

Mendo Grass

Technical Assistance Report

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Center for Economic Development
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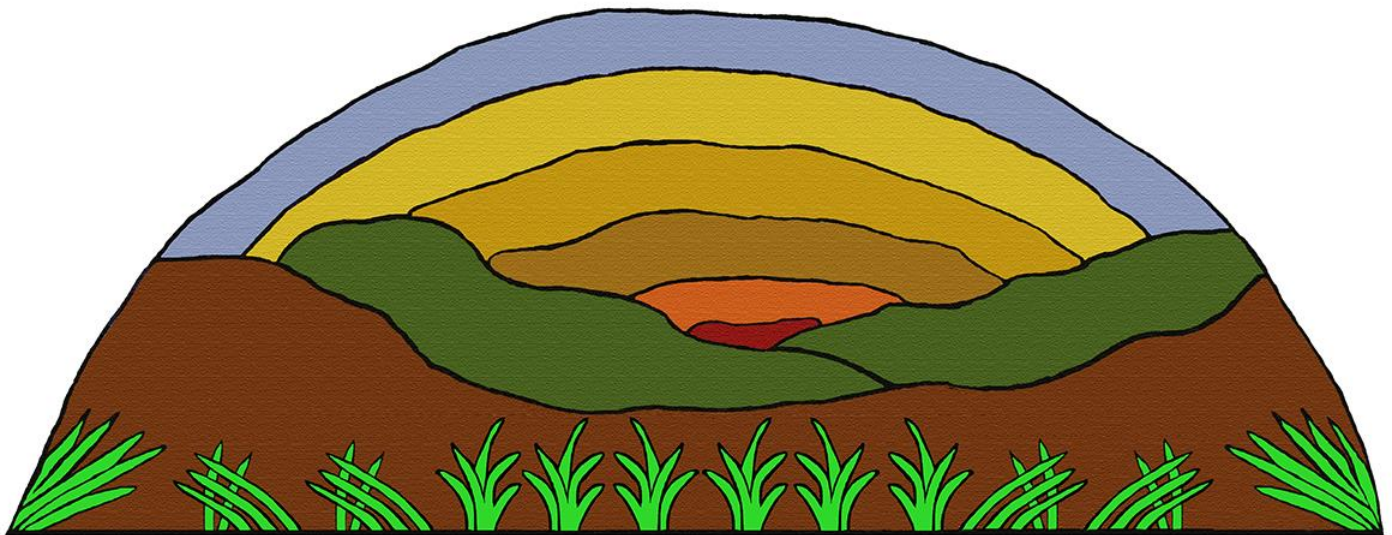
Strategic Partner of the
California MEP Network



Acknowledgements

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MENDO GRASS

Introduction

In September 2022, CED staff met with Mendo Grass to discuss their needs and determine the areas of service that could be provided by the Ukiah CDBG grant. During discussions between Mendo Grass and CED staff, it was determined that Mendo Grass required assistance with their current website, to which CED staff have developed a recommendations report to assist in optimizing their website. Additionally, CED staff have prepared a report on grant opportunities, social media best practices, social media post templates, and a schedule of social media postings, along with a detailed market research section using ESRI Business Analyst software.

Website Optimization Report

Mendo Grass requested assistance with website optimization and development. CED staff coordinated with Mendo Grass to determine how best to optimize their current website with the aim of supporting user accessibility and increasing interactive opportunities.

The website was designed with function and aesthetics in mind. It contains distinctive Home, About Us, Products, Shops, Blog, and Contact Us pages; these include essential information, allowing customers to navigate and learn more about the business. Mendo Grass' website features photo galleries, shopping abilities, contact forms, owner and product introductions, and the business logo. Each page on the website has a white background and incorporates a uniform color scheme for an easy-on-the-eyes experience. The website has been formatted for both desktop and mobile browsing. Although the website has all the features mentioned above, additional measures can be taken to further optimize the website.

The majority of the CED's recommendations involve the visual aesthetics of the website and navigational issues. The shopping cart button, located on the right side of the website, doesn't function properly. When clicked, it would redirect users back to the Home page. The images on the Home page are relatively low resolution. Additionally, the images located under "OUR PRODUCTS " are also low resolution and have inconsistent sizing. For both of these pages, the CED recommends updating the images with higher resolution versions and implementing consistent sizing of product images. The "Order Now" button blends with the background making it difficult to see. Additionally, the button does not function properly. By altering the text to contrast more with the background, the button will be more noticeable and improve the user-friendliness of the site. The "QUICK LINKS" located in the footer do not function properly and result in "page not found" errors. In addition, on the About Us page, there is a lack of visuals. Including images to capture the attention of users and aid in establishing a more personal connection with potential customers. The slideshow on the Products page is missing images for the first and third slides. Lastly, the "SWAG" section is also missing images. In addition to these recommendations, CED staff will continue to be in contact with Mendo Grass to further assist with optimizing their website.

Grant and Loan Research

This section has been divided into three categories, covering grants and loan opportunities, along with additional resources that may be of interest to Mendo Grass. These grants and loans have been selected according to the needs and potential qualifications of Mendo Grass.

Grant Opportunities

California Dream Fund

Opens: Rolling

Deadline: Rolling

Funding Amount: Up to \$10,000

The California Dream Fund is available to small businesses who participate in services from a participating SBDC or Women's center in the state of California. Upon completion of services with one of these entities, businesses can apply to the California Dream Fund for grant funding of up to \$10,000. Participating centers in Mendocino County include the local SBDC and the West Women's Center. Contact these entities for additional information. Detailed information on the requirements can be found at the website listed below.

Website: <https://calosba.ca.gov/funding-grants-incentives/california-dream-fund-program/>

Available Loans

SBDC (Small Business Development Center)

The SBDC in Mendocino County offers free programs to small business owners. The SBDC can assist with additional financial hurdles that small businesses may encounter. Services include one-on-one financial advising, webinar classes, and assistance with financial loans.

Website: <https://www.mendosbdc.org/>

Additional Resources

Women's Business Center at Jedi

The Women's Business Center at Jedi is a nonprofit business center that offers free business assistance services to small businesses throughout Northern California. Services include financial coaching and courses to help businesses build business plans.

Website: <https://www.wbcjedi.org/>

West Business Development Center

The West Business Development Center offers financial development services to small business owners located in Mendocino County. Services include webinars and community education events.

Website: <https://www.westcenter.org/>

Social Media Best Practices

Social media plays a very important role in the continuing development of a business. Businesses can use social media posts to attract new customers, strengthen relationships with existing ones, and freely promote services and products. In addition, it helps to connect a face to the business by highlighting the people behind the scenes. A number of strategies can be employed by Mendo Grass to enhance its social media presence and grow their business.

Social Media Best Practices

It is important for a business to follow specific guidelines in order to create effective and efficient posts. The first is to create consistency in the frequency of posts. This will show your followers that you are invested in your business and its social media presence. Lack of consistency with posts can result in a loss of followers and traffic to your profile. It is also important to note that posting too frequently can deter some potential customers. The CED recommends an approach of quality over quantity and posting about once a week to maintain consistency. Another great practice is to provide sincere and genuine posts to strengthen your customer relationships. Providing information about how Mendo Grass was created will improve customer loyalty and positive feedback from your followers. Mendo Grass has already implemented this practice in recent posts, and we highly encourage it to continue.

It is essential for Mendo Grass to engage with followers and connect with other businesses alike. Connecting with new followers or businesses in the same industry can foster further growth and expansion of your brand. The CED recommends that Mendo Grass follow, like, and comment on other posts to improve engagement and maximize growth. Collaborating with other businesses is another good tool for engagement, especially with brands that are similar to your own or that compliments your business. An example could be a restaurant that Mendo Grass is interested in selling its products to in the future. Cooperating or partnering with other local small businesses helps to establish your business within a community and local market. Mendo Grass can also receive helpful feedback from other businesses. These relationships can prove mutually beneficial for both businesses by extending their web presence, exposure, and by fostering positive relationships with other local businesses.

Additional social media tips:

- Keep active on your platforms even when not posting, and interact with your followers
- Include website links in posts for ease of access to purchase products
- Stay consistent with posts
- Facebook receives a lot of traffic on Wednesdays, making it a key day for posting
- Repost any customers' posts about Mendo Grass. This can further your relationship and show that you care about your customer's experience

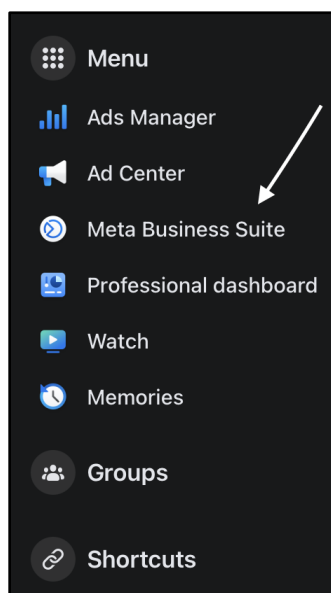
Facebook Shops

Facebook is a very powerful tool for businesses as you can utilize it for ads, engagement, online sales, and Facebook Pages. Facebook has 2.91 billion active users, making it one of the best platforms to improve your social media marketing. A Facebook page can connect your customers to key information about your business, products, services, and upcoming events.

