

oakland grown

Membership Information

Supporting Oakland's
locally-owned & independent
businesses & local artists



Oakland Merchant Leadership Forum





What is Oakland Grown?

Inspired by similar efforts around the country, Oakland Grown is a group of local business owners, artists, and engaged citizens committed to strengthening Oakland's local economy, social well being, and unique sense of place. Our vision includes the creation of a permanent local network that:

- Supports the growth and development of locally owned and independently operated businesses and local artists in Oakland
- Encourages local purchasing by residents, businesses, and artists
- Creates opportunities for business owners and artists to network and share best practices
- Advocates for public policies that strengthen independent local businesses and artists, and helps level the economic playing field

Why Oakland Grown? Why Now?

A growing number of people around the country are re-examining where we buy goods and services, how we create and consume energy, how we design communities, how we grow distribute and sell our food, how we build homes, how we interact with our natural environment and its resources, and, ultimately, how we define success.

The Oakland Grown movement recognizes this is an opportunity to demonstrate how a regional network of locally-owned and independently-operated businesses and artists can support one another, stabilize the economy, help to ensure equitable public policy, and strive for long-term sustainability.

How can you join the Oakland Grown network?

We've identified membership criteria to ensure that those who join are either locally-owned operated local businesses that can make independent business decisions, or Oakland-based artists / artisans. Business owners and artists must complete an application and answer six questions about their business or craft.

What are the *benefits* of membership?

Member Benefits vary based on the level; *most* include the following:

- Year round ongoing promotion of your business, art, or craft
- Oakland Grown Decal for Windows or Festival Booth
- Oakland Grown Promotional Material
- Event Discounts and Exhibitor Opportunities
- Listing in Online Directory
- Referrals to Small Business Services
- Networking opportunities
- Bi-Monthly E-newsletter
- Ideas and advice from fellow members
- Access to BALLE Resources
- A chance to strengthen OUR local economy and more!

Supporting Oakland's locally-owned & independent businesses & artists



Top 10 Reasons to Get it Local & Independent

1) Keep Money In Oakland!

Significantly more money re-circulates locally when purchases are made with businesses that are local & independently owned. This "multiplier" is due in part to locally owned businesses purchasing more often from other local businesses, service providers, and food producers. Purchasing helps grow other businesses as well as strengthen the local tax base.

2) Create More Jobs!

Small local businesses are collectively the largest employer nationally and therefore provide the most jobs to residents in communities.

3) Keep Oakland Cool and Hip!

Our one-of-a-kind businesses are an integral part of the distinctive character of Oakland.

4) Reduce Our Environmental Impact

Local & independently owned businesses can make more local purchases requiring less transportation, less packaging and products that you know are safe and well made because our neighbors stand behind them.

5) Invest In Our Community

Studies reveal non-profit organizations receive an average 250% more support from smaller local and independently owned business owners than they do from larger businesses. Local businesses owned by people who live in this community, are less likely to leave, and are more invested in the community's future.

6) Get Better Service

Local businesses often hire people with a better understanding of the products they are selling and take more time to get to know customers.

7) Put Your Taxes To Good Use

Shopping in Oakland's existing independent business districts means less infrastructure, less maintenance, and more money available to beautify Oakland.

8) It Creates More Choice

A marketplace of tens of thousands of small businesses is the best way to ensure innovation and low prices over the long-term. Small businesses, selecting products based on the needs of their local customers in their own individual markets, guarantee a much broader range of product choices.

9) Encourage Oakland's 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.

10) It Makes Oakland a Destination

Oaklanders are constantly trying to improve our beautiful city's image. The more interesting and unique we are as a community, the more we attract tourists, shoppers, and others who want to visit Oakland. "When people go on vacation they generally seek out destinations that offer them the sense of being someplace, not just anyplace." (Richard Moe, President, National Historic Preservation Trust)



Membership Benefits

Basic Business

(Rates Vary,
See Member Rates)

- Oakland Grown Window Decal for Window or Festival Booth
 - Oakland Grown Promotional Material
 - 50 Oakland Grown Reusable Shopping Bags (\$50 Value)
 - Listing in Online Directory of Oakland Grown Independent Businesses
 - Event Discounts and Exhibitor Opportunities
 - Networking opportunities
 - Bi-Monthly E-newsletter
 - Discounts for Goods & Services
 - Access to BALLE (Business Alliance for Local Living Economies) Resources
 - Referrals to Small Business Services/ Organizations
 - Opportunity to build the campaign and suggest new benefits and activities
 - Advertising credit in the *East Bay Express* in the value of Oakland Grown membership dues. For existing advertisers with the Express, the credit may be applied toward additional print and/or online advertising. The offer expires at the end of your first year of Oakland Grown membership.
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Artist & Non-Profit

