



## Top 10 reasons to buy local this Mother's Day

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When Anna Jarvis founded Mother's Day more than 100 years ago, she envisioned a day to honor mothers and motherhood, yet it has turned into one of the most commercially successful holidays in the United States.

According to the National Restaurant Association, it is the most popular day of the year to dine out. Americans spend more than \$2.6 billion on flowers, \$1.53 billion on gifts and \$68 million on greeting cards every year. Wouldn't it be great if some of that money went back into our communities?

This Mother's Day, put as much effort into where you're going to buy the perfect gift as to what you're going to buy. Honor mothers by thinking locally and buying locally and supporting the independent retailers, restaurants, florists and other businesses in your community.

Bellingham-based Sustainable Connections has developed a national "Buy Local" model. The following is excerpted from their "Top 10 Reasons to Think Local, Buy Local, Be Local."

### Ten reasons to buy local

**1. Support yourself.** When you buy from an independent, locally owned business, rather than a nationally owned chain store, more of your money is used to make purchases from other local businesses, service providers and farms, which strengthens the economic base of our community.

**2. Reduce your impact on the environment.** Locally owned businesses make more local purchases, which requires less transportation, and they generally set up shop in town, which means contributing less to sprawl, congestion, habitat loss and pollution.

**3. Support community groups.** Small, independent business owners contribute 250 percent more to non-profit organizations than big businesses.

**4. Keep your community unique.** Where we shop, where we eat, and where we have fun – all of this makes our community home. One-of-a-kind businesses are an integral part of the distinctive character of Whatcom County and neighboring areas.

**5. Create more good jobs.** Small local businesses are the nation's largest employer, providing jobs to residents.

**6. Get better services.** Local businesses often hire people who take more time to get to know their customers and who have a better understanding of the products they are selling.

**7. Create an investment in your community.** Local businesses are owned by people who live in the community and who are invested in our community's future.

**8. Put your taxes to good use.** Local businesses require comparatively little infrastructure investment and make more efficient use of public services as compared to nationally owned stores entering the community.

**9. Buy what you want.** Independently owned businesses select products based on their own interests and the needs of local customers, not on a national sales plan, which results in a much broader range of product choices.

**10. Encourage local prosperity.** Entrepreneurs and skilled workers are more likely to invest and settle in communities that preserve their one-of-a-kind businesses and distinctive character.

For more ideas on buying local, visit Sustainable Connections' web site at [www.sustainableconnections.org](http://www.sustainableconnections.org).