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As a Suze Orman fan and a chef/independent restaurateur, I must take issue with her recommendation to avoid eating out as part of her 2009 action plan.

In principal, avoiding eating out may provide a short-term solution for select consumers, however, it is crucial to view this decision in term of both its short and long-term impact on the economy.

According to All Business, a D&B Company:

- Restaurant-industry employment will reach 13.3 million by 2012.
- In 2010, the restaurant industry will operate more than 1 million units and post sales of \$577 billion
- More than eight out of 10 salaried employees at table-service restaurants started as hourly employees
- One third of all adults in the United States have worked in the restaurant industry at some time during their lives
- The number of African-American-owned and women-owned eating and drinking place firms increased at double digit rating during the past decade
- Eating and drinking places rank second, based on sales volume, among retail establishments owned by African-Americans and Hispanics
- Eating and drinking places employ more minority managers than any other industry

With independent restaurants closing on a daily basis due to lack of volume, Suze's advice can only serve to further impact this situation.

It is my hope that she will investigate this situation in a more global manner and ultimately discuss the fact that, in this particular instance, she may have jumped to a conclusion that does not best serve the consumer.

Best Regards,

Douglas Katz
Owner, fire food and drink
President, Cleveland Independents (www.clevelandindependents.com)