



Sonoma County Restaurant Week Report

2016
SONOMA
COUNTY



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Sonoma County Restaurant Week Report

June 2016

The Sonoma County Economic Development Board (EDB), in partnership with Sonoma County Tourism, is pleased to bring you the 2016 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 2016 once again advertised a lunch option, giving diners the chance to experience \$10 and \$15 lunches.

In its seventh 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 event had a total economic impact of \$3.08 million. Over \$214,000 in tax was generated and more than \$100,000 was purchased in local products for use in Restaurant Week menus.
- More than 14,000 meals were served directly from the lunch and dinner prix-fixe menus^S and more than 63,000 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 90% of participating restaurants indicated that they were satisfied with their involvement and 97% 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 120.
- 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 eighth year in March of 2017.

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.

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 seventh annual Sonoma County Restaurant Week event was held in March of 2016. The event built on its highly successful first five years; 120 restaurants participated, and nearly 64,000 meals were served.

Total Economic Impact of Restaurant Week

The total economic impact of the 2016 Sonoma County Restaurant Week is valued at \$3.08 million. This includes restaurant revenue, taxes and the value of local ingredients purchased for Sonoma County Restaurant Week prix-fixe menus. This shows the consistently strong impact of the program, and the success of adding the lunch option.

Meals Served

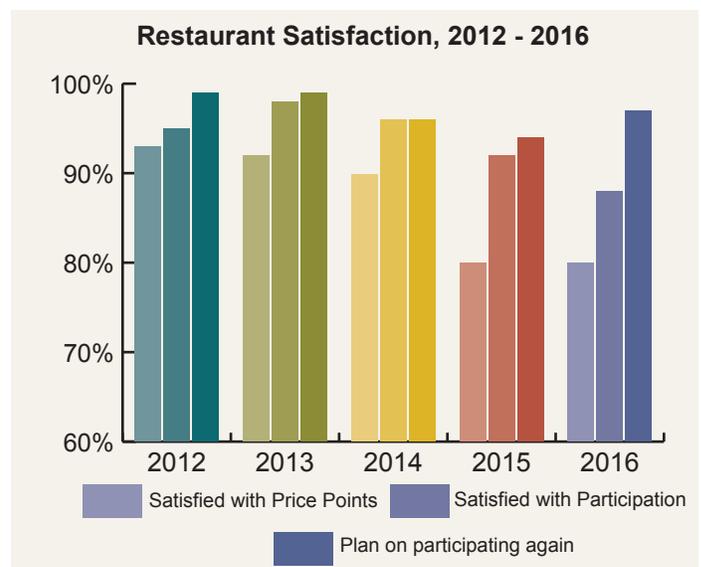
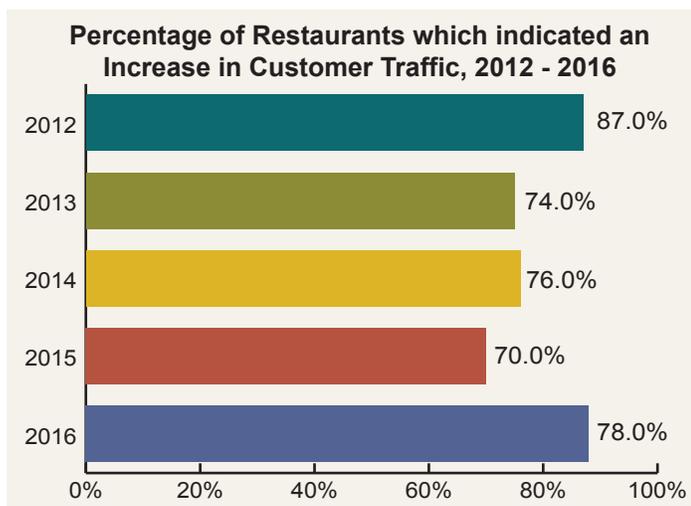
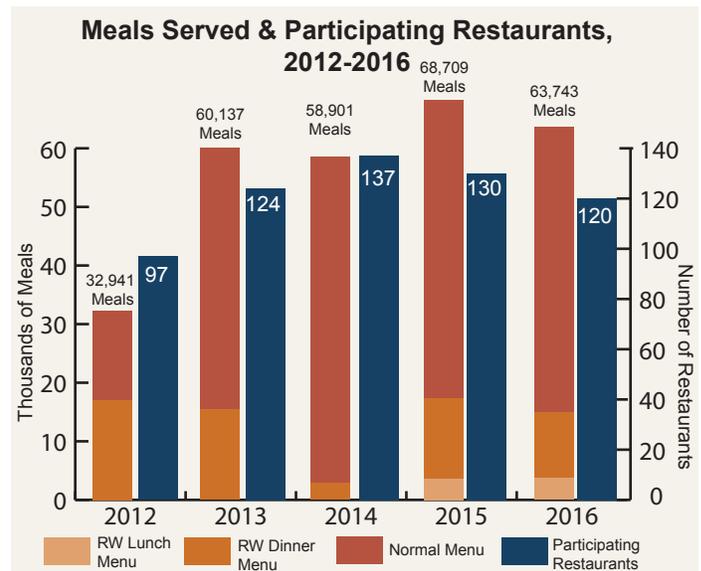
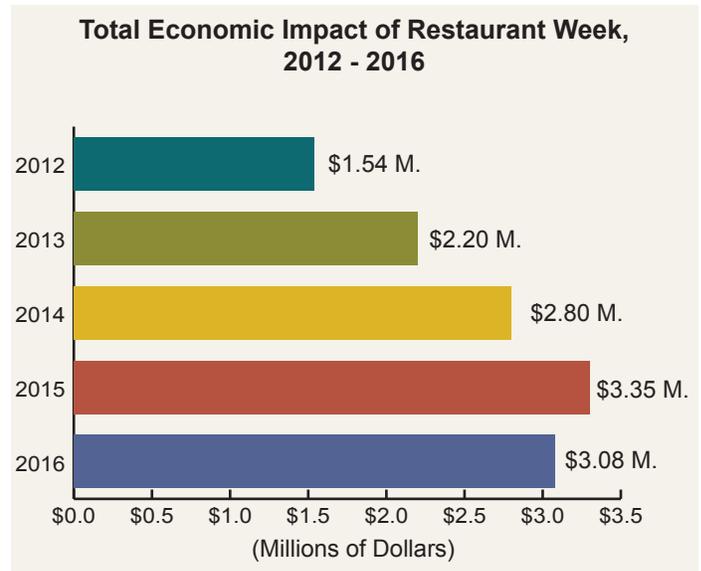
More than 63,700 meals were served during the 2016 Sonoma County Restaurant Week based on reporting from restaurants; over 14,000 meals were ordered off of the prix-fixe Restaurant Week menu.

