



St Marys

Shops enjoy support of community

WITHOUT local support, St Marys small business owners say the town would not survive.

The Examiner Buy Locally regional road trip wound up in the historic town yesterday to find a handful of small businesses that relied on fresh local produce and craft as a selling point for visitors.

Purple Possum Wholefoods and Cafe owner Elaine Sullivan said as a gateway to the East Coast, having the community support their local business was necessary for the town's growth.

The health and wholefoods outlet has been a staple in the St Marys business community for eleven years, and a place for tourists to stop over and refuel their nutritional snack supplies.

"They can't believe there is a shop like this in a town like this," Ms Sullivan said.

With a variety of home-made relishes, and sweet and savoury gluten-free products, she makes a conscious decision to use fresh produce — the best being in the state.

"We use whatever is available locally," Ms Sullivan said.

"Local people bring in some vegies when they're in season and people in town are supporting people that are growing organically.

"We've got hospitality businesses that come in and buy ingredients that they can't get anywhere else. I'm then able to go around the corner to do the day-to-day things, like having my car serviced, and the mechanic then comes in here to buy things."

Ms Sullivan said it was this sort of relationship that meant all St Marys small businesses could develop and offer more products for more distinctive tastes.



Purple Possum Wholefoods and Cafe owner Elaine Sullivan surrounded by her unique, locally sourced produce. Pictures: PAUL SCAMBLER

YOUR SAY

Why do you believe in buying locally?



"Everything I need is here. All the local businesses support each other and it grows the town." — KERRY VELDUMS, of St Marys



"It keeps jobs in the town so we don't end up like a ghost town." — KRISTI SMART, of St Marys



"It keeps money in the local area and this town survives on small business." — VICKI PATERSON, of St Marys



"It provides big benefits for little communities. Shops close down if people go elsewhere." — IAN SUMMERS, of St Marys