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Santa Fe Alliance Membership Criteria

The Santa Fe Alliance is a coalition of locally-owned, independent businesses, organizations and community members dedicated to building a healthy local economy. We are pleased to have significant growth in inquiries and membership; this speaks to the quality of our community and its business owners.

What does “local” mean? What is a “local business?” These simple questions can be surprisingly complex. For the Santa Fe Alliance, there are two aspects to being local: **Geography** and **Ownership**.

A primary goal of the Santa Fe Alliance is to strengthen the communities and economy of Santa Fe and the surrounding region. Local businesses are defined as those located in Santa Fe or adjoining counties. For retail businesses this is straightforward, but for other types of businesses it may not be so clear-cut. For example, including our local farmers often requires a broader geographic definition. Many of these farms, while situated away from Santa Fe’s nucleus, are located within our northern New Mexico “food shed.”

Sometimes determining which businesses are independently owned can be difficult. What about a locally owned fast-food franchise? Or an insurance agent with a national company and a local office? Many businesses participate in cooperative marketing, offer exclusive lines, and have all sorts of other business agreements.

The Santa Fe Alliance defines a locally-owned business as one where the community member has **full autonomy** and **decision-making authority** with respect to his or her business practices. An owner with decision-making authority can:

- choose to purchase goods and services from other locally-owned businesses, increasing the economic return of every dollar for the community
- change their business practices to respond to the social and environmental needs and desires of the community
- promote their business in ways that maintain the unique character of a specific community
- communicate directly with members of the community on a day-to-day basis



Community Advocacy Local Economy

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Please take a few moments to answer the following questions to determine the best type of membership for your business.

1. Is your business privately held? (versus publicly traded) YES or NO

Intent: the Santa Fe Alliance serves local owners who are available to meet with us and have autonomy to transform any and all aspects of their businesses to support local communities. While our group is not equipped to engage with national/international organizations, there are other good resources for those businesses. Local managers of businesses that operate on a national/international scale are invited to join as Affiliate Members.

2. Do the business owners, totaling greater than 50% of the business ownership, live in Santa Fe or adjoining counties? YES or NO

Intent: You might have business financing that comes in the form of debt, equity, family trusts, or other innovative scenarios. This question relates to whether or not the business owners who have responsibility for that financing reside in Santa Fe and adjoining counties. Our intent is to support business owners who are actively involved in this community.

3. Is your business registered in the state of New Mexico, with no corporate or national headquarters outside New Mexico? YES or NO

Intent: the Santa Fe Alliance is a local organization comprised of local residents and business owners. There are other organizations better equipped to work with businesses that operate (inter) nationally and have headquarters outside of our region. Local managers of businesses that operate on a national or international scale are invited to join as Affiliate Members.

4. Can your business make independent decisions regarding the name and look of your business, as well as all business purchasing, practices and distribution? YES or NO

Intent: the Santa Fe Alliance promotes reciprocity between local business owners and customers in order to strengthen the communities of Santa Fe and adjoining counties. By autonomy we mean the ability to choose local potatoes for French fries rather than having to use what's shipped from a parent company, to change delivery methods to lessen environmental impacts, to re-organize the ownership or profit-sharing structure of the business, or to pursue any other idea a local owner has to strengthen our community through their business.

5. Do you pay all your own marketing, rent, and other business expenses without assistance from, or payment to, a corporate headquarters? YES or NO

Intent: One of the advantages of locally-owned, independent businesses is that they're unique and contribute to our region's unique character. Businesses that are part of national marketing cooperatives and use the same names, signs and ads don't contribute in the same way to this sense of place.

Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. If you answered "yes" to all, you are encouraged to become a Business Member of the Alliance. If you answered "no" to any question, we encourage your involvement as an Affiliate Member. Affiliate members receive all the benefits of business membership with the exception of advocacy, marketing and promotional support.