Restaurant Satisfaction

Total restaurant participation reached 120 restaurants for 2016, marking continued support for the event. Restaurants continued to be satisfied with the program: 88% were satisfied with their participation in the event, 80% were satisfied with the price points, and 97% of participants indicated that they would like to participate again.

Customer Traffic and Restaurant Revenue

Almost 80% 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 among customers who otherwise would not have dined out.



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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 2016, more than 4,000 comment cards were received. Some of the results are summarized below.

Restaurant Week Encouraged Customers to Dine Out

Approximately 57% of Sonoma County Restaurant Week survey respondents indicated that they had chosen to go out because it was Restaurant Week. While 42% indicated that they had not been encouraged by the event, 25% of diners heard about the event from a friend, another 18% had heard about it in the newspaper, and about 5% heard about it on the radio. 13% heard about it directly through the event website, and 6% heard about it from Facebook. This suggests the event is gaining popularity and recognition throughout the greater Sonoma County community.

Lunch Option Participation

Nearly 20% of all diners took advantage of the lunch event. Although only 16% 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

Nearly 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.

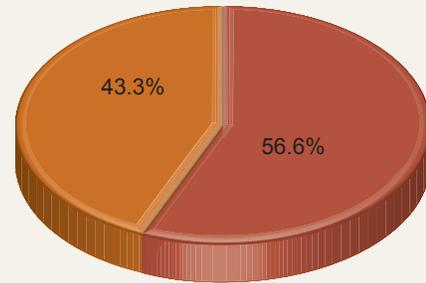
Point of Origin

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 2016.

The Point of Origin, 2016 (Respondent-Based)

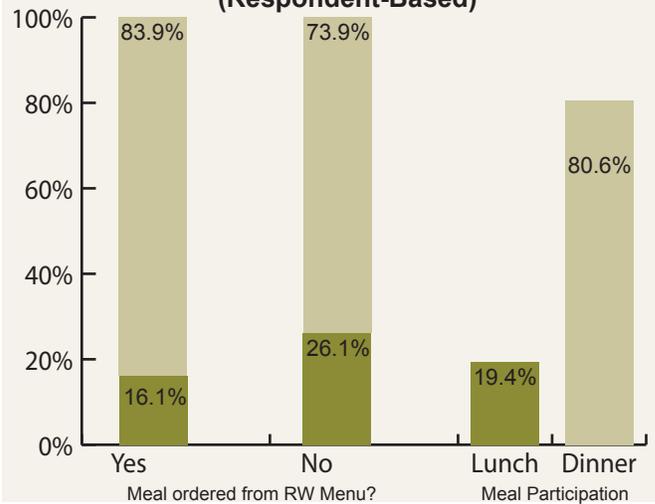
Area	Diners	Restaurants
Outside of County	24.3%	-
Santa Rosa	33.7%	34.5%
Sonoma	8.8%	8.4%
Petaluma	11%	14.3%
Sebastopol	6.2%	7.6%
Windsor	3.9%	3.4%
Unincorporated	5.3%	21.0%
Healdsburg	3.0%	7.6%
Rohnert Park	4.0%	3.4%
Cotati	-	-
Cloverdale	-	-

