



# Sonoma County Restaurant Week Report

**2015**  
SONOMA  
COUNTY

SONOMA COUNTY  
**EDB**  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD

**SONOMA  
COUNTY  
TOURISM**

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# Sonoma County Restaurant Week Report

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## May 2015

The Sonoma County Economic Development Board (EDB), in partnership with Sonoma County Tourism, is pleased to bring you the 2015 Sonoma County Restaurant Week Report.

This report summarizes the results from our annual event, Sonoma County Restaurant Week. The seven-day celebration of the county's farm fresh food and premier beer and wine featured Sonoma County's top restaurants offering special three-course meals at \$19, \$29 or \$39.

Restaurant Week in 2015 once again advertised a lunch option, giving diners the chance to experience \$10, \$15 and \$20 lunches.

In its sixth year, the event has also made a significant impact on the restaurant industry by encouraging locals and tourists to dine out during a typically slow time of the year:

- The total impact of the event grew by 20% to \$3.35million. Over \$214,000 in sales tax was generated and more than \$100,000 was purchased in local products for use in Restaurant Week menus.
- More than 17,000 meals were served directly from the lunch and dinner prix-fixe menus, and more than 68,700 meals were served over the week at participating restaurants.
- The event was popular with diners and restaurants alike. Almost all diners rated their restaurant week experience as good or excellent. More than 92% of participating restaurants indicated that they were satisfied with their involvement and 93% indicated that they will participate again.
- Showing support again for this year's event was Jackson Family Wines, which was instrumental in encouraging restaurants to participate and to use locally produced wine. Coupled with efforts by Sonoma County Tourism, Sonoma Media Group, the Press Democrat, North Bay Bohemian, and Sonoma West Publishers to provide co-op advertising, restaurant participation remained high, with a total of 130.
- About 24% of total diners were from outside of Sonoma County. Additionally, diners came from all over the county to enjoy Sonoma County Restaurant Week.

Because of its success, the event will return for its seventh year in March of 2016.

Thank you for your interest in the Economic Development Board's research. For additional information, questions, comments or suggestions, please contact us at (707) 565-7170 or visit [www.sonomaedb.org](http://www.sonomaedb.org).

Sincerely,



Ben Stone  
Executive Director



Pamela Chanter  
Chair



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# Sonoma County Restaurant Week Report

## Restaurant Week Experience

The inaugural Sonoma County Restaurant Week was held in 2010 and was well received; 85 restaurants participated, 15,000 meals were served, and the event had a total economic impact of almost \$900,000 to the local economy. Each of the subsequent years has seen the number of meals served and the economic impact of the event grow. The sixth annual Sonoma County Restaurant Week event was held in March of 2015. The event built on its highly successful first five years; 130 restaurants participated, and nearly 69,000 meals were served.

### Total Economic Impact of Restaurant Week

The total economic impact of the 2015 Sonoma County Restaurant Week is valued at \$3.35 million. This includes restaurant revenue, taxes and the value of local ingredients purchased for Sonoma County Restaurant Week prix-fixe menus. This is a 20% increase over 2014, showing a continually growing interest in the program, and the success of adding the lunch option.

