
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Agriculