2.3 Inventory and Promote Local Products and Services

10 – 35 Points

Action Updates

This action was last updated in 2024. The previous version of this action is available for comparison. Edits are highlighted in yellow.

Objective

Promote purchase of products and services from local businesses.

Complementary Actions:

- Provide Resources and Supports to Local Businesses
- Implement Sustainable Purchasing

What to Do

1. Develop and meaningfully distribute a user-friendly inventory of local business options. The inventory should serve as a comprehensive guide for residents of business options (including non-brick-and-mortar businesses) that are located within your municipality. Municipalities may work collaboratively to develop a regional inventory. Connecticut Business Registration Data may be a helpful resource in ensuring the completeness of your inventory. The inventory should be posted on the municipality's website.

   The more you do, the more points you earn.

   a. The inventory must include the name and location of each business in list form. **(10 points)** Optional: For an additional **5 points**, create a map of the businesses, either by marking up an existing municipal map manually, or by using an electronic Geographic Information System (GIS) base map. This map must be submitted with the completed inventory and may not be submitted alone.

   b. Incorporate special designations in the inventory for local businesses, sustainable, or eco-friendly businesses, women-owned, veteran-owned and minority-owned businesses, and alternative corporate structures, such as B Corps and cooperatively owned businesses. For retailers of locally grown food, the inventory could include designations for retailers that reliably sell fresh, local, in-season, native products. **(5 points per designation, up to 10 points)**

   Submit: Your inventory, a hyperlink and a screenshot of the relevant webpage(s) on which the inventory is posted, and if applicable, a statement about which designation(s) your inventory incorporates. For regional inventories, each participating municipality will receive points. If your inventory was created more than three years ago, include a brief description of how it is still relevant and used by your municipality.

2. Develop, implement and maintain an ongoing "buy local" campaign. Elements may include a campaign name, logo, slogans, tag lines, website, and social media platforms. In communication materials, the campaign needs to utilize a statement about ***why*** buying local is important to the community. A definition of "local" should be stated for purposes of the campaign. If any local retail inventories are created (please see item 1 above), the campaign should include their dissemination. Venues for and modalities of distribution of materials may include but are not limited to schools, child care centers, libraries, community centers, local health departments and districts, municipal tax bills and links on the municipality's website. The campaign may be ongoing or long-term, but at least one campaign outreach initiative or event must have taken place in

the last three years. **(10 points)**

Submit: Your completed "buy local" campaign discussion worksheet and at least one example of materials disseminated, which could include flyers, articles, letters, newsletters, presentations, or digital communications. For websites, submit both a hyperlink and a screenshot of the relevant webpage(s).

Engaging Partners

Sustainable CT encourages regional collaboration and other forms of partnership. For every action, please complete the "Partners" box in your submission, indicating the name(s) of any municipalities and/or organizations you partnered with (if any) and a brief description of your municipality's role. If you collaborate with other municipalities, each community will receive points. For additional information, please see the "Partners Guidance Document".

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Any municipal economic development staff and potentially local government public health department or district staff should be involved in the implementation of this action. Community partners include local businesses (including farms), chambers of commerce and other business alliances, business associations, community food organizations, and downtown revitalization groups.

Funding

If available, below are potential funding sources specific to this Action. For a complete listing of potential funding opportunities to assist with implementing Sustainable CT Actions, please visit the Sustainable CT Grants Portal, which is searchable by Action. Please also visit the Support for Your Town page for opportunities for technical assistance and other supports.

- Urban Act Grant Program
- Sustainable CT Community Match Fund
- State Funding Readiness Project

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents

- American Independent Business Alliance, The Keys to Effective Buy Local Campaigns
- Made in Connecticut
- About B Corps | Certified B Corporation

Organizations and Relevant Programs

- Northeast Organic Farming Association of Connecticut
- The Business Alliance for Local Living Economies
- UCONN: Zwick Center for Food and Resource Policy
- UConn Extension Community & Economic Development
- UConn College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources
- Small Business Saturday
- 350 Project

Benefits

Supporting independent and locally owned businesses produces a host of benefits. Such support can bring stability and diversity to the local economy, create jobs and expand municipal tax revenue, all promoting local and regional economic well-being. Local support can enhance social cohesion and build community. And buying local reduces transportation costs, and in turn, greenhouse gas emissions.

CT Success Stories

- Lyme - May 2022 Certification
- Darien - Oct 2022 Certification
- Stonington - Oct 2022 Certification
- Ellington - May 2024 Certification
- Thomaston - May 2024 Certification
- Suffield - Oct 2024 Certification
- Stamford - May 2025 Certification
- Vernon - May 2025 Certification