

## CalaverasGrown

2020 was a very difficult year for our community here in Calaveras County. I know personally for me it was hard because of the lockdowns and closures of many places. My summer plans had to drastically change because Hogan Lake and Melonies were not open for camping. I know that the local economy probably missed out on a lot of the revenue that comes from people who visit from out of the area. They may come to use the lakes but they also stop at the local stores and gas stations. In my small town of San Andreas, we don't have very many options to help support our town's economy. I do have a few ideas about what we as individuals can do to support and enhance our regional economy.

First, we can support small businesses in our area. A new shop that has opened up and expanded recently is the This and That Store. This store is new to our area and sells household goods. If the local residents shop at this store before they run to Jackson or to the Valley they might save a little money and find what they need. I know my parents have bought a few things that they would have otherwise had to go out of Calaveras county to find.

Other small businesses that we can support are the local restaurants. Even in this small town, we have lots of good options. From Pickle Patch to the newly opened Station 49. Another way to help is by buying gift certificates to these places. I personally was thrilled to get a gift certificate for Rolling Dough.

Another way we can support and enhance our regional economy is to work where we live. I know a lot of my friends want to find jobs in Jackson because it's not cool to work in the same town you live in. What these friends don't understand is that it cost money to work farther away. You end up buying gas, eating out, and shopping after work but not in the town you want to support.

I think the local farmers market on Thursday in San Andreas is a great idea to support our local economy. The fact that even though we are struggling with covid you are able to order products on line is really smart. Not only does buying locally help your community it also helps you eat better because the source of your food is much fresher and more healthy.

Having the community garden is another way to bring people from outside the area in. I think because we are used to the garden we don't realize how beneficial it is and how unique it is to our town. We as citizens of this town need to help support it and volunteer at it.

I feel confident that in the coming years when businesses open and people realize how important it is to support our local economy by buying local and volunteering that Calaveras County can become a better place to live. Small towns like ours are a great place to grow up and call home.