one candidate has a majority of voter support.

Based on the ballots received through Friday morning, no food-on-a stick reached a 50% majority on the first count. The lowest vote holders were eliminated through four instantaneous runoffs until Pronto Pup emerged on the fifth ballot tally with 53% of the vote total, and a clear majority of support!

The secret yet verifiable ballots were collected at the Green Party of Minnesota’s State Fair booth (second floor of the grandstand) and will continue to be accepted through Monday in an effort to illustrate how IRV more accurately reflects voter preference and ensures a majority of support for election winners.

“This worked very well in accurately determining the choice of voters for the best food-on-a-stick,” commented Pentel. “Now, if we could just identify another use for an improved voting system in the coming months...”

*For more information about about Instant Runoff Voting and its progress in Minnesota, check FairVote Minnesota at [www.FairVoteMN.org](http://www.FairVoteMN.org). The Green Party of Minnesota also has information about IRV at [www.mngreens.org](http://www.mngreens.org) or 612-871-4585.*