
*In Memory of
David F. Sobey*



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Sobeys mourns former CEO David F. Sobey

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David Frank Sobey, chair emeritus of Sobeys Inc. and an instrumental figure in the retailer's growth, died Sept. 18. He was 92 years old.

"David was a great grocer, a great retailer and a great businessman who was instrumental in guiding the phenomenal growth of Sobeys from a regional grocery chain, built by his father, into a national food retailing and distribution business that today serves millions of Canadians on a weekly basis," said Jim Dickson, chair, Empire Co. Ltd. "David was unfailingly generous with his time, energy and personal resources and never stopped advocating for the growth and development of Atlantic Canada, Nova Scotia and Pictou County."

David, like his brothers Bill and Donald, was introduced to the grocery business at an early age, honing his skills and knowledge working virtually every job there was in the family's ever-expanding business. His career took him into increasingly senior leadership roles, including serving as vice chairman and CEO from 1982 to 1986; chairman and CEO from 1986 to 1995; and chairman from 1995 to 2001. When he retired in 2001, he was appointed chair emeritus by the Sobeys Inc. board of directors. He retired from the Empire board of directors in 2015.

"David was an incredible retailer, business leader and a mentor to so many of us at our company as well as in our industry," said Michael Medline, president and CEO of Empire Co. Ltd. "His legacy is an unparalleled business culture that spans from coast to coast and is lived every day by our 131,000 teammates. Throughout his life, he exemplified the kind of leadership in business and the community to which we must all aspire."

Mr. Sobey was predeceased by his mother, Irene MacDonald Sobey; father, Frank Hoyse Sobey; and brothers William M. Sobey and Donald C.R. Sobey. He is survived by Faye, his wife of 70 years; daughter, Janis (Christopher Hames) and son, Paul (Marsha Sobey); seven grandchildren; three step-grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren. He is also survived by his sister, Dianne Sobey.

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