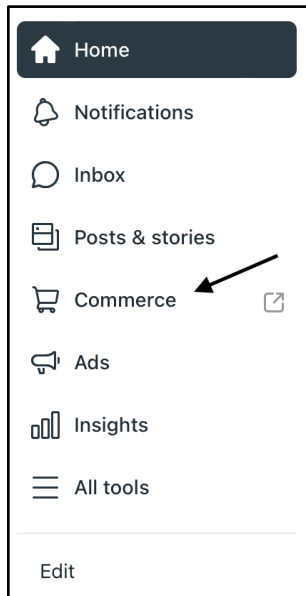
One marketing strategy that Mendo Grass can take advantage of is Facebook Shops, which can be accessed through both Instagram and Facebook. This makes it a lot easier for customers to access the products and services you are selling on either platform. Once your shop is set up, you can quickly tag your products in posts making it easier for customers to view your items. Making purchases via Facebook Shops is very streamlined and can result in customers making purchases they may not have otherwise made had they needed to go to a brick-and-mortar storefront. CED staff have included a short guide to setting up a Facebook Shop below.

How to Set Up Facebook Shops

1) Navigate to your “Meta Business Suite” on the page’s sidebar menu



2) Click on “Commerce”

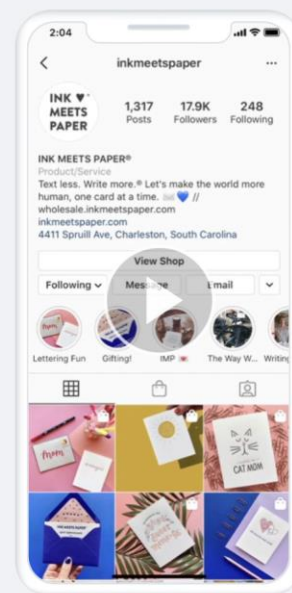


3) Continue by clicking on “Get Started”

Sell on Facebook, Instagram or both


There are a couple of ways to share your inventory on Facebook and Instagram. Shops are branded storefronts to sell, tag and advertise physical items. If you sell other items, or you just want to advertise, you can use a catalog.

Get started




4) Select “Create a Shop”

Choose a way to sell




Create a shop

Add physical products to sell, tag and advertise from a custom shop on Facebook and Instagram. If you're new to selling and want to try our inventory and order management tools, you'll be able to create a test shop.
Recommended for ecommerce products
[Learn more](#)



Create a catalog

Add products, vehicles, rentals and more, and choose different ways to promote them. You can start with just one item, or add an inventory of millions.
Recommended for travel, rentals, vehicles, and media
[Learn more](#)




Shops are currently only available to businesses that sell physical goods. You can sell or advertise other items on Facebook and Instagram by creating a catalog.


[Get started](#)


5) Select the Facebook icon to start your shop on Facebook


-We will be able to connect Instagram once Facebook is complete


Create your shop

Autosave progress 

**Get started**

 Choose checkout method

 Choose sales channels



 Preview

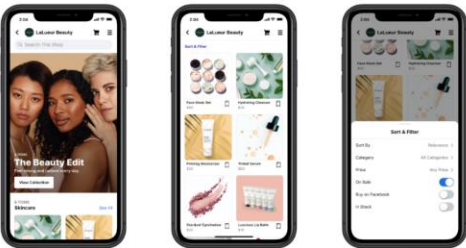
Start selling on Facebook, Instagram or both

Setting up a shop is free and only takes a few minutes. Once it's approved and you've added products to your catalog, customers will be able to browse your shop and make purchases.

One shop, more ways to get discovered

Design and manage your shop on Facebook and Instagram from one place.

 Instagram  Facebook





Fast and secure checkout

Customers can browse and buy products directly in the app or be redirected to your website's checkout.

Zero subscription fees

Do you already sell online?

Get set up with your partner platform

If you're selling on Shopify, BigCommerce or another partner platform, create your shop by importing and syncing your products.

You'll be directed to complete setup based on the platform you use.

[Sync a partner platform](#)

Test your API integration

Create a test shop to try out your integration and preview the customer purchase experience.

[Create a test shop](#)

[Next](#)

[Report a Problem](#)

6) Choose you preferred checkout message from the following options:

- Checkout with Facebook or Instagram (Recommended)
- Checkout on another website

c) Checkout with Messaging

✓ Get started

1 Choose checkout method

Choose sales channels

Preview

Give customers a way to pay

Your checkout method determines where customers provide their payment info when they want to make purchases from your shop.

Checkout with Facebook or Instagram

Recommended

Selling fees are waived through June 30, 2023. Only available for businesses located in the US. [Learn more](#)

Reduced friction at checkout

Customers will be able to browse your shop and pay for items directly on Facebook or Instagram. Their payment credentials are securely saved for faster future purchases.

More opportunities to make sales

An integrated checkout puts you in control of the end-to-end shopping experience. Create collections and tag items to make it easier to discover your brand.

Exclusive access to creative tools

Connect with your audience using product launches, Shopping from Creators and live shopping.

Get more email subscribers

Adjust your email opt-in settings on your shop's home page and checkout to help boost email sign-ups.

[Common questions about this checkout method >](#)

✓ [Shop Pay](#) Turn on Shop Pay by Shopify as a payment method

Shop Pay is a fast and convenient payment option already used by millions of shoppers. Adding more payment methods like Shop Pay improves the customer experience and can increase sales for your business. This will be available starting on August 2, 2021.

What are the terms of service for Shop Pay?

If you choose to offer Shop Pay at checkout, you agree to [Shopify's terms and conditions](#). This payment method is only available in the US. When Shop Pay is turned on, we'll share order information from Shop Pay transactions with Shopify, which may be used according to their terms and policies. This can include providing Shop Pay users with services like order tracking and payment status updates and recommending products, sellers and services to users in its Shop app. You can turn off Shop Pay at any time in Settings. [Learn More](#)

Checkout on another website

Customers can browse your shop on Facebook or Instagram. When they checkout, they'll be directed to your website from an item's details page.

[Learn more](#)

Checkout with messaging

When customers go to checkout, they'll be directed to send your business a message on Messenger or WhatsApp. Customers won't be directed to your website or in-app checkout.

9:41

The button on the item's detail page will start the in-app checkout process right away.

Previous

Next

- 7) Select Mendo Grass's Page to sell from
- 8) Connect a Business Account User to manage your shop
- 9) Connect your business email
- 10) Set your desired settings for all shipping and returns

✓ Get started

✓ Choose checkout method

✓ Choose sales channels

Shipping and returns

○ Preview


Set shipping and returns

Choose how you'll ship orders and provide some information about how you'll handle returns. You'll be able to update your shipping options or add unique shipping profiles later.

Default shipping profile

This will automatically apply to all your products. You'll be able to customize shipping profiles for items later.

Country

 United States of America

States

Select the places you ship to in the U.S.

51 options selected

Address types


Select the types of addresses you ship to.

5 options selected

Handling time

The number of business days between receiving an order and marking it as shipped in the Orders tab. You must ship orders within this timeframe to comply with our merchant policies.

3 days

 Add at least one shipping option for your customers to select at checkout.

☐ Offer Standard shipping

☐ Offer Expedited shipping

☐ Offer Rush shipping

Return window

11) Preview your shop details and confirm Facebook's Seller Agreement

It is important to note that these settings update frequently and may change in the future. Once the basic setup is complete, you can now manage and customize your shop to your preferences. All items will appear in your shop automatically, but you have the ability to change which items are available to see. You can create a collection to showcase a group of products in your shop.

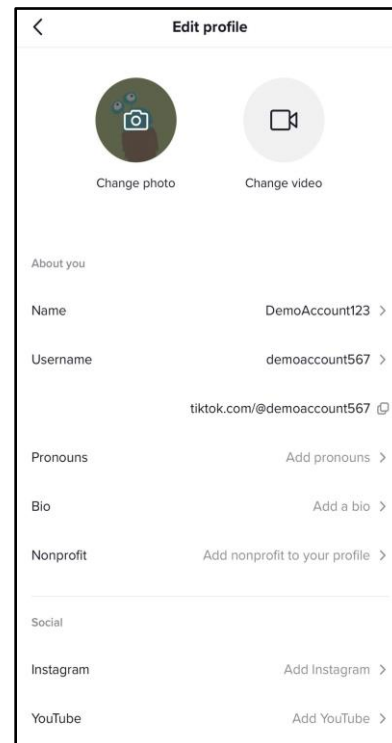
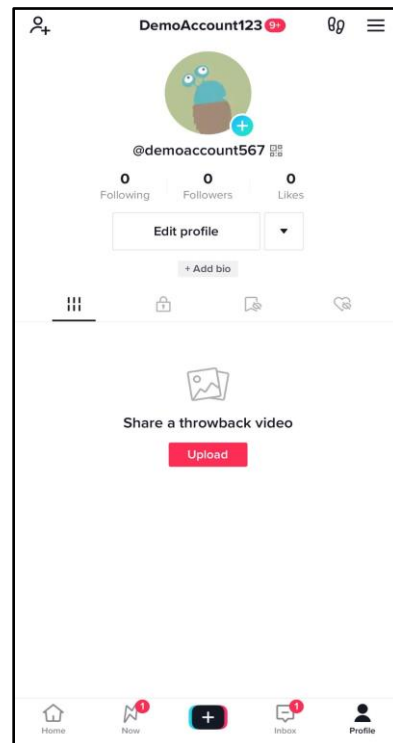
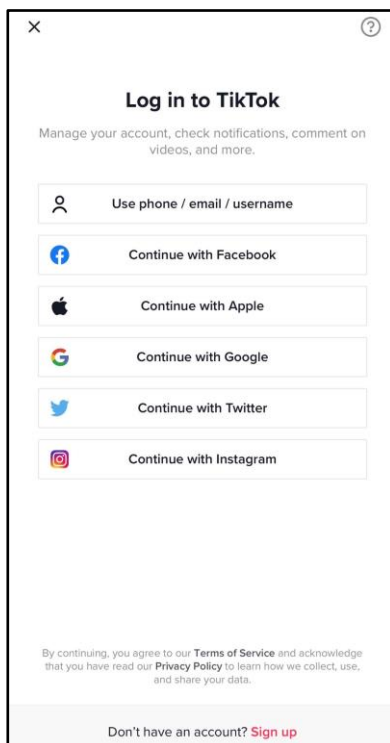
Introduction to TikTok

TikTok is a video-sharing app that allows users to create and upload 15-second, 1-minute, or 3-minute videos. The app is particularly popular among younger demographics. While TikTok's primary appeal remains with younger demographics, it is growing in popularity among older users as well. Approximately 90% of users are below the age of 50.