Promotion Encouraged Decision to Dine Out, 2016 (Respondent Based)

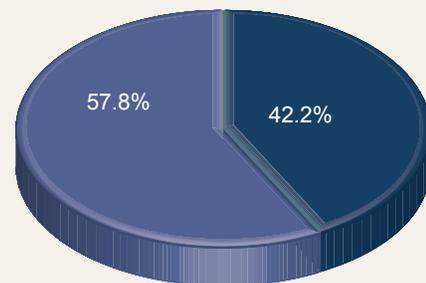


Yes (56.6%) No (43.3%)

Ordered from Restaurant Week Menu, Lunch vs. Dinner participation, 2016 (Respondent-Based)



New Patron to Restaurant, 2016 (Respondent-Based)



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

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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

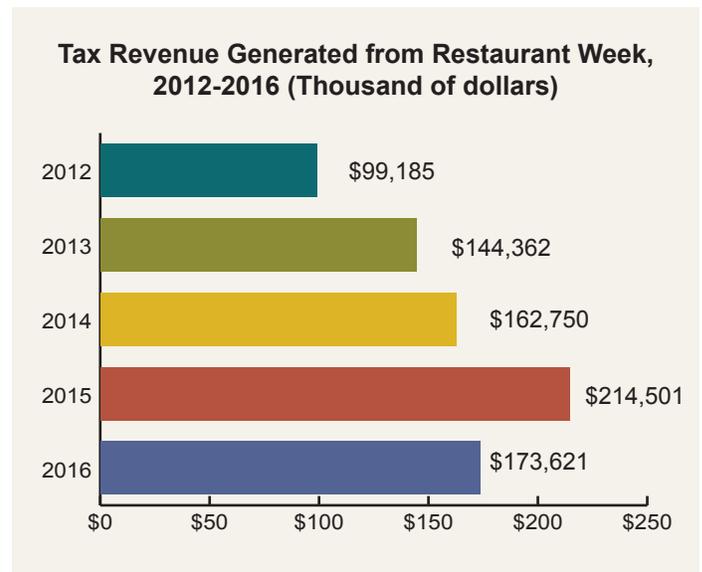
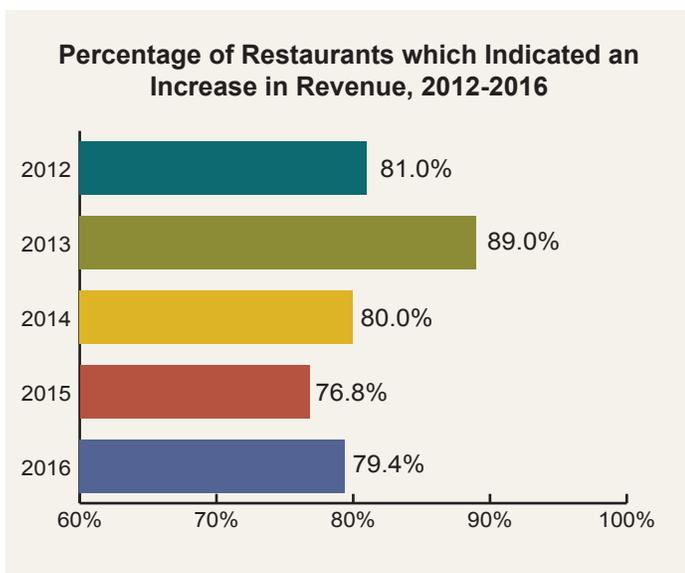
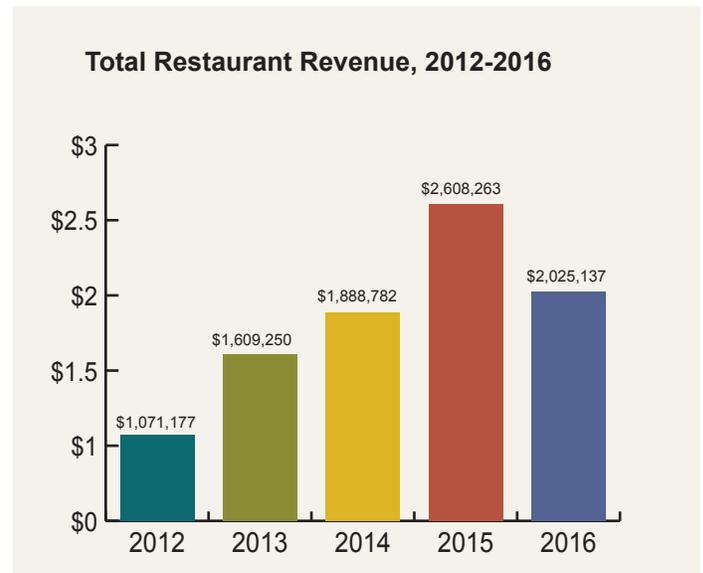
Total customer expenditure during Restaurant Week is valued at \$2,025,137. This number is reported by restaurants directly through surveying.

