

Posted on: March 25, 2020

## Press Release - Supporting Local Businesses in Woodland

### PRESS RELEASE



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#### COVID-19 - Supporting Local Businesses in Woodland

March 25, 2020 - Woodland's business community, including its local shops, restaurants, and professional service providers, play a vital role in the health of our economy and the resiliency of our community. Shelter-in-place orders issued by Yolo County Health and by the Governor to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus are essential to the physical health of local residents and to the region. Still, these measures put a significant strain on our local businesses and their employees.

It is important to acknowledge that during this difficult time, local businesses have responded swiftly by not only ramping up sanitation, but also shifting toward curbside pickups, at-home delivery services, creative online shopping experiences, and many offering special senior and low-income services.

President of the Woodland Chamber of Commerce, Aniek Ramsay, expresses her admiration and support of the Woodland business community, "I truly am in awe of our Woodland businesses and how they have locked "virtual" arms to work together, promote one another and stay positive. As I have stated previously, none of us have encountered anything like this before and it is imperative that we support our local businesses throughout this crisis. It is also vital to the health of our community that we heed the call to stay at home, practice social distancing and only shop when necessary. Finding some immediate financial relief so that our employers can continue operations and retain as much of their workforce as possible is also an uppermost priority. We will continue to work diligently with all of our partners to find and promote solutions that will ensure the health and vitality of our treasured business community."

Like the Chamber, the City of Woodland is strongly advising residents to comply with all shelter-in-place requirements and guidance provided by the State, Federal and local governments. At the same time, residents are encouraged to continue to support local businesses wherever possible, while maintaining compliance with government guidelines.

Here are some practical ways community members can support local businesses and Woodland's economy during these unprecedented times:

- Take advantage of curbside pickup and delivery options from many of Woodland's local restaurants and specialty food retailers. A list of restaurants open for curbside pick-up and delivery can be found here: <http://arcg.is/0nKH15> .
- Search websites, Instagram and Facebook for local boutiques and retailers offering unique online shopping experiences and deals on shipping. Check out the Woodland based @Nytch app that helps connect independent, offline businesses to local shoppers looking for specific items.
- Interact with businesses' social media pages. Likes, comments and shares go a long way. And leave a positive review!
- Purchase (online) local branded merchandise such as hats, mugs, t-shirts, and share on your own social media channels.
- If possible, maintain current memberships with local service providers to show support of their services in the community until they are able to reopen to the public.
- Reschedule appointments rather than cancelling; purchase gift certificates online for later use. Look for new local mobile apps for online gift card purchases.

Owner of Savory Café, Juan Barajas, shares important statistics from the James Beard Foundation on the dire situation the food and beverage community is in due to the Covid-19 pandemic, "The food and beverage community employs nearly 16 percent of the American workforce. These businesses support local economies...pump[ing] as much as 60 percent of their money back into their local business communities. Restaurants, bars, and other independent food and beverage operations are often on the frontlines of community revival and real-estate development."

Juan, like others in the downtown business area, are checking in with their fellow restaurant and Main Street business owners daily to see how they can support each other and the broader Woodland community during this time.

### **Supporting Food Suppliers (and One Another!)**

As residents shelter in place to flatten the COVID-19 curve, a tendency to stockpile food and supplies may be a natural tendency to avoid going to the store. Limiting the number of trips to public spaces including grocery stores is a good practice. However, according to the California Grocers Association (CGA), stockpiling has created a tremendous strain on our food and grocery supply chain and has demanded around-the-clock efforts from all in the food & ag industry. It also makes it extremely difficult for Woodland's most vulnerable populations to find the food and supplies they need without making several trips away from home.

A statement issued by the CGA on March 20, assures customers "...that the supply chain is healthy and there is enough for all. But with the increased demand, the grocery stores need a chance to catch up to restock the shelves. We encourage consumers to remain calm and exercise sensibility when shopping. Overbuying is a concern as a customer who buys more than they need could prevent another customer's preparation."

### ***What can YOU do to help? A few things to remember:***

First, purchase only what you can consume! This will help alleviate the pressures of increased demand on our farmers, allow grocery stores to restock, and help you avoid food waste at home due to spoiled food.

Second, remember that there are multiple ways to safely access food during this time and support your local businesses:

1. Sign up for local retailer's home delivery services. Order from the 45+ Woodland-based restaurants that offer curbside pickup & home delivery as well as local apps that offer contact free pickup!
2. Look for senior & low-income food assistance and delivery through the Yolo Food Bank, Raley's and Bel Air, Nugget Market and Food 4 Less
  - **Nugget Market & Food 4 Less offering Dedicated Senior/At-Risk Shopping Hours** – Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 6 AM to 8 AM, are temporarily designated as shopping hours specifically for guests ages 65+ and those guests who are at-risk due to health conditions.
  - **Raley's and Bel Air Curbside Pick Up and Senior Essentials Bags** - Curbside pickup for prescriptions at Pharmacy locations. \$20 and \$35 Senior Essentials Bags available in stores or for curbside pick up, <https://www.raleys.com/senior-essentials-bag/>.
  - **Yolo Food Bank Low-income/senior home delivery** - Yolo Food Bank, in partnership with the County of Yolo, is providing service to low-income senior citizens and other Yolo County residents with underlying health conditions who should not leave their homes to visit the Food Bank's regularly-scheduled food distributions. This service provides a weekly home delivery food box, supplemented with a bag of fresh produce, dairy products, and other essential items. <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/edd823037f444aee819eba4628d889a8>
3. Sign up for a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program at one of our Yolo County farms. Signing up for a CSA allows you to buy local, seasonal produce directly from a farmer in our community.

#### **Looking for temporary employment or volunteer opportunities?**

Food service and healthcare related temporary employment & volunteer opportunities are now available in response to COVID-19. Periodically access the City's Economic Development response webpage for available opportunities in Woodland and Yolo County: <http://cityofwoodland.org/1210/COVID-19-Resources-for-Businesses-Employ#temporaryemployment>

#### **Additional Resources**

The City of Woodland will continue to provide information on ways in which residents can support local businesses and on the extraordinary measures businesses are taking to continue to serve the residents of Woodland as we weather this storm together. Visit the City's primary COVID-19 response webpage: <http://cityofwoodland.org/1209/COVID-19>, the City's Economic Development response webpage: <https://www.cityofwoodland.org/COVID-19-Response-for-Businesses-and-Employees>, and the City's social media channels on Facebook and Instagram: @cityofwoodland, @thefoodfront, and @woodlandcondev, for additional resources and information.