### Meals Served

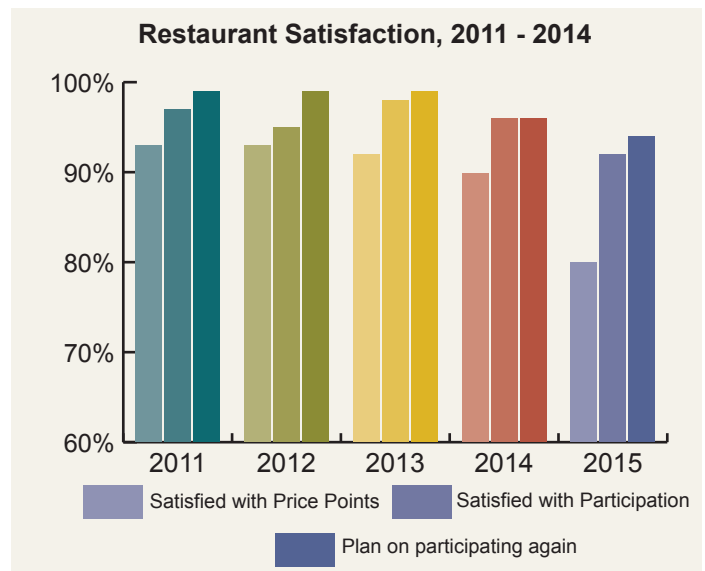
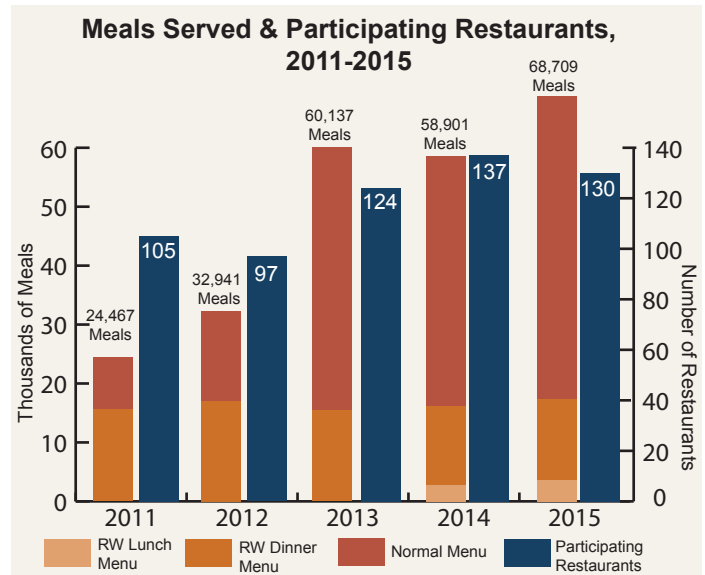
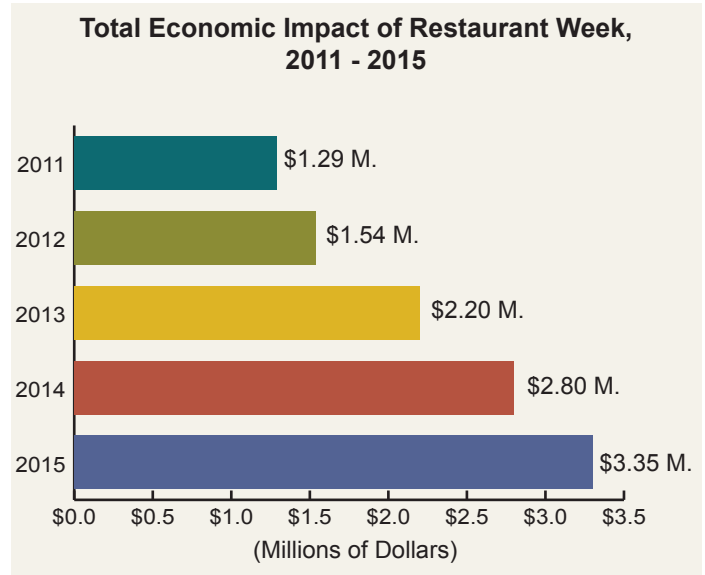
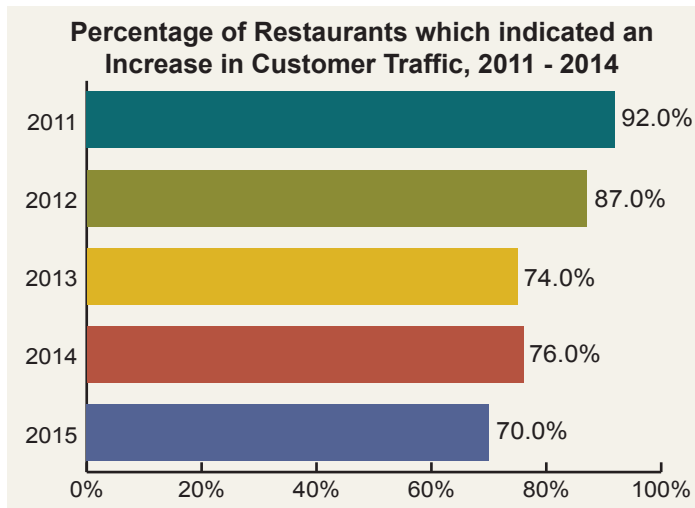
More than 68,700 meals were served during the 2015 Sonoma County Restaurant Week based on reporting from restaurants; over 17,000 meals were ordered off of the prix-fixe Restaurant Week menu. A 7% increase compared to 2014 in the number of meals served off the Restaurant Week menu can be attributed to the increased popularity of Lunch, along with increased restaurant reporting.