- Oakland Grown Window Decal
 - Oakland Grown Kit Promotional Material
 - Listing in Online Directory of Oakland Grown Independent Businesses
 - Event Discounts and Exhibitor Opportunities
 - Networking opportunities
 - Bi-Monthly E-newsletter
 - Discounts for Goods & Services
 - Referrals to Small Business Services/ Organizations
 - Opportunity to build the campaign and suggest new benefits and activities
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Individual Supporter

- "Support Oakland Grown" T-shirt (\$20 Value)
 - Bumper Sticker / Bike Sticker
 - Reusable Oakland Grown Shopping Bag
 - Bi-Monthly E-newsletter
 - Literature on Importance of Shopping Local & Independent
 - Discounted entrance to Oakland Grown Events
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Student

- Reusable Oakland Grown Shopping Bag
 - Bumper Sticker / Bike Sticker
 - Bi-Monthly E-newsletter
 - Literature on Importance of Shopping Local & Independent
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Membership Rates

Basic Business
Annual Revenue \$499K or Less \$80
Annual Revenue \$500K – \$999K \$150
Annual Revenue \$1M+ \$250
Artist & Non-Profit
\$45
Individual Supporter
\$50
Student
\$25

Basic Business Applicants Only

A single \$25 Discount may be applicable; if any of the following applies to your organization:

- Paid member of Oakland Unwrapped
- Member of an existing BALLE organization (*OMLF excluded*)
- Business is B Corp Certified
- Business is a certified Alameda County Green Business
- Business is a manufacturer of a Fair Trade Certified Product
- Member of Buy Fresh Buy Local (CAFF)

- Must be a member 60 days prior to the next event to be included in materials for that promotion.
- Membership is valid for 12 months after you submit your application and payment.

Join the Oakland Grown movement today!



Welcome to Oakland Grown!

As an Oakland Grown member, you join us in our mission to connect and promote locally-owned, independently operated businesses and local artists, and to educate consumers on local products and services to build a sustainable local living economy in the Oakland area.

To become a member, please follow these simple steps:

1. Review the criteria below. You must answer 'yes' to all questions to be eligible for membership as a business or artist.
2. Fill out an application below and email it to info@omlf.org or fax it to (510) 280-2814. Or complete the online application at www.omlf.org.
3. Please send a payment that corresponds to your membership level. Make checks payable to **Oakland Merchants' Leadership Forum** and send them to, or stop by our offices at 829 27th Ave, Oakland, CA 94601. Membership is valid for 12 months.
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Membership Criteria

Artists / Artisans

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|---|-----|----|
| 1. Are you an artist or artisan that lives in or has a studio in Oakland, CA? | Yes | No |
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Businesses

- | | | |
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| 1. Is this business registered in Oakland, with no corporate headquarters outside Alameda County? | Yes | No |
| 2. Is this business privately held and not publicly traded? | Yes | No |
| 3. Does the business make independent decisions regarding the name and look of the business, as well as all business purchasing, practices, hiring and distribution? | Yes | No |
| 4. Does the business pay all its own marketing, rent, and other business expenses (without assistance from a corporate headquarters)? | Yes | No |
| 5. Does this business have six or less outlets, with at least 50% of its outlets in Northern California? | Yes | No |
| 6. Do at least 50% of the managing owners of the business live in Northern California? | Yes | No |

**The Oakland Grown committee reserves the right to refuse membership to any business or artist who engages in harmful, hateful, or other practices that do not align with the mission of the Oakland Grown movement. The Oakland Grown committee also reserves the right to restrict use of the Oakland Grown logo by member and non-member entities if they do not meet the local business criteria and/or if the use is inconsistent with the messaging and mission of the movement.*



Membership Application

Date _____

Business Name _____

Owner(s) _____

Industry _____

Business Description _____

Website _____

Address _____

City / Zip Code _____

Business Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Fax _____ Email _____

Annual Membership Contribution:

- Basic Business (Annual Revenue \$499K or Less) \$80.00
- Basic Business (Annual Revenue \$500K – \$999K) \$150.00
- Basic Business (Annual Revenue \$1M+) \$250.00
- Oakland Soul (*Artist & Non-Profit*) \$ 45.00
- Oakland Lover (*Individual Supporter*) \$ 50.00
- Oakland Pride (*Student*) \$ 25.00

I have read and understand the Oakland Grown membership criteria and have responded “yes” to all the questions.