Tax Revenue Generated from Restaurant Week

The sales tax revenue from the event was \$173,621 in 2016.

Restaurants Indicated an Increase in Revenue

Nearly 80% of restaurants reported an increase in revenue in 2016. The average reported increase in revenue was 7%.



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 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

2016 Restaurant Week was sponsored by the Jackson Family Wines for the fourth 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 kindly hosted a launch event for the restaurants to thank them for their participation. We look forward to another such event in 2017.

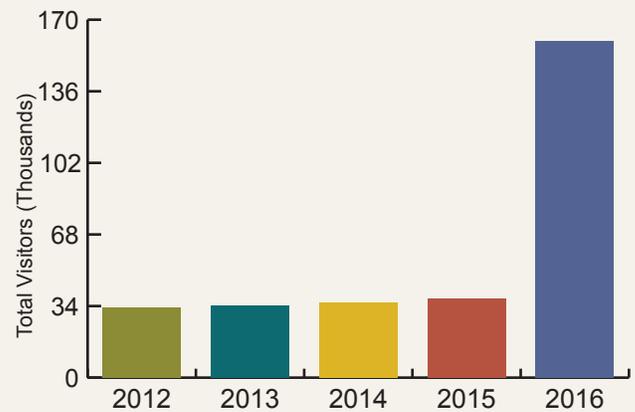
Website

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. The Restaurant Week website was hosted on sonomacounty.com as a result of our continued partnership with Sonoma County Tourism. 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.

Sonoma County Restaurant Week on Facebook

The Restaurant Week campaign grew on Facebook in 2016. 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 31,251 users and each post had an average reach of 1,302 people. Overall, our likes grew to 5,526 in 2016. 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, 2012 - 2016



Website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, 2015

Website

160,038 Unique Visitors

1 min 13 sec Average length of visit

Facebook

5,526 people like Sonoma County Restaurant Week on Facebook

31,251 the total unique "reaches" during Restaurant Week

1,302 the average "reach" of each post during Restaurant Week

Twitter

1,403 the number of SoCoRestWeek followers

619 the number of SoCoRestWeek tweets

Instagram

630 the total number of followers

41 the number of pictures posted

79 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 1,403 in 2016.

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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:

We had good exposure and lots of new guests!

-Edwin Martinez, Owner
La Perla Peruvian Cuisine

Restaurant [Week] is a terrific event that is timed perfectly. The first quarter is historically a very slow time of year in our industry. Great event!

-Sue Kade, Owner
La Vera Pizza

It was a very successful Restaurant Week for Earth's Bounty this year. We were full each night in the restaurant.

-Amy Ludwick, Managing Partner
Earth's Bounty Kitchen & Wine Bar

This was an excellent opportunity to introduce Quinoa Restaurant!

-Juan Gutierrez, Partner
Quinoa Cocina Peruana

Our restaurant revenue increased by 10%!

-Jan Young, RGM
Boathouse Sushi

Overall positive feedback and uptick in sales!

-Lina Hoshino, Co-owner
Petaluma Pie Company

Perfect time. It rained and we got extra business that we otherwise would not have had.

-Martin Chavez, Manager/Owner
The Plaza Bistro

Good year so far. Overall numbers are up!

-Bob Rice, Owner
Breakaway Cafe

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 4,000 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 the National Restaurant Association. Economic impact figures from 2012-2016 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 2016. 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

bite club eats

Sonoma West Publisher's, Inc.

The Healdsburg Tribune

CLOVERDALE



REVELLE

SONOMA WEST

THE WINDSOR TIMES

The seventh 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, Josue Rivera, 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 advertisements, and updating content on the official Restaurant Week website. Josue also updated and compiled the results of the seventh 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

American AgCredit	Midstate Construction
American River Bank	NorBAR
City of Santa Rosa	Sonoma County Alliance
Comcast	Summit State Bank
George Petersen Insurance	Vantreo Insurance
Keegan & Coppin Co.	Zainer Rinehart Clarke

MEDIA LEVEL



Sonoma County Board of Supervisors