### Restaurant Satisfaction

Total restaurant participation reached 130 restaurants for 2015, marking continued support for the event. Restaurants continued to be satisfied with the program: 92% were satisfied with their participation in the event, 80% were satisfied with the price points, and 94% of participants indicated that they would like to participate again.

### Customer Traffic and Restaurant Revenue

Almost 70% of restaurants indicated that their customer traffic had increased as a result of Restaurant Week. This indicates that the event was successful in helping restaurants generate business during the off-season.



# Sonoma County Restaurant Week Report

## Customer Feedback

Participating restaurants are asked to pass out customer comment cards during Sonoma County Restaurant Week. Comment cards are given to all diners during the week as a way to measure the effects of the event. Diners are asked a variety of questions including where they are from, whether or not they had eaten at the restaurant before, whether the promotion encouraged them to dine out and if they ordered from the special menu. In 2014, more than 4,500 comment cards were received. Some of the results are summarized below.

### Restaurant Week Encouraged Customers to Dine Out

Over one half of Sonoma County Restaurant Week survey respondents indicated that they had chosen to go out because it was Restaurant Week. While 44% indicated that they had not been encouraged by the event, 40% of diners heard about the event from a friend, another 30% had heard about it in the newspaper, and about 12% heard about it on the radio. 17% heard about it directly through the event website, and 10% heard about it from Facebook. This suggests the event is gaining popularity and recognition throughout the greater Sonoma County community.

### Lunch Option Participation

Nearly 27% of all diners took advantage of the lunch event. Although only 24% ordered from the prix-fixe menu, the overall participation highlights a vested interest in the lunch event by patrons. Looking ahead, simplifying this option as well as more directed marketing of this event will increase participation for diners going out to lunch.

### New Patron to Restaurant

More than 60% of the respondents indicated that they had not been to the restaurant before Restaurant Week. Along with the data indicating that customers were eating out specifically because of the promotion, this suggests that Sonoma County Restaurant Week succeeds in helping restaurants attract new customers and generate revenue during a typically slow time of year.

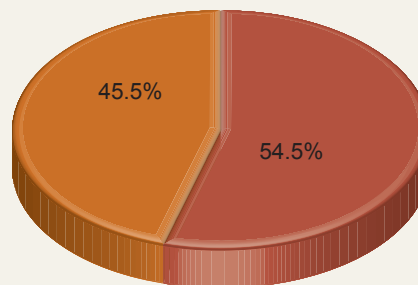
### Point of Origin

Customers originated from all over the county and outside of it. The majority of the diners were from Santa Rosa (34%), which is also where most of participating restaurants were located (35%). Over 24% of diners were from outside Sonoma County. This includes customers from the rest of California and diners from 43 states and 5 countries. Many restaurants located in Petaluma, unincorporated county, and the city of Sonoma also participated in 2015.

