



## RAN's Socially and Environmentally Responsible Purchasing Guidelines

With the Socially and Environmentally Responsible Purchasing Guidelines, RAN embraces its role as an organization that works for both social justice and the environment. Therefore, we pledge to make conscientious purchasing decisions with respect to RAN's office, staff and event needs as they relate to our purchasing power, the environment and sustainability.

### **RAN's FOOD PURCHASING POLICY**

RAN is committed to only providing vegetarian and vegan food at RAN meetings and events while prioritizing sourcing from organic, fair trade, local, union-made/worker-owned suppliers; exceptions can be made in limited circumstances when it would be culturally inappropriate

### **SCOPE**

These guidelines apply to all of RAN's purchasing needs, including food, supplies and services. They also include RAN-sponsored events and trainings, regardless of location.

The guidelines apply to any expenditure made by RAN staff members with RAN funds, whether they are in San Francisco or traveling.

The implementation of the guidelines will be a shared responsibility between the RAN staff, interns, and volunteers. Implementation will be informed by a number of guiding principles, which will be reviewed annually by the Diversity Committee and the Operations department. It is the responsibility of each RAN staff members to make an informed decision in all purchases based on their judgment of what available option best meets the values expressed in these guidelines. Should there be questions about the guidelines, please address them to the Operations Director who is part of the Diversity Committee and the Leadership team.

### **DEFINITIONS**

*Purchasing* refers to the process of procuring products from restaurants, manufacturers or vendors for a fee.

*Fair Trade certification* is a system that seeks to improve the lives of agricultural product producers in origin countries by ensuring that the owners of farms receive a guaranteed fair price for their harvest. *Transfair* and *Equal Exchange* are recognized certification bodies in North America. Examples of commodities that may be fair trade certified include coffee, green and black tea, cocoa products, sugar, rice, bananas and other tropical fruit.

Certified Organic is a certification system that requires agricultural production without the use of synthetic pesticides, herbicides, or chemical fertilizers, and that contributes to a healthy environment including clean groundwater. Because we recognize that not all certification groups use the same principles, any certified products will be considered organic for this purpose.

Union made describes products made by unionized workers. A union is a legally sanctioned, formally organized association of waged workers who have united to represent and protect their welfare, interests, wages, hours, and working conditions, primarily by collective bargaining.

Worker-owned cooperative is a [cooperative](#) owned and operated by its "worker-owners". There are no outside, or consumer owners, in a worker's cooperative - only the workers own shares of the business. Only one membership share may be issued to a member. One membership share = one vote. Membership is not compulsory for employees, but only employees can become members.

Preferences are the primary way of doing business at RAN; we will purchase necessary goods and services from the most appropriate, available source.

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- RAN will communicate its commitment to these purchasing guidelines to the Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, interns, and the public and to all suppliers of goods and services, if requested.
- RAN will make human and financial resources available, as needed, to meet its stated commitments including regular trainings for relevant staff. The Approved Supplier List will be updated regularly and will include Approved Suppliers in the Bay Area and in other locations where RAN staff frequently travel.
- RAN will support allied organizations in developing and implementing similar policies.
- RAN will annually review the progress of guideline implementation for purchasing through the Diversity Committee and Ops.
- RAN will rely on a combination of approved processes by which those responsible for purchasing are screening business partners by way of the Approved Supplier List and reference to other organizations' certification processes.
- RAN will work with suppliers not in full compliance with the policy to assist them to improve their practices.
- RAN will work under a commitment to reduce consumption.

#### **FINANCIAL & GEOGRAPHIC CONSIDERATIONS**

RAN recognizes that there may be additional costs associated with the practices detailed within these guidelines, and that products that meet our preferred standards may not be available in all geographic areas or within the required timeframe. When adequate funds aren't available to obtain a particular product or food that adheres to RAN's guidelines or when items that meet RAN's guideline preferences are not readily available, purchasers will determine the following three things:

1. Is it necessary to purchase said product?

2. Can quantities of product be reduced in order to meet guideline goals?
3. Are there substitutes that can meet our needs even if said substitutes aren't preferred?

Staff members may purchase the best available product within the budget when the desired product is necessary, quantities cannot be reduced, and no adequate substitutes are available.

When choosing among food alternatives that do not satisfy all of RAN's preferences, RAN will prioritize Fresh, Local, Organic, Sustainable and Humane products (in that order of preference) that meet the purchaser's dietary requirements and other needs.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

RAN commits to the following socially and environmentally responsible practices:

RAN will not purchase goods produced through child or forced labor.

RAN will not purchase products from companies listed by Coop America, Sweatshop Watch or other reliable sources as employing or supporting sweatshop labor.

RAN prefers products not made by companies currently subject to a RAN campaign.

RAN prefers companies that have adopted responsible palm oil commitments.

RAN prefers Union-made products or those made by worker-owned cooperatives.

RAN prefers companies that pay employees a living wage and offer health benefits.

RAN prefers companies with policies against discrimination in the workplace on the basis of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, age, class, or heritage.

RAN prefers companies that protect their employees from exposure to hazardous working conditions, such as toxic chemicals.

RAN prefers Fair Trade certified products that ensure fair prices to family farmers and fair wages to farm workers.

RAN will only offer vegetarian and vegan food at RAN meetings or events when food is served. In limited circumstances, where it would be culturally inappropriate to not serve meat products, exceptions can be made.

RAN prefers certified Organic products from sustainable, local, and when applicable, cage-free sources.

RAN prefers companies that do not engage in animal testing and will rely on certification by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (<http://search.caringconsumer.com/>), the Humane Cosmetics Standard (<http://www.gocrueltyfree.org>), or other reliable certification.

RAN prefers non-genetically modified produce and other foods that do not contain GMO's.

RAN prefers buying local and seasonal products.

RAN prefers post-consumer recycled paper and non-paper products are favored over products created from virgin materials.

RAN prefers the reuse of materials and the minimization and recycling of waste.

RAN avoids undue and unnecessary use of packaging and paper materials.

RAN prefers companies involved with monitoring and modification of processes and activities that are wasteful and damaging to scarce resources.

RAN employs conservation efforts to ensure that all production and delivery processes, including the use of heating, ventilation, lighting, IT systems and transportation, are based on the need to maximize efficient energy use and to minimize harmful emissions.

RAN prefers fully biodegradable cleaning and toiletry products.

RAN uses low- or zero-volatile organic compounds (VOCs) paint for banners and decoration of the office space; wastefulness is avoided by caring for tools and brushes.

RAN prefers soy-based inks for all publications, brochures and educational posters.

RAN prefers to purchase in bulk when available.

RAN avoids products that are current targets of campaigns or boycotts by groups working for social or environmental justice.

RAN will not cross labor picket-lines.

RAN prefers free/open source software solutions over proprietary software when practical.

### **Approved Supplier List**

*For institutional purchases:*

Copy paper: 100% PCW from New Leaf, Mohawk or Evergreen

Stationery: 100% PCW, union label, soy-based ink

Direct Mail pieces: 100% PCW New Leaf 60#, envelopes are 100%PCW (through mailhouse)

Newsletters: New Leaf Imagination 80#, 100% post-consumer recycled paper

Toilet paper: Bath Marcal 100% recycled (60% PCW)

Office supplies: Give Something Back

T-shirts: check out <http://www.cfomaquiladoras.org/english%20site/dj.en.html>