



# Think Local First



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### WELCOME LOCALS!

If you're reading this, you are interested in or are already working to strengthen your local economy and community through the support of the independent business sector. Congratulations on your recognition of the importance of this issue and on your efforts to take action!

This "How-To Kit" was created to help you more quickly and easily launch a Local First marketing campaign in your community. Across the country Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE) networks in communities of varying size and composition are conducting Local First campaigns. However, most of the materials are based on a successful and ongoing "Think Local First" campaign conducted by Sustainable Connections, the NW Washington BALLE network. Up to date examples from other communities can be found at BALLE's website, [www.LivingEconomies.org](http://www.LivingEconomies.org), and at Sustainable Connections' Campaign website, [www.ThinkLocal.org](http://www.ThinkLocal.org).

The uniqueness of your community will set the direction for your campaign. These guidelines can help steer you toward success and save you from re-inventing what isn't necessary. Your own individual creativity and regional flavor will be critical to ensuring a campaign that works where you live. And most importantly, the makeup of your steering committee and participating businesses will determine the likelihood of your success.

We hope that you enjoy this How-To Kit. It was developed to be a work in progress binder. Always be on the lookout, and become active in BALLE to collect new ideas and add them to your kit. Please send us your campaign tools and stories of your successes so we can share them with others. The joint efforts of our many communities will ensure better progress and the likelihood of all of us achieving greater widespread economic democracy.

**Best of luck and Think Local First!**

# Think Local First



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**LAUNCHING YOUR CAMPAIGN WITH A BUY LOCAL DAY**

Several communities have an annual Buy Local Day. In fact, a "Think Local First" - Buy Local Day can be a great way to launch your community's campaign for several reasons.

- ◆ A tangible date in time with activities and publicity is a great incentive for new businesses to sign up and participate in the campaign. Without a deadline, even important activities in which we want to participate can slip to the bottom of an in box and remain there indefinitely.
- ◆ A date in time also provides a great media focal point. Most media publications will want to write a story about Thinking Local First at the time of Buy Local day because it is timely. Without this focal point, some media may never get to writing about the campaign and others will certainly feel less urgency to get out a story.

**EXAMPLE BUY LOCAL DAY PLAN**

**What:** 'Think Local First! Buy Local Day'

**Why:** To strengthen awareness of the benefits of shopping with locally owned, independent businesses in (your region)

**When:** The holiday season is a great time for a Buy Local day since so much of the year's retail spending takes place in the fourth quarter.

Buy Local Day in Austin, Texas is always a date sometime prior to Thanksgiving. On that day local businesses promote the projected impact to their local economy if citizens spent just \$100 at locally owned businesses instead of at non-locally owned businesses. They then encourage people to imagine how big their impact could be if they continue "local first" purchasing throughout the holiday season.

**Where:** Encourage participating businesses to have in store activities of their choice that day. For example:

- ◆ Staaf Sails: One day 20% discount.
- ◆ Everybody's Store - a locally made cheese tasting.
- ◆ Village Books: Front page article in their newsletter, and a display of local authors.
- ◆ La Fiamma Wood Fired Pizza: Local farmers in store to display local foods & farms.
- ◆ Clayworks: Display of local clay artists.

**How:** You can coordinate the following kinds of activities for the day -

- ◆ Remind participating businesses to post all of their in-store campaign materials in time for the Buy Local Day
- ◆ Participating businesses can distribute stickers with the logo and slogan to customers.
- ◆ Distribute flyers listing your community's locally owned businesses and the day's activities. The flyers can be distributed in stores and as an advertising insert in local media publications.