I am entitled to a \$25 discount for the following reason (please include proof with application):

Return completed application and make checks payable to:
Oakland Merchants’ Leadership Forum, 829 27th Ave, Oakland, CA 94601



Frequently Asked Questions

1. When will my membership renew?

Membership renews annually in the month you joined.

2. What are the member levels and benefits?

A complete list of membership levels and benefits is available on the website at www.shopoakland.com or have it emailed by contacting info@omlf.org

3. How will you provide year round ongoing promotion of my business?

Oakland Grown anticipates coordinating and promoting campaign events each year. These campaign events are designed to create awareness and educate consumers on the benefits of shopping at Oakland's local & independently owned stores first. Statistics show increased traffic to local businesses as a result of campaign events. In addition to the campaign events, Oakland Grown will provide promotional opportunities for all members.

4. Do the products a business sells need to be manufactured locally for the business to truly be a local business?

It is not a requirement of Oakland Grown businesses to purely source from local businesses. However, we encourage and reward businesses who make efforts to sell products that are locally produced, and artists who create works from locally-sourced materials. Locally owned and independently operated businesses selling products that are not local still return more money back to the local economy, provide more stable jobs, and help maintain a sense of community and place by their local support than non-locally based chains.

5. What are the criteria to become a member?

A complete list of membership criteria is available on the website at www.shopoakland.com. Or have it emailed by contacting info@omlf.org.

6. Why are local franchise owners not included?

Local franchise owners cannot make independent business decisions and must align with corporate standards. In many cases this impacts their choice of vendors, procurement, products and services and prevents them sourcing from locally owned and independently operated businesses.

7. What kind of business support can I expect?

You can expect opportunities to network with other business owners experiencing similar successes and facing similar challenges. You can elect to participate in meetings with other business owners in your sector to share ideas and best practices. You can expect to share marketing and advertising with other business owners to leverage your resources more effectively. You can expect more services and programs to be offered as you and other business owners determine what you need and the organization's capacity grows to fill that need.

Frequently Asked Questions *(continued)*

8. Why is your membership criteria exclusive to local, independent businesses?

We believe there are other organizations that exist to support other business interests, but none exist specifically to support and promote locally owned and independently operated businesses.

9. How is this business network different from the Chamber of Commerce or any of the existing Business Improvement Districts?

Oakland Grown is a business network for locally owned and independently operated businesses and local artists that meet the membership criteria. Working together, members can share best practices, jointly market their products and services, and influence local shopper behavior and city policy. Our objective is to help our community members and leaders understand how to most positively impact our local economy and environment through their financial decisions. The Oakland Grown network will often collaborate with business, arts, and other organizations, and we encourage our members to join any organizations that contribute to their success.

10. Why Oakland?

A growing number of people around the country are re-examining where we buy goods and services, how we create and consume energy, how we design communities, how we grow distribute and sell our food, how we build homes, how we interact with our natural environment and its resources, and, ultimately, how we define success.

Given our rate of growth and popularity as a community, it's time for this conversation to take a first step forward in Oakland. The Oakland Grown movement recognizes this is an opportunity to demonstrate how a regional network of locally-owned and independently-operated businesses and artists can support one another, stabilize the economy, help to ensure equitable public policy, and strive for long-term sustainability.

11. How will I be notified of updates?

Email will be the primary source for communication. We will also produce a bi-monthly e-newsletter for members to share their information or specials with other members.

12. Where can I get more information on the localization movement?

These websites can get you started:

Oakland Grown Program Info – www.shopoakland.com

Oakland Merchants' Leadership Forum – www.omlf.org

Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE)- www.livingeconomies.org

American Independent Business Alliance (AMIBA) – www.amiba.net

Institute for Local Self-Reliance - www.ilsr.org

Sustainable Business Alliance of the East Bay (SBA) – www.sustainablebiz.org

Buy Local Berkeley – www.buylocalberkeley.com

13. Who is managing the Oakland Grown network?

Oakland Grown is managed by the marketing committee of the Oakland Merchants' Leadership Forum (OMLF). This committee is comprised of local business owners, arts leaders, non-profit leaders and passionate community members. The committee welcomes those interested in building a sustainable local economy to inquire about joining! The OMLF office is located at 829 27th Ave, Oakland, CA 94601.