The Point of Origin, 2015 (Respondent-Based)

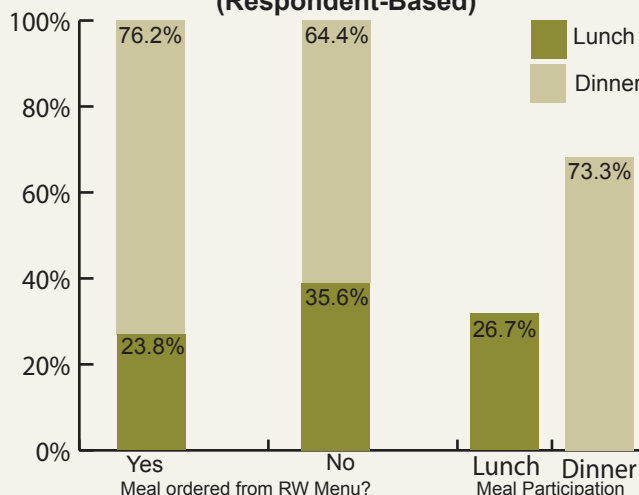
Area	Diners	Restaurants
Outside of County	24.3%	-
Santa Rosa	33.7%	34.5%
Sonoma	8.8%	8.4%
Petaluma	11%	14.3%
Sebastopol	6.2%	7.6%
Windsor	3.9%	3.4%
Unincorporated	5.3%	21.0%
Healdsburg	3.0%	7.6%
Rohnert Park	4.0%	3.4%
Cotati	-	-
Cloverdale	-	-

Promotion Encouraged Decision to Dine Out, 2015 (Respondent Based)

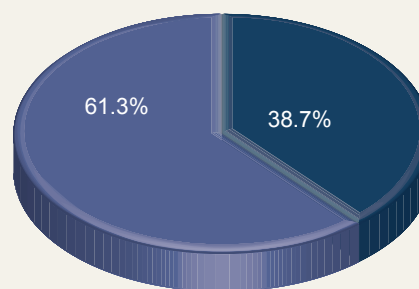


Yes (54.5%) No (45.5%)

Ordered from Restaurant Week Menu, Lunch vs. Dinner participation, 2015 (Respondent-Based)



New Patron to Restaurant, 2015 (Respondent-Based)



New Patron (61.3%) Dined There Before (38.7%)

# Sonoma County Restaurant Week Report

## Economic Impact

Sonoma County Restaurant Week has a significant economic impact to the local economy; these figures are discussed below.

### Value of Local Ingredients

As Sonoma County has so many great local food producers, more and more restaurants are turning to local ingredients for use in their menus. We asked participating restaurants to indicate what was the value of the local ingredients purchased specifically for their special restaurant week menu. More than \$100,000 worth of local food products were used for Restaurant Week. This amount does not include restaurants that declined to indicate the value of local products used in their Restaurant Week menu.

