

# WHY LOCAL FIRST?

1. More money re-circulates longer when purchases are made at locally owned, rather than nationally owned, businesses.
2. Most new jobs are provided by small, local businesses.
3. Helps preserve the character of our unique one-of-a-kind businesses which also encourages tourism.
4. Local business owners invest in the community where they live.
5. Customer service is better.
6. Competition and diversity lead to more and better choices.
7. Reduced environmental impact because there is less need for transportation of products from far away places.
8. Public benefits far outweigh public costs.
9. Encourages investment in Sonoma County.
10. Non-profits receive greater support from local businesses.



## Why Think Local First?

There are many well-documented benefits to our communities and to each of us to choosing **local, independently owned** businesses. We

realize it is not always possible to buy what you need locally and so merely ask you to THINK LOCAL FIRST!

## Why a 'Think Local First' Campaign?

A Think Local campaign is a critical piece of a sustainable community economic development strategy. Bringing awareness to THINKING LOCAL helps promote economic stability, job growth, and entrepreneurial vigor through nurturing and promoting a wide diversity of locally owned businesses in our region.



## Who Benefits from a Local First Campaign?

**Independent businesses** stand to gain significantly from a Local First Campaign. Businesses can be quite successful when they cooperatively market to local consumers, and commit to delivering quality services and products local consumers desire.

Strong business networks can also facilitate connections to suppliers and support services.

Diverse and numerous small and independent businesses provide a stable tax base and generally require less costly infrastructure and public services, thereby providing a good return on investment to **local governments**.

**Community residents** can be the greatest beneficiaries. When there is a conscious effort to support local businesses, residents of a community get the products and services that they want in a geographically convenient area. They also have more stable local employment. A strong local tax base can support public projects, schools, and cultural activities enhancing the quality of life in a community.



As a business owner, you know the importance of supporting independent locally owned companies.

But do your customers? Your neighbors? The visitors walking by?

By working together we can educate people to...

**THINK LOCAL FIRST!**

*"I think this has been a real educational opportunity for many of my customers. Some have always thought local first and appreciate being acknowledged for that but others are only occasional customers and had never considered the many significant benefits of their choices. This campaign has made it easy for me to introduce the topic with them."*

*Quote from a local business owner from the 'Think Local' campaign in Bellingham, WA.*



## THINK LOCAL FIRST!

### How Do You Define Local?

It depends. Our local region will be defined by our county boundary. Typically members of a local BALLE network are privately owned, live in Sonoma County, have full autonomy and local decision-making authority with respect to their business practices.

### What is BALLE?

BALLE is a growing alliance of business people around the US and Canada, who join local BALLE networks dedicated to building local living economies. BALLE comprises 34 such business networks with more than 5,000 business members overall. It is our mission to catalyze, strengthen, and connect these local business networks.

BALLE networks respond to the unique needs of their communities and share ideas throughout the alliance of networks.

In community after community, BALLE networks are proving that a coordinated group of locally owned companies can stand up to some of the harmful effects of globalization and foster the health and vitality of a region.

Thanks for your support and participation!

For more information and research on local economies go to: [www.livingeconomies.org](http://www.livingeconomies.org)

If you are not already a member of this growing movement please consider joining!



For questions including information on member benefits, please contact: Derek: 707-843-1845 or Kelley: 707-377-4008

## THINK LOCAL FIRST!

Sonoma County

Educating our community about the connection between a strong local economy and supporting independent locally owned businesses.



**BALLE**  
Sonoma County

A Business Alliance for a Local Living Economy

[www.livingeconomies.org](http://www.livingeconomies.org)