How to Create a TikTok Account

- 1) The process of creating an account can be done using an email address, a phone number, or even an existing Facebook account.
- 2) In the app, a basic username is automatically generated for you. At the bottom right corner, you will see an icon that says Profile. Click or tap this to change your username.
- 3) Then click or tap Edit Profile and there you can change it to your business's name. Your bio can also include a short description of your business, its location, and your profile picture. You can link your other social media platforms (e.g. Instagram and YouTube) and TikTok profiles are public by default.

How to Navigate TikTok

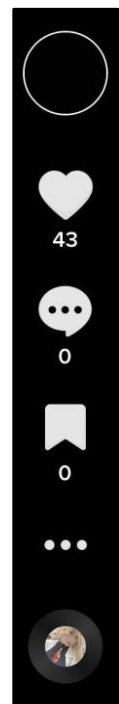


After creating a profile, you'll find four different tabs and a white square between them at the bottom of your screen.



From left to right you'll see: Home, Now, Inbox, and Profile. The Home Page has two options to view news feeds from other users; "Following" & "For You." For the TikTok accounts that you follow, their news feed will be posted below "Following." The "For You" feed is an algorithmically generated stream of videos that are catered to your account. The Now tab is a new feature that was just released where you post a picture with the front and back cameras of your phone. This will capture a realistic view of what is going on throughout your day. The Inbox tab is where you will receive direct messages. You can only send and receive messages from accounts that follow you back. The Inbox is also where you will also get notified of who likes and comments on your videos. You can edit your account and find your videos from the Profile tab. The middle icon with the "+" sign is used for posting your videos.

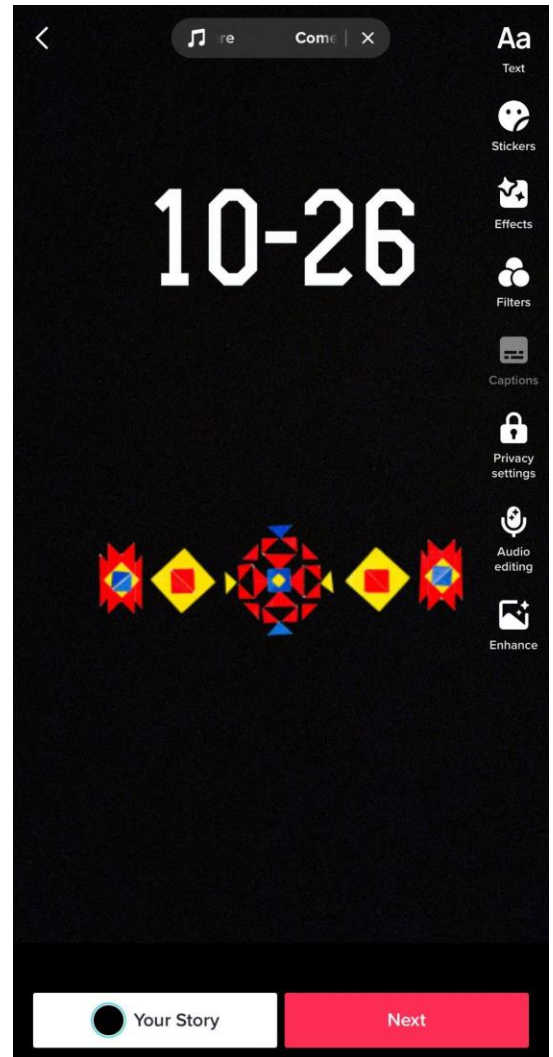
There are five different icons on the right-hand side of every video. From top to bottom you'll see: a circle icon, a heart icon, a speech bubble icon, a bookmark icon, and an icon with three dots. The circle icon is a profile picture and a red/white follow button. You can click the small plus sign to follow someone under the For You Page. If you are using your phone, you can also swipe right to the creator's page, follow them, and watch their other videos. Double-tap your screen if you want to like a video, you can also do so by clicking the white heart icon. To comment on a video, click the white speech bubble. Favorite and share video by pressing the last two white icons under the speech bubble.



see
any

How to Post on TikTok

You can open the camera by tapping the plus sign at the bottom of the screen. The app allows you to upload pre-recorded videos from your camera roll or record your own. Adding a voice-over or song to a video can be done after it has been prepared. You can add voice-over by clicking the microphone icon on the right of the screen and hitting record. When you've finished recording, you can adjust the volume using the Volume tool and toggling the Original Sound. You can add a caption to the video by clicking the 'Text' icon. You can also click the 'Caption' icon to generate captions for spoken words in your video. After editing and adjusting the video to your liking, you can add a caption, hashtags, and tag an account to your video. Once your video is ready, hit Post. Once you're familiar with the app, try experimenting with duets. Duets split the screen in half and allow you to react to the video you're dueting. To use this feature, tap the share button on the original video, and hit Duet.



Tips/Benefits of Using TikTok as a Small Business

There are a few tips that can help businesses engage with their audience using TikTok. First, examine user trends within your target audience. For instance, if you notice your videos get more engagement with special events, you can post more videos showcasing and demoing your products. Another tip is to use less of a commercial approach. TikTok is a fun and creative platform where you can freely express yourself, unlike polished platforms like Instagram and Facebook. Avoid

heavily commercial-like videos. Lastly, post about your location to promote local brand awareness. Include the location of your business in your captions and hashtags. This will help people in your area find your business.

TikTok is one of the most used social media platforms, following Facebook, Youtube, WhatsApp, Instagram, and WeChat. There are approximately 1 billion monthly active users, and the average user spends around 858 minutes per month on the app. That amount of screen time is great news for someone new to the app. More eyes on the app mean a greater potential to reach a large audience. Brands on TikTok thrive when their content is entertaining and unique, so explore what makes your brand interesting.

Social Media Post Templates

The CED team has developed a series of post templates to help Mendo Grass maintain an active presence on their Facebook profile. Listed below are a variety of templates that will help Mendo Grass create its own posts.

It is important to note that these posts should be short and concise. Longer posts are permitted to update and inform your platforms regarding big events or upcoming changes to Mendo Grass, but most of the time posts should be kept short and to the point. It is best to not reuse these templates every day but instead to post once a week.

Operational Posts

Operational posts provide basic information regarding the business. This includes the hours of operation, location, website location, and anything that ties into the operations of Mendo Grass. These posts can also provide major changes such as ownership or location to make sure your customers are informed.

Example:

Image -

Owners of Mendo Grass with the Business Sign behind as a background

- ❖ Mendo Grass will be closed for this Thanksgiving Holiday! We wish you all a great Thanksgiving and enjoy it with family.

Promotional Posts

A portion of posts can be strictly promotional, inviting your followers to visit the website and purchase products. These posts are meant to maintain your web presence and let your followers know that your accounts are active. Promotional and operational posts should make up about 40% of your social media posts. If you post too many promotional posts, then it will start to look unappealing to some customers. One way that Mendo Grass can alleviate this problem is by aligning posts with annual events, such as holidays or community celebrations. By highlighting these events, your posts will appear less promotional and more genuine. These promotional posts are usually short and to the point.

Example:

Image-

Mendo Grass' website home page

- ❖ Mendo Grass offers [promotional discount] on purchases of inland Mendocino and Northern Sonoma Counties! Our website is located at mendograss.com.

Event Posts

Attending local events provides a great opportunity to create content for your social media platforms. It is important to create several posts notifying your followers about the event you are participating in and where you will be located. It is best to post live during the event when it is possible. Once the event is over, making a final post thanking your customers for visiting will give positive credibility to Mendo Grass.

Example:

Image-

Logo of the local Farmer's Market you are attending

- ❖ Mendo Grass will be attending Ukiah's Farmers Market this next week on (Date). Be sure to stop by if you see our booth.

Product Posts

Product posts are used to feature new goods and services your business is offering. These posts should be made regularly because new products can attract new and returning customers.

Example:

Image-

New logo printed onto a piece of clothing

- ❖ Just completed a new set of merch for our customers, these will be for sale starting next week!

Process Posts

Customers enjoy seeing the process and design of the purchases they make from businesses. To utilize these posts, you can create TikTok videos showing the process of creating Mendo Grass's products. This can draw in customers and create a bigger interest in your business as they understand more about the production process. It is also useful to share your TikTok videos across platforms so customers can cross-follow your profiles.

Example:

Image-

An edited video showing the start and end phases of how a microgreen flat grows.

- ❖ Here is a video of how the process of microgreens is sprouted, we are happy to show you the magic of creating our products!