### Total Restaurant Revenue

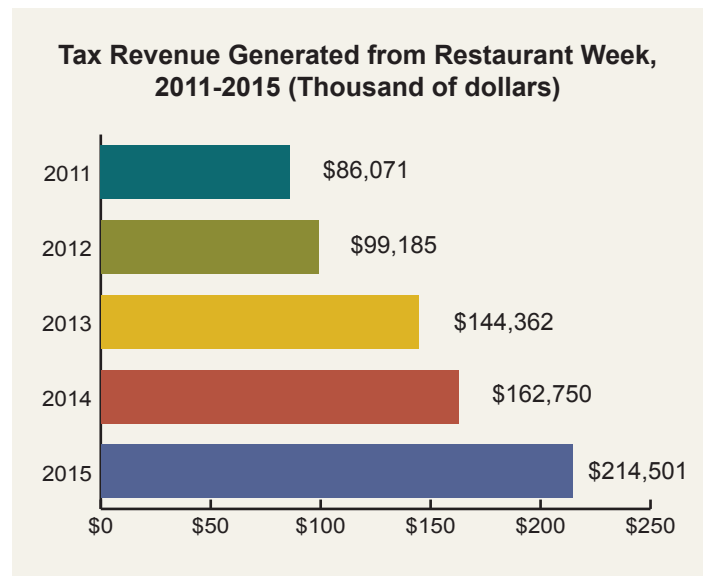
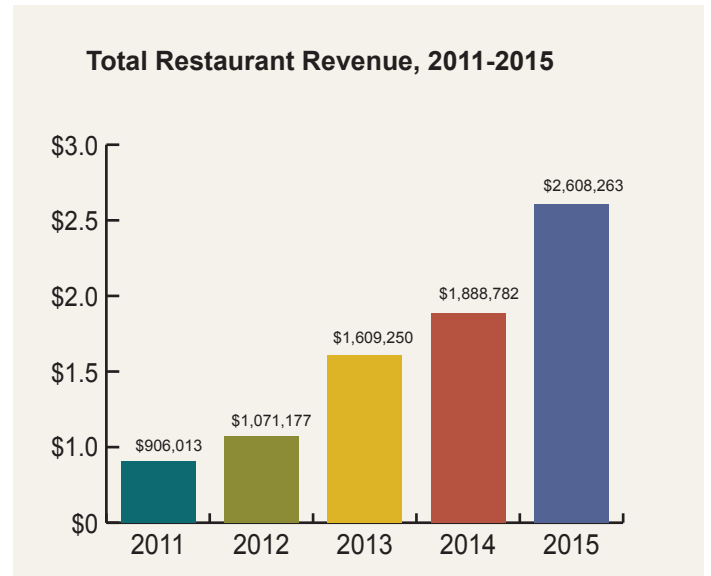
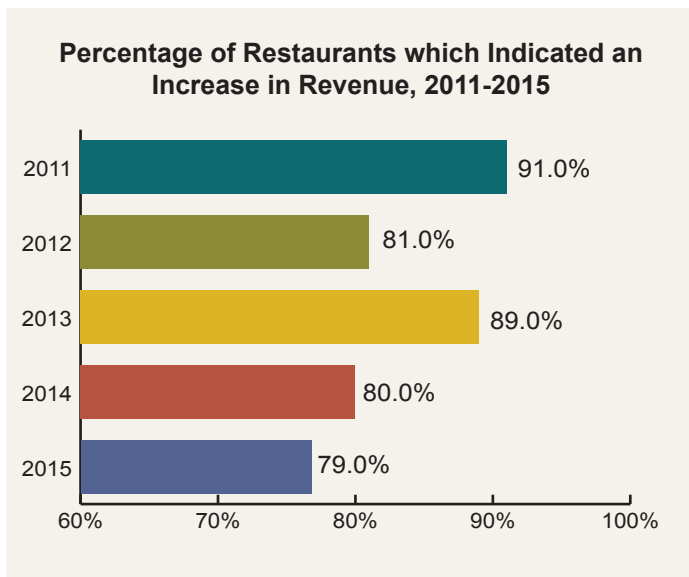
Total customer expenditure during Restaurant Week is valued at \$2,608,263. This number is reported by restaurants directly through surveying.

### Tax Revenue Generated from Restaurant Week

The sales tax revenue from the event was \$214,501 in 2015. This is a 32% increase over 2014 revenues.

### Restaurants Indicated an Increase in Revenue

Nearly 80% of restaurants reported an increase in revenue in 2015. The average reported increase in revenue was 10%.



# Sonoma County Restaurant Week Report

## Sponsors and Online Marketing

Restaurant Week was successful largely because of our sponsors. These include Sonoma County Tourism, The Press Democrat, Sonoma Media Group, The Northbay Bohemian, Jackson Family Wines, Sonoma West Publishers Inc, local Visitor Centers and Chambers, and OpenTable. We also utilized Google Adwords and used social media platforms to promote the event.

