

SHOPPING AT MONTEREY MARKET TODAY? FIRST, THINK ABOUT THIS:

It started with Mahmoud.

For seven years he'd sold fresh, beautiful flowers, at reasonable prices, from his sidewalk stand on Hopkins Street. With his warm smile and artist's eye, Mahmoud is like the heart of the neighborhood. But in 2009 Monterey Market started saturation marketing of dirt-cheap flowers. Mahmoud's sales dropped 70%.

That was just the beginning.

Look around. Many of the small businesses around Hopkins Street are threatened now by the Market – by what's become a clear pattern of predatory pricing and marketing. The Market started selling more cheeses, more meat, more baked goods, more wine – at rock-bottom prices that are hurting the sales of Country Cheese Coffee Market, Magnani's, Hopkins Street Bakery and Monterey Liquors. Recently the Market started pushing plants, at prices Freshly Cut can't match.

Think about it. What comes next?

There's more at stake than just business. For decades this neighborhood has flourished -- as a vibrant, distinctive place where each store makes a unique contribution and where customers feel like people, not like dollar signs. For decades the Market flourished, too, without preying on surrounding shops. We all want to keep Hopkins Street bustling, not pitted with empty storefronts.

So what can I do?

Where you spend your dollars makes a difference. Don't just buy local. Buy small. Buy your produce at Monterey Market but:

SUPPORT THE SPECIALTY SHOPS.

This leaflet was produced by an informal alliance of neighbors, customers and merchants, including Monterey Fish, Gioia Pizzeria, Hopkins Launderette, Storey Framing, Magnani's, Country Cheese Coffee Market, Monterey Liquors, Freshly Cut and Mahmoud's Flowers. If you'd like to help, you can contact us at (510) 832-3400.