Shared/Linked Posts

Business owners can share or link other users' posts to improve their social media marketing. This includes sharing positive online reviews of their products or services, online articles that are suitable to your industry, or social media posts from satisfied customers featuring the business' products. This can be very beneficial in the long term as you can build positive growing connections with other businesses or social media accounts. This can lead to additional cross-promotion if other businesses respond by sharing your own posts.

Example:

Image-

Article about microgreens' nutritional benefits

- ❖ This article provides great information about how microgreens can sustain a healthy living body. They are proven to provide many nutrients for us!

Highlight Posts

Highlight posts give you the chance to post an appealing part of your business to customers. You can post about how your products are organic, eco-friendly, local/family-owned, or show that you support other small businesses with the production of your own merchandise. These posts are relevant to showcase the standard that Mendo Grass achieves in providing for their customers.

Example:

Image-

Owner standing at the farm

❖ Mendo Grass is locally owned and honored to serve Mendocino County.

Community Posts

Businesses often are appreciated more by their customers when they are actively involved within the community. These highlights would include posting about the moments you are involved with community events, charity opportunities, local sponsorships, and joint efforts/projects with other local businesses. A business that has established trust and loyalty with its community is more likely to acquire support from that community.

Example:

Image-

Event flier and details

- ❖ Mendo Grass will be tabling at [community event] next week! Be sure to look out for our vendor and we'd be happy to connect.

Post Schedule

The CED Team would like to assist Mendo Grass in maintaining its social media presence with a schedule of posts. This schedule will include the type of post, date, and example post. This will help sustain social media growth and keep an active following on your platforms.

The schedule will start in November and end at the start of May. It is coordinated so Mendo Grass can post once a week for the next six months. These posts are created to be uploaded on Wednesday afternoons, as this is studied to be Facebook's highest volume of traffic in the week.

November 2, 2022

- Processing Post
- Photo: A successful batch of microgreens
- Caption: Every crop of microgreens is slightly different. Different seeds, different weather conditions, different watering. These [products] have harvested well these past few months!

November 9, 2022

- Highlight Post
- Photo/Video: Variety of all microgreens available
- Caption: It is our priority to provide the best options for you all. Posted here are all of the available microgreens we offer.

November 16, 2022

- Community Post
- Image: Personalized flier with Farmers Market information
- Caption: We are excited to announce we will be at [Location] Farmers Market. Come say hi and grab some microgreens!

November 24, 2022

- Holiday Post
- Photo: Mendo Grass's staff
- Caption: Happy Thanksgiving and we all wish you a happy holiday today. Thank you for being a part of our amazing journey and supporting a local business.

November 30, 2022

- Process Post
- Video: Tiktok of the first steps on how you plant your microgreens
- Caption: Mendo Grass would like to introduce you to how we start the process of planting our microgreens! This is where it all begins for the amazing greens!

December 7, 2022

- Operational Post
- Photo: Most favorited selection of Microgreens by customers
- Caption: Our website is always listed in our bio if you'd like to buy our best-selling greens! Mendograss.com is where you can find these [type of microgreen], they are the most sought-after in our selection.

December 14, 2022

- Highlight Post
- Photo: Mendo Grass farm
- Caption: We are proud to be a business that serves all-natural foods to our customers. In our products, we use organic seeds and soil only for the growth of the greens.

December 21, 2022

- Process Post
- Video: TikTok of the trimming and packaging process for Mendo Grass
- Caption: These are the steps we take when cutting and packaging our plants. This is the true definition of farm-fresh foods.

December 25, 2022

- Holiday/Promotional Post
- Photo: Holiday-inspired photo of microgreens
- Caption: We are wishing everyone an amazing holiday season! We would love to give [promotional discounts on products] on our products. This is a holiday discount from us, to you!

January 1, 2023

- Holiday Post
- Photo: Fireworks or sunset with 2023 decorations
- Caption: May this new year bring abundance, happiness, and blessings to our community. Happy New Year!

January 11, 2023

- Event Post
- Photo: Farmers Market Flier with details
- Caption: Mendo Grass will be attending the [location] Farmers Market this week! Look out for us to purchase some delicious greens at our table.

January 18, 2023

- Product Post
- Photo: New product or service
- Caption: We are now adding [product/service] to our shop now! It is a wonderful opportunity for us to provide you with this product. Buy yours now at Mendograss.com.

January 25, 2023

- Highlight Post
- Photo: Multiple varieties of microgreens
- Caption: So many choices with so many nutrients. Which one of these stacks is your favorite? Tell us in the comments below.

February 1, 2023

- Operational Post
- Photo: About Us page from your website
- Caption: Here is the "About Us" page on our website. For our new followers, here is a brief picture to show you who we are at Mendo Grass! We appreciate the support you've all given us!

February 8, 2023

- Promotional Post
- Photo: A bowl of soup with micro greens as a topping
- Caption: Soup season is here! Microgreens are a great addition to the top off any warm soup of your choice. For any restaurant, this is a great addition to add to your menu.

February 15, 2023

- Event Post
- Image: Farmers Market flier with details
- Caption: Mendo Grass will be attending this week's Farmers Market at [location] on [date]. There will be a splendid variety of greens to purchase, so be sure to stop at our table!

February 22, 2023

- Highlight Post
- Photo: Microgreens on avocado toast
- Caption: Microgreens are packed with nutrients, as they contain 40 times more nutrients than their fully grown counterparts. It is essential to eat them raw because when cooked, they lose them quickly.

March 1, 2023

- Highlight Post
- Photo: A edited photo of a review that a customer posted
- Caption: We are grateful to provide our microgreens for you [Name of customer]. Thank you for your support!

March 8, 2023

- Informational Post
- Image: Fun fact about microgreens
- Caption: This is an interesting fact about the benefits of eating microgreens. We strive to help others with the well-being of a good diet and how microgreens can influence good health.

March 15, 2023

- Process/Product Post
- Video: Video of the new seasonal changes for Mendo Grass farm
- Caption: As spring begins, we are making some changes to the farm with the change of weather! [Describe some of these changes]

March 22, 2023

- Product/Promotional Post
- Tiktok: Variety of the best-selling microgreens
- Caption: For the first quarter of the year, these are our best-selling greens! The best thing about [microgreen strain] is the [flavor, recipe creations, nutrient fact, or other content] because [explain your claim]. We would like to thank you all for continuing to support and purchase from a Mendocino County small, local business.

March 29, 2023

- Operational Post
- Image: The website URL and online shop page
- Caption: For all of our new followers and connections, our website is located at Mendograss.com where you can shop for all of our products. Here is a preview of our shop to give you a peek at the available options to buy!

April 5, 2023

- Shared/Linked Post
- Image: Fact or article shared from another page about microgreens
- Caption: Here is an interesting fact to learn about baby greens. They are one of the best options for nutrients in your diet!

April 12, 2023

- Product Post

- Photo: Pick the best-looking patch of fresh greens
- Caption: A delicious micro mix of [strain] microgreens.

April 19, 2023

- Community Post
- Photo: Mendo Grass staff at a community event
- Caption: We at Mendo Grass are dedicated to providing only the finest microgreens in Mendocino County.

April 26, 2023

- Highlight Post
- Image: An edited image of your most recent review
- Caption: Mendo Grass is happy to hear your words of satisfaction. Thank you for being a supporter of Mendo Grass!

Market Research

Mendo Grass requested a market research report within the Sonoma County region but more specifically for Windsor, Healdsburg, Sebastopol, Petaluma, and Santa Rosa. CED staff conducted this market research using the Esri Business Analyst to create the necessary figures and tables for Mendo Grass to understand the region's market potential. CED staff also compiled a list of potential clients, competitors, and local farmer markets that could allow Mendo Grass the opportunity to showcase the benefits of organic microgreens to the general public.

When selecting factors that would provide Mendo Grass insight into the organic food market, CED staff chose variables that correlate with Mendo Grass's product line. These factors included the number of juice bars, the percentage of households purchasing organic food/juice, median household income, the total amount spent on vegetable juice, and the number of grocers that offer an organic section. CED staff provided the number of retail grocers, farmer markets, juice bars, restaurants, and population for each city in Table 1. Looking at Table 1, we can make a few observations, including the market size of each city in the researched region, which follows Santa Rosa, Petaluma, Windsor, Healdsburg, and Sebastopol. CED staff used color-coded maps for all included figures below and divided them into ZIP Codes to better represent the market. The CED also recommends that Mendo Grass consider a region's median income when proceeding with the organic microgreen market, as consumers who purchase organic food are generally higher income earners. This analysis is also further apparent when looking at Figure 1 and Figure 8, which display percentage of adults that purchase organic/natural food and median household income. We can see that the higher median-income areas correlated with the number of households purchasing organic food. After analyzing the data provided by Esri Business Analyst, the CED recommends that Mendo Grass focus on the following cities in order after considering all the above factors: Santa Rosa, Petaluma, Sebastopol, Windsor, and Healdsburg.

Organic Market in Santa Rosa and Sebastopol

Santa Rosa is the business hub of the north bay while also being the fifth most populous city in the Bay Area with a diverse and well-balanced local economy. According to Table 1, Santa

Rosa is the largest market among the selected cities, with the highest number of business avenues for organic businesses. Santa Rosa also benefits from being the largest city in Sonoma County. The local economy of Santa Rosa includes a strong tourism scene, internationally recognized restaurants, fine arts, agriculture, and high-tech manufacturing. Santa Rosa is also in close proximity to Sonoma State University, located in Rohnert Park.

Figure 1 might be the most crucial map for Mendo Grass as it displays the percentage of adults that purchased food labeled natural/organic. Figure 1 is vital because it provides Mendo Grass with a rough estimate of the market demand for organic food in each city. After combining the results from every ZIP Code within Santa Rosa, we found that the total number of adults that purchase foods labeled organic/natural led all other cities in total quantity, with approximately 30,150, which also came to be about 16.93%. This also showcases how we need to consider the population of these cities since, although Petaluma has a greater percentage of people buying organic food, Santa Rosa still has a larger population by almost threefold. Figure 2 is a map focusing on the percentage of households that reportedly used organic food products in the last six months. Santa Rosa also had the highest number of households that used organic food in the previous six months, with 21,249 households. Based on the findings from Figure 3, Santa Rosa had a ZIP Code with the highest percentage of households consuming organic juice in the last six months. To put that into perspective, that single ZIP Code in Santa Rosa also equated to almost half of Petaluma's total number of households that consumed organic juice in the last six months. Figure 4, which displays a map of the total amount spent on vegetable juice, shows that Santa Rosa was the only city with consumers spending more than \$488,835 in multiple ZIP Codes within the city limit and about \$2,398,004 in total.

As the art and creative center of Sonoma County, Sebastopol is a popular tourist attraction with a strong history in agriculture. Table 1 shows that although Sebastopol has the smallest population compared to the other cities, it has an impressive number of businesses promoting an organic lifestyle. This is because the community prides itself in being progressive in many things, including environmentalism, which organic farming falls in line with since it eliminates the use of pesticides known to cause soil, air, and water pollution. One of the biggest attractions of Sebastopol is The Barlow, a 12.5-acre culinary and arts center, which features many of Sonoma County's best restaurants, wineries, distilleries, art galleries, and boutiques.

Many of these restaurants and juice bars use locally sourced organic produce, which provides an opportunity for Mendo Grass to collaborate.

Figures 1 and 2 show Sebastopol as the city with the third-highest percentage for both adults ordering food labeled natural/organic and households that consumed organic food in the last six months. Figures 3 and 4 also had Sebastopol with the third-highest percentage of households that consumed organic juice in the previous six months and spent the third most on vegetable juice compared to the other cities. The findings in Figure 4 were the most surprising since Sebastopol households spent \$385,822 on vegetable juice, despite being the city with the smallest population. According to Figure 5, the percentage of Sebastopol households that consumed organic fresh fruit/vegetables was 31.22%, ranking third among selected cities. The fact that Sebastopol ranks third in all these categories while having the smallest population is a testimony to how important Sebastopol is for Mendo Grass as a target organic market. Since Sebastopol acts as a community hub for Sonoma County, building a presence in The Barlow could also expand Mendo Grass's name recognition.

Organic Market in Petaluma

CED staff found that Petaluma is one of, if not the most, organic-friendly cities in Sonoma County. This is evident after observing that Petaluma led in many of the figures below while having a third of the population of Santa Rosa. By far, Petaluma has the largest percentage of people that prefer organic food compared to the other cities, which provides context as to why Petaluma is a hotspot for organic business opportunities. For any organic business wishing to enter Petaluma's organic market, consider that much of Petaluma's consumer base already prefers organic products over non-organic products. This advantage avoids one of the biggest hurdles in the organic market: informing consumers of the numerous health benefits of organic and why they should choose organic produce over non-organic.

Table 1 shows that although Santa Rosa has almost three times the population compared to Petaluma, Santa Rosa only has a 2:1 ratio lead in organic business avenues versus Petaluma. Looking at Figure 1, we observed that Petaluma leads all other cities with the highest rate of adults that bought food labeled as natural/organic. Analyzing Figure 2, we can see that Petaluma has the highest percentage of households that used organic food in the last six months, with 31% for both ZIP Codes within Petaluma. Meanwhile, Figure 3 has Petaluma as the city with the

highest percentage of households that consumed organic juice in the last six months, with approximately 7.1%. Figure 4 shows households in Petaluma spending the second most on vegetable juice, with \$939,974 in total between both ZIP Codes. Figure 5 also had Petaluma lead in the percentage of households that used organic fresh fruit/vegetables in the last six months, with an average of 34% for the city of Petaluma.

Organic Market in Windsor and Healdsburg

Windsor and Healdsburg are both cities north of Santa Rosa in the heartland of wine country, with over 400 wineries and 600,000 acres of vineyards spanning Sonoma County. These cities are important markets for Mendo Grass because of their proximity to local wineries, allowing tourism to flourish in their respective sprawling downtown plazas. Tourism is the most significant avenue for both Windsor and Healdsburg's regional economies, as it generates income for local businesses and restaurants. Being home to the Charles M. Schulz-Sonoma County Airport in Windsor also allows a constant stream of visitors annually; according to the latest numbers, the airport brought in 435,427 passengers in 2021.

Figure 1 depicts Windsor with 18.65% and Healdsburg with 19.23% of adults who purchased food labeled natural/organic. Figure 2 puts into perspective just how popular organic food is within the community, with 28% of households in both cities consuming organic food in the last six months. Windsor and Healdsburg had a similar percentage of household consumption of organic juice when looking at Figure 3. Looking at Figure 4, we can observe that households in Windsor and Healdsburg spent the least on vegetable juice compared to the other cities. This could be explained by the smaller population in these growing cities and possibly from the lack of businesses. Figure 5 shows that both Windsor and Healdsburg had similar households consuming organic fresh fruit/vegetables with an average of 30%.

Table 1: Market research in the Santa Rosa region

City	Santa Rosa	Petaluma	Windsor	Healdsburg	Sebastopol	Total
Retail grocers	24	11	5	3	5	48
Farmer market	1	1	1	1	1	5
Juice bars	11	5	1	2	1	20
Restaurants	29	14	3	4	13	63
Population	178,127	59,776	26,344	11,340	7,521	283,103

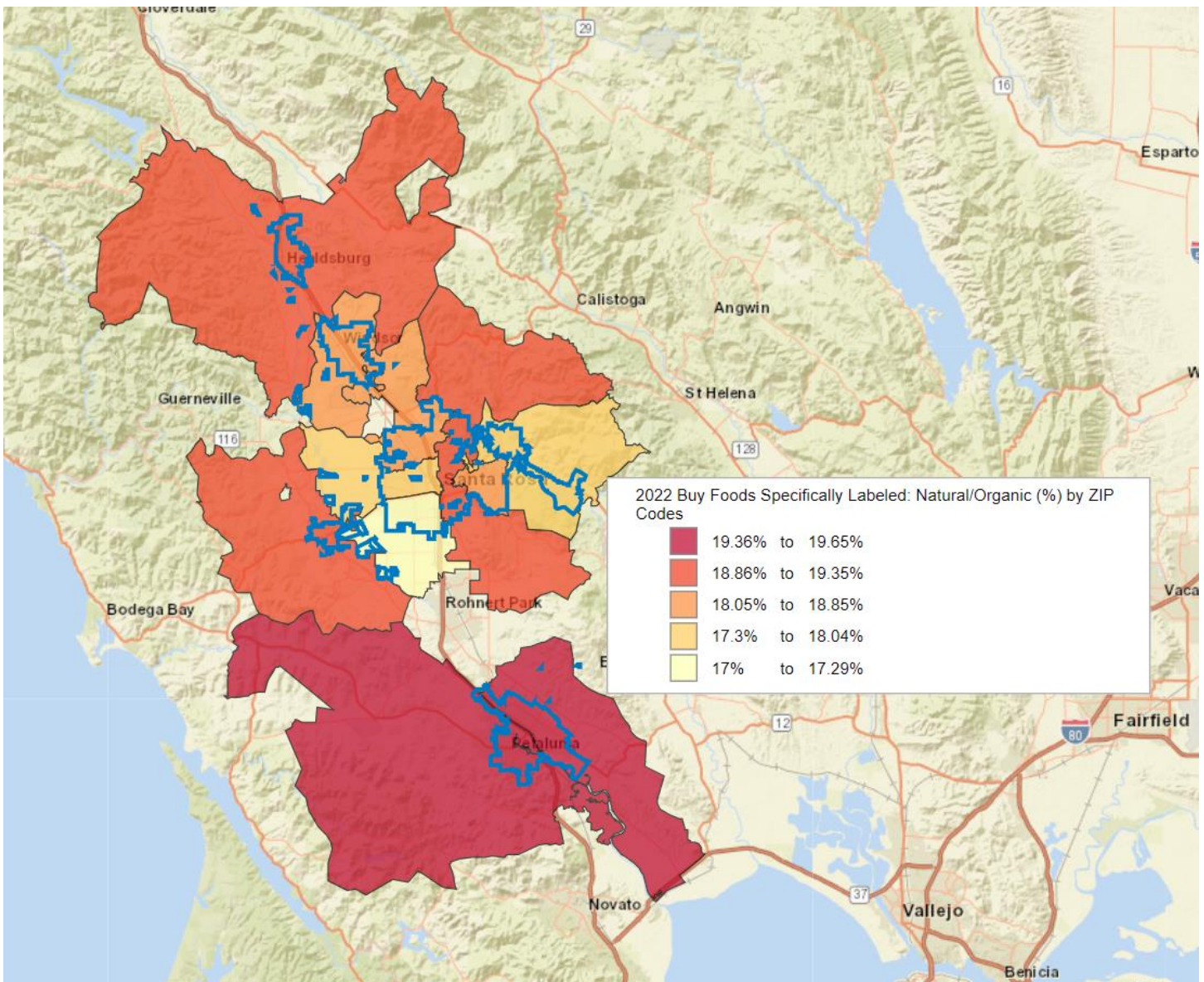


Figure 1: Percentage of adults who purchase foods specifically labeled Natural/Organic by ZIP for Windsor, Healdsburg, Sebastopol, Petaluma, and Santa Rosa.