### Sonoma County Restaurant Week Sponsors

With the help of our sponsors we were able to publicize the event and give the public access to many of our online resources. Sonoma Media Group created specific Restaurant Week pages on each of their station's sites, and featured the event on their Facebook accounts. The Press Democrat was instrumental in our print ad campaign by featuring advertisements for several weeks, and also creating a co-op advertising opportunity. The Northbay Bohemian featured print and online ads which drove people to the official website. Sonoma West Publishers Inc. bolstered our digital and print ad campaign reach by publicizing the event online and through local newspaper avenues. OpenTable also hosted a designated Restaurant Week page so diners could make reservations at their favorite participating restaurants.

### Jackson Family Wines

2015 Restaurant Week was sponsored by the Jackson Family Wines for the third year. Event posters and bookmarks were handed out in tasting rooms in Sonoma County. Jackson Family Wines also promoted the event via their social media platforms and with e-blasts to wine club members. Again for this year, Kendall-Jackson hosted a launch event for the restaurants to thank them for their participation. We look forward to another such event in 2016.

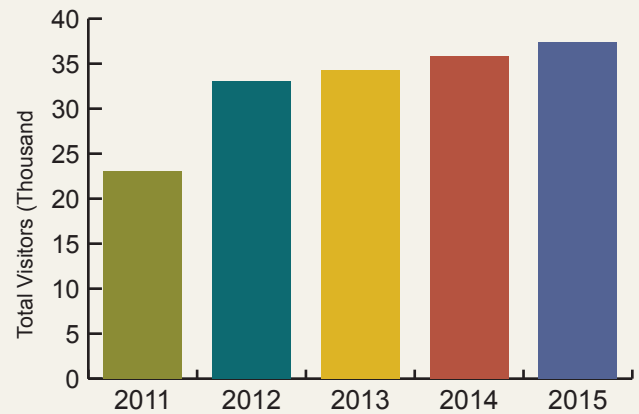
### SonomaCountyRestaurantWeek.org

The website was revamped in 2012 with the goal of being more streamlined and user-friendly, and again in 2014 to improve restaurant's experience. Search functions allow diners to search for restaurants by location and price point. Menus, photos, addresses, phone numbers, hours of operation and OpenTable links where applicable allowed diners to easily find information about all of the participating restaurants. Beginning after the conclusion of this year's event, Sonoma County Tourism will be assisting in building out a brand new website for the event.

### Sonoma County Restaurant Week on Facebook

The Restaurant Week campaign grew on Facebook in 2015. There was significant traffic to the site, which included comments and likes by unique visitors. During the week of Restaurant Week, our Facebook posts reached 29,245 users and each post had an average reach of 4,227 people. Overall, our likes grew to 5,119 in 2015. We also ran several giveaways on our Facebook page, which allowed us to increase our engagement with users and the number of photos we had on the Facebook profile.

Website Traffic from the week prior through Restaurant Week, 2011 - 2015



### Website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, 2015

#### Website

25,105 Unique Visitors  
8.69 Pages per Visit  
6 min 28 sec Average length of visit

#### Facebook

5,119 people like Sonoma County Restaurant Week on Facebook  
29,245 the total unique "reaches" during Restaurant Week  
4,227 the average "reach" of each post during Restaurant Week

#### Twitter

1,301 the number of SoCoRestWeek followers  
568 the number of SoCoRestWeek tweets

#### Instagram

299 the total number of followers  
31 the number of pictures posted  
65 the number of pictures tagged by others

65.0%

#### @SoCoRestWeek

Twitter was utilized as an active part of the Sonoma County Restaurant Week promotional campaign. Followers were driven to both Facebook and the official website. The number of people following SoCoRestWeek increased to 1,301 in 2015.



# Sonoma County Restaurant Week Report

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## Comments from Participating Restaurants

In addition to asking participating restaurants about their business figures for Restaurant Week, we ask them to provide us with feedback about the event. This way we can determine what we are doing well and how we can improve. Here are some of the comments we received from this year's participating restaurants:

Thank you for putting on this event. We find it a very valuable format for people to come in and try us out!

