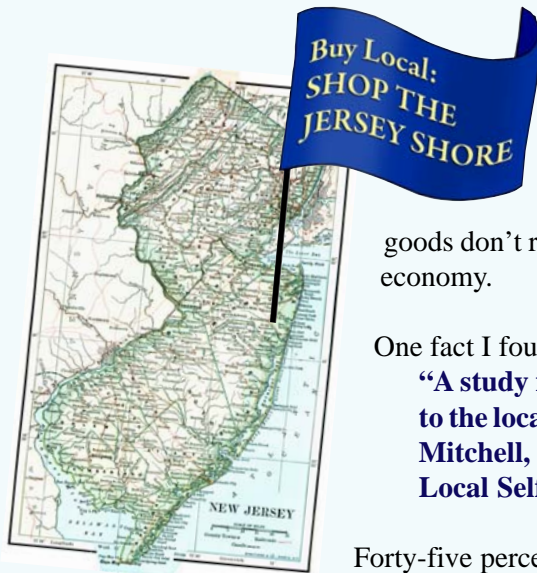


# Put money in your pocket: support a local business

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The December 26, 2008 issue of **USA WEEKEND** featured a story called “*Local & Loving It: One writer’s quest to help her community by celebrating birthdays closer to home.*” The story talked about the benefits of buying local – everything from produce and foods to gifts and services. The reasons included environmental concerns like reducing pollution (because local goods don’t require long-haul shipping) as well as the quest to build up the local economy.

One fact I found especially interesting was this:

**“A study found that for every \$100 spent in a chain store, \$14 went back to the local economy. For a locally-owned business, it was \$45,” says Stacy Mitchell, author of *Big Box Swindle* and researcher with the Institute for Local Self-Reliance.**

Forty-five percent...that’s a staggering figure. When you shop provincially almost half of your purchase stays in the local economy.

The story went on to say that “locally-owned businesses buy a lot of services from other local businesses. So by buying from one local business, you’re not only supporting that business, you’re supporting other local businesses.”

The author, Natalie Ermann Russell, concedes that it’s not always possible to buy everything locally, but she advocates getting in the habit of looking locally first.

Even if you overlook the pitiful state of the economy, there are numerous benefits to buying your clothing, home and office products, food and services from a locally-owned business—one of the most compelling reasons being that it may, in turn, help your business. I’ve always been a “Made in the USA” kind of shopper whenever possible, but this concept brings it even closer to home. “Made in Jersey” sounds pretty appealing right now.

So, this year, why not make a resolution to support local businesses and fellow Chamber of Commerce members whenever possible? The result may be that by buying on Main Street you end up putting money in your pocket as well.

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*Jo Smith Schloeder is a writer, designer and marketing consultant based in Wall Township. For more information visit her website at [www.CreativeNJ.com](http://www.CreativeNJ.com). Copyright 2009.*