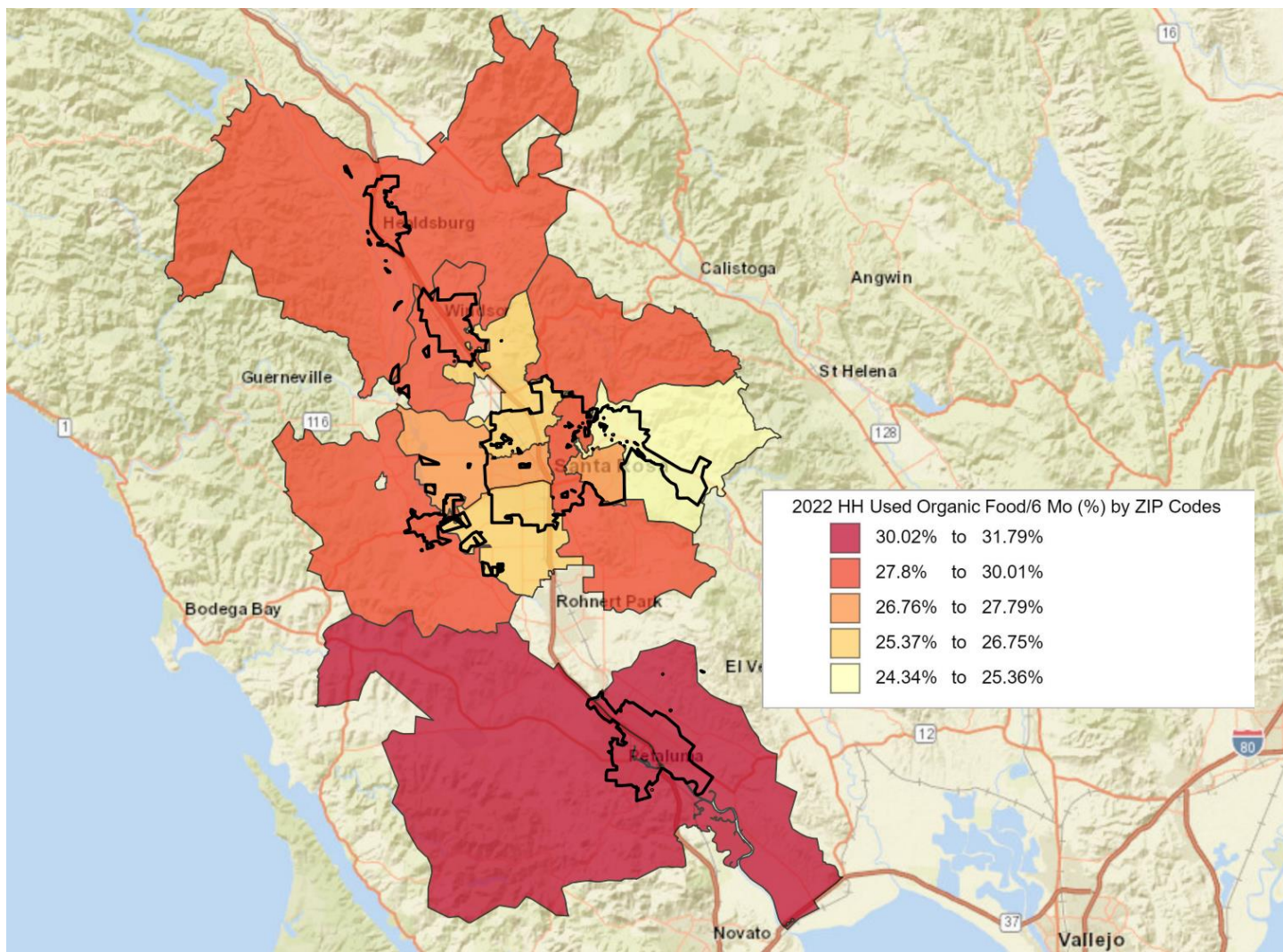


Figure 2: Percentage of Households that consumed organic food in the last 6 months for Windsor, Healdsburg, Sebastopol, Petaluma, and Santa Rosa.

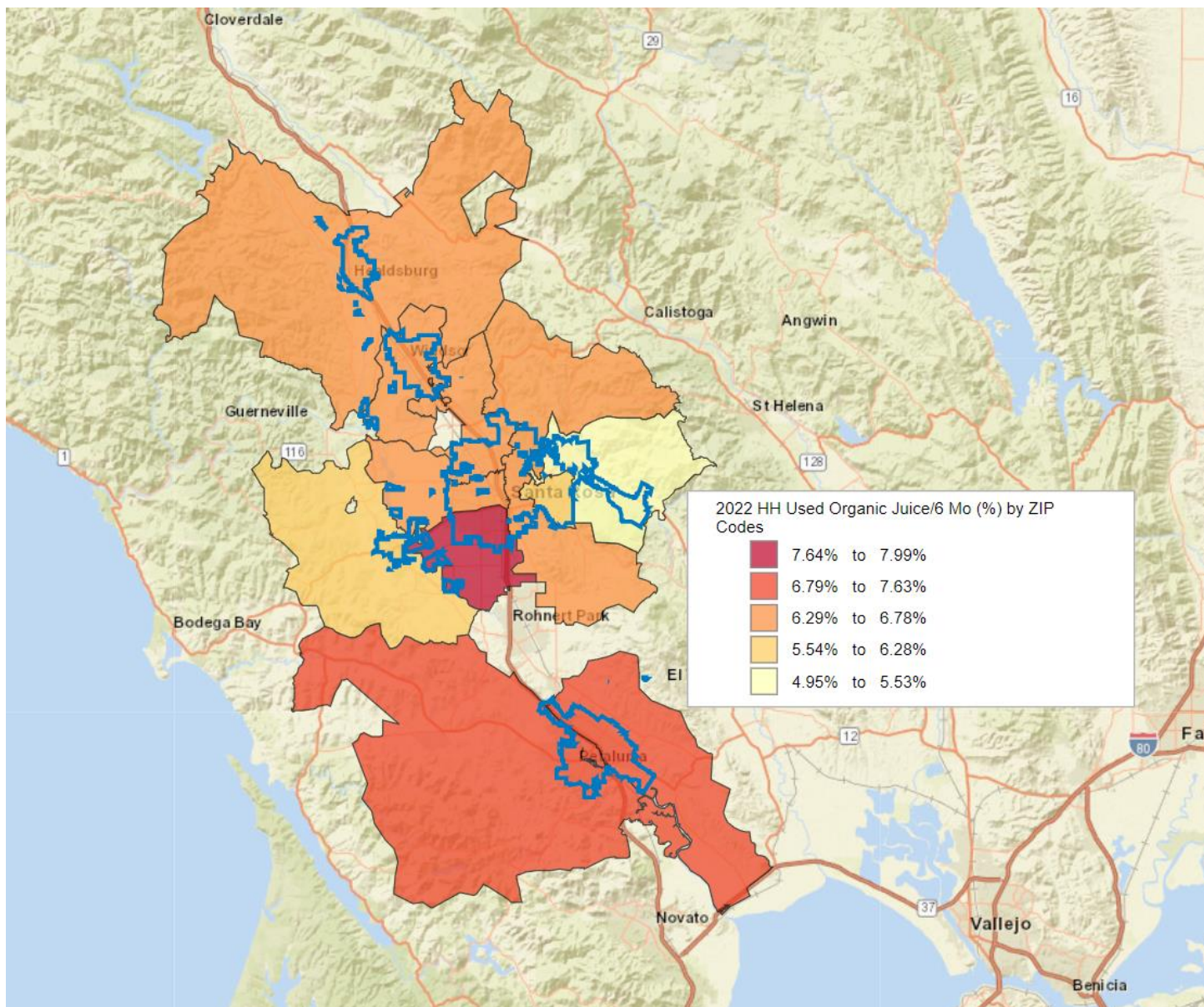


Figure 3: Percentage of Households that consumed organic juice in the last 6 months for Windsor, Healdsburg, Sebastopol, Petaluma, and Santa Rosa.

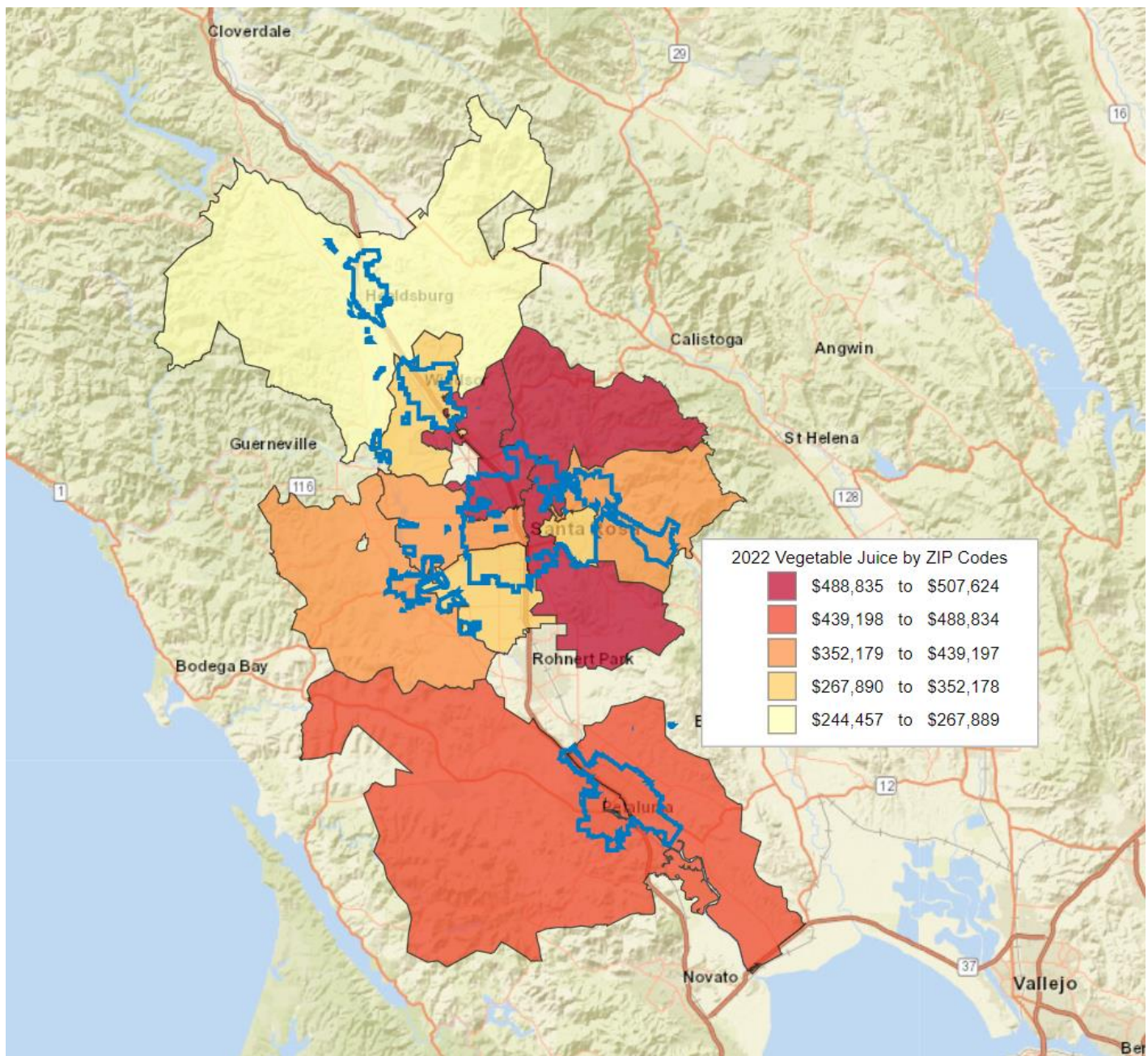


Figure 4: Total amount spent on vegetable juice by all households in Windsor, Healdsburg, Sebastopol, Petaluma, and Santa Rosa for 2022.

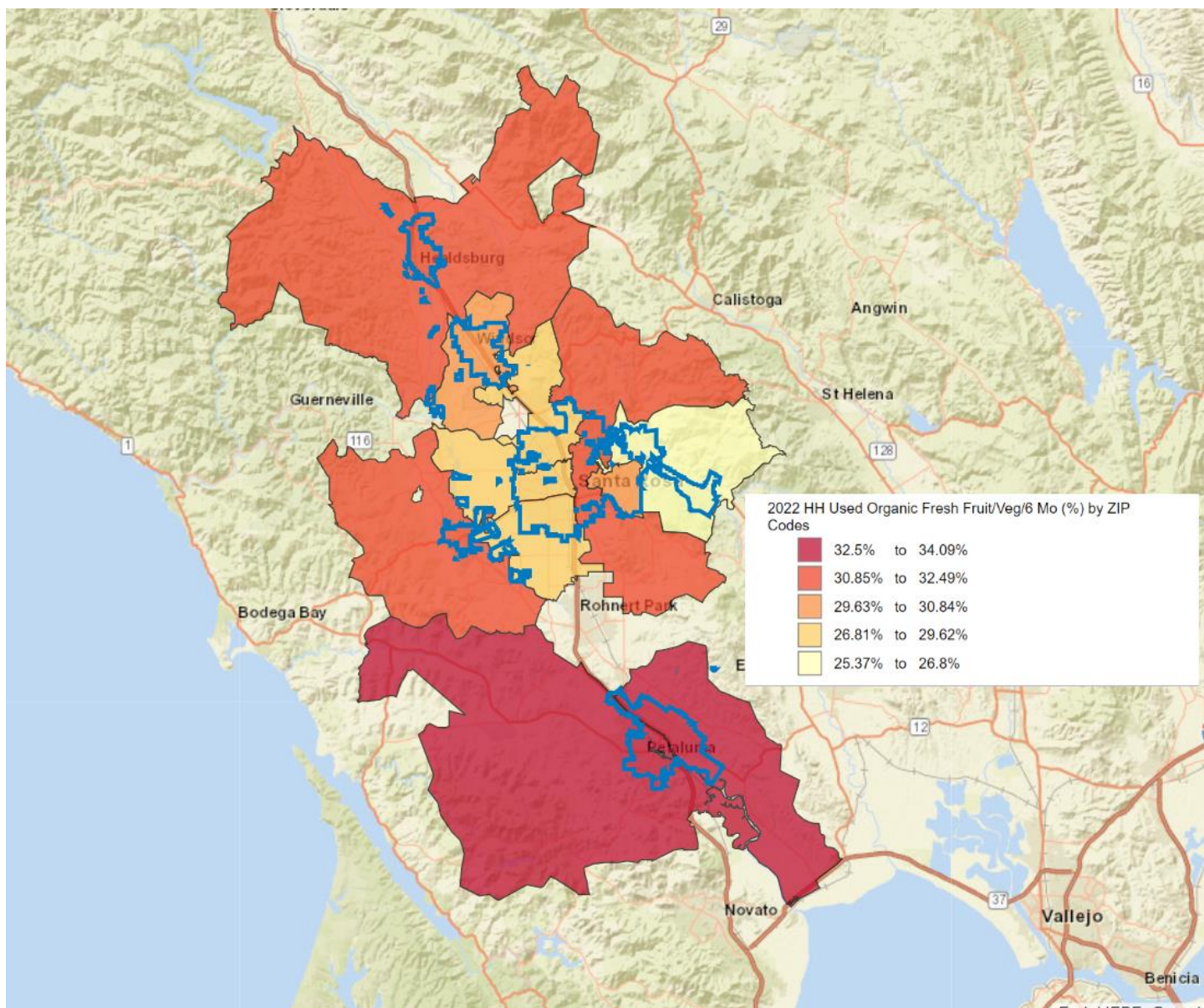


Figure 5: Percentage of Households that used organic fresh fruit/vegetables in the last 6 months for Windsor, Healdsburg, Sebastopol, Petaluma, and Santa Rosa.

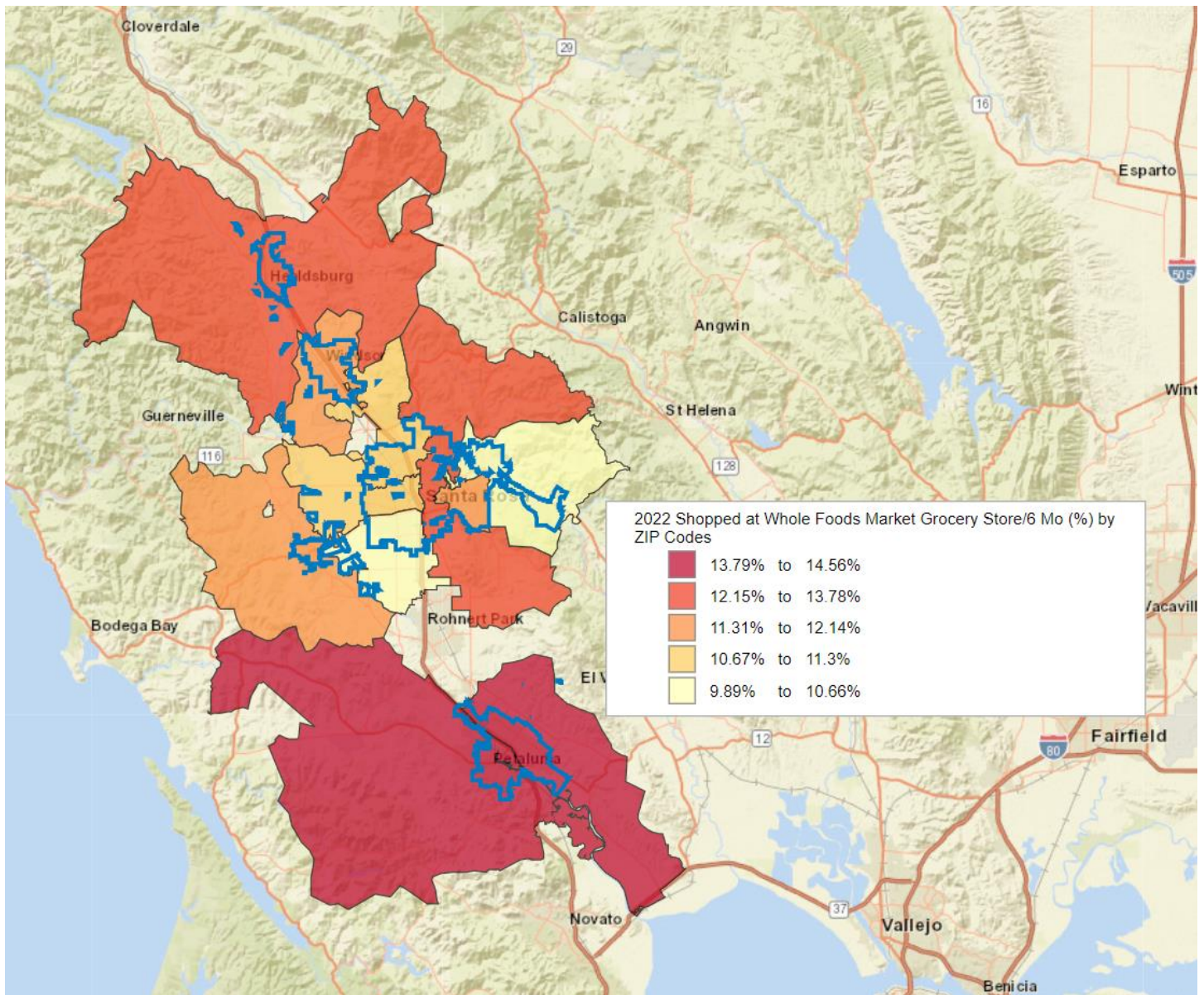


Figure 6: Esri 2022 estimate of the expected number of adults and Market Potential Index (MPI) for Shopped at Whole Foods Market Grocery Store Last 6 Months for Windsor, Healdsburg, Sebastopol, Petaluma, and Santa Rosa.

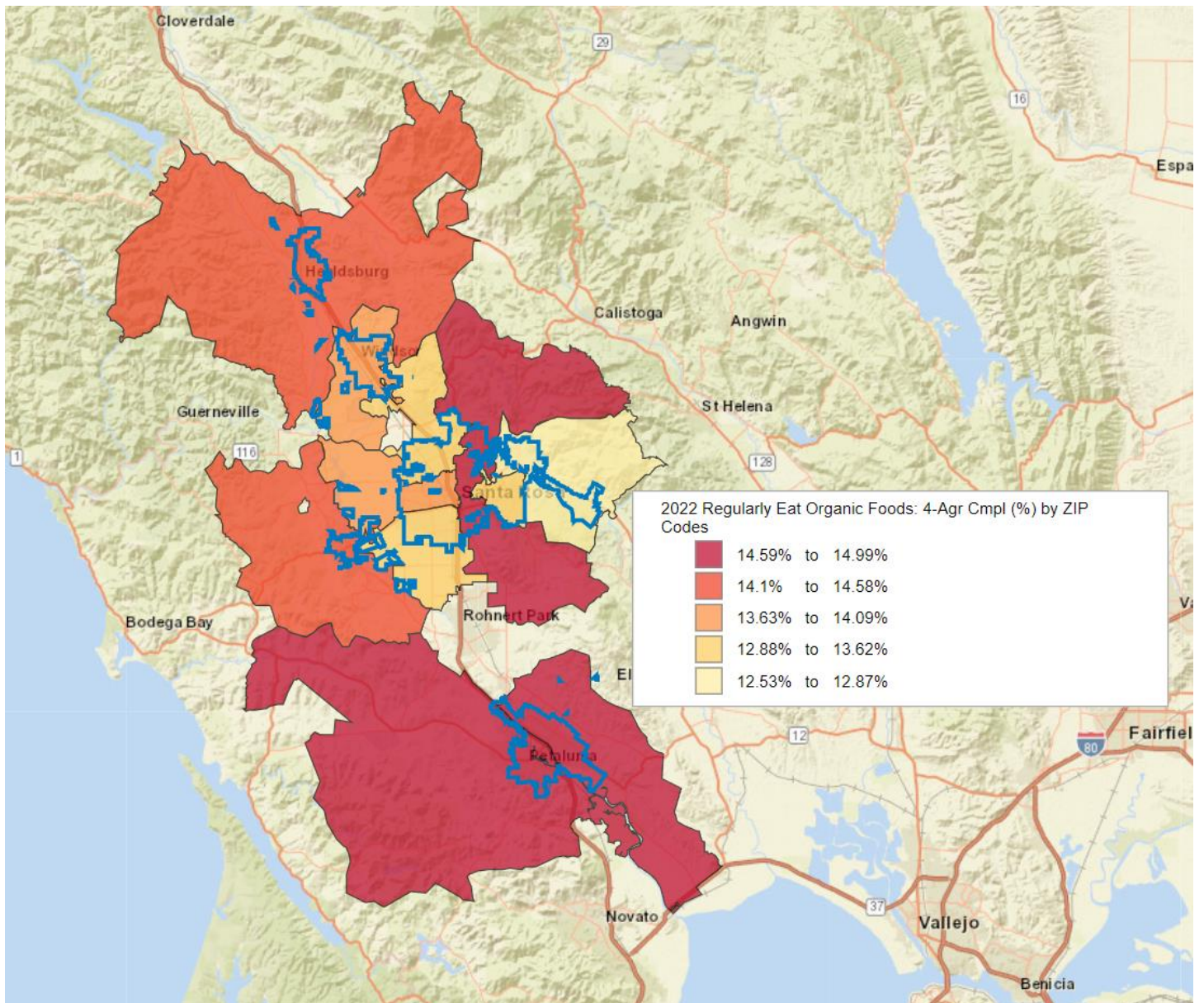


Figure 7: Map of Windsor, Healdsburg, Sebastopol, Petaluma, and Santa Rosa that showcases Market potential demand that regularly eat organic food (Esri 2022 estimate of the expected number of adults and Market Potential Index (MPI) for Regularly Eat Organic Foods).

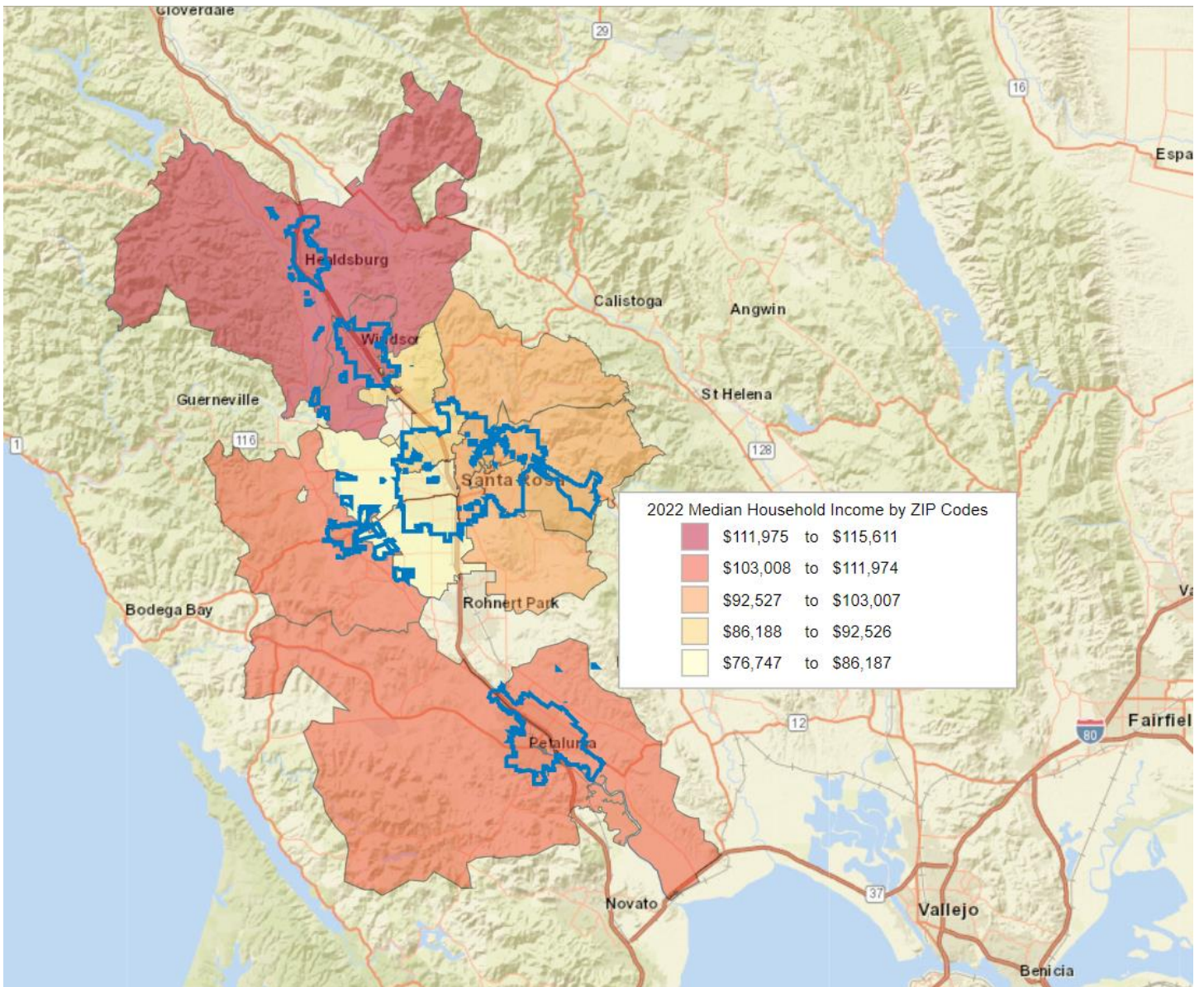


Figure 8: 2022 Median Households Income by zip codes for Windsor, Healdsburg, Sebastopol, Petaluma, and Santa Rosa.