**-Julie Warner, Owner**  
**Twisted 2**

Thank you to the staff on SCRW for doing such a great job. We do a prix-fixe menu every week, so it helps us out significantly to let new customers know what we do. We were sold out for the whole week before the event started.

**-Brian Anderson, Owner**  
**Bistro 29**

It was a great week for us. We received great reviews and the event kept the restaurant busy all week. We are very satisfied with this year's restaurant week!

**-Lucy Crawford, Manager**  
**The Brasserie Restaurant & Lounge**

Overall we are very satisfied with the results, and we are looking forward to next year's event!

**-Juan Navarro,**  
**Sazon Peruvian Cuisine**

This was our first year participating, and it was easy to get my staff on board. We saw lots of nice, new people that came in, and the program was very straight-forward and successful.

**-Angela Grant, Owner**  
**Tudor Rose English Tea Room**

It was very nice being able to promote Restaurant Week during our slow season!

**-Susie Pryfogle, Owner**  
**TIPS Tri Tip Trolley**

2014 was our best year ever, and we saw no slow down for 2015.

**-Ken Goldfine, General Manager**  
**Jackson's Bar & Oven**

Thank you to SCRW. We appreciate all the work that is put in to make this event happen!

**-John Frenzel, Marketing Director**  
**Cattlemen's**

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## Methodology

This report outlines the event and the results from the last five years. This includes restaurant experience and event outcomes, customer feedback, economic impact data and the Sonoma County Restaurant Week web presence.

Data for this report is collected directly from diners and participating restaurants during the event, and with follow-up surveys given immediately after the week of the event. More than 5,300 diners filled out our comment cards, and 52% of participating restaurants filled out ex-post surveys. Their feedback allows us to track the success of the event.

### Notes on Calculations:

Economic Impact Data: we use a multiplier of 1.16 to determine the overall economic impact of spending at eating & drinking establishments per National Restaurant Association. Economic impact figures from 2011-2015 have been adjusted to reflect this multiplier and explains any discrepancies in previously reported figures.

Because some restaurants did not report, we believe the economic impact, the value of local ingredients and overall restaurant revenue figures to be understating the effects of Sonoma County Restaurant Week in 2015. However, we have chosen not to project the value of these figures in order to have an accurate and conservative figure.



# Acknowledgements

## Sonoma County Restaurant Week Sponsors



The Press Democrat

BOHEMIAN



Sonoma West Publisher's, Inc.

The sixth annual Sonoma County Restaurant week would not have been possible without the contribution of many individuals.

Most of the credit for the success of this event belongs to the local restaurants that participated in this week-long event. Their hard work and dedication to serving the outstanding food that Sonoma County is known for provided the inspiration and the purpose behind continuing this event. Furthermore, Sonoma County restaurants provide over 17,000 jobs in Sonoma County and the Sonoma County EDB is proud to highlight the importance of this industry to our local economy.

Special acknowledgment is also due to the sponsors of Sonoma County Restaurant Week. The Press Democrat, Northbay Bohemian, Sonoma Media Group, Sonoma West Publisher's Inc. and Jackson Family Wines all donated significant time and resources to promote this year's event. Acknowledgement is also due to Sonoma County Visitors Centers and local chambers of commerce for their support, as well as staff at Sonoma County Tourism for their assistance with press releases, website management and support with promoting the event to local restaurants and visitors.

Finally, Dominic Wiggam, Tourism Project Coordinator with the EDB, contributed a significant amount of time and effort to the organization of this event, including restaurant sign-up and contact, managing social media and advertisement and the updating content on the official Restaurant Week website. Dominic also updated and compiled the results of the sixth annual Sonoma County Restaurant Week to create this comprehensive report, and deserves special thanks.

Ben Stone  
Executive Director

The EDB is pleased to thank the following Signature Sponsors for their support of our important programs.

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FOUNDATION LEVEL



PREMIER LEVEL



EXECUTIVE LEVEL

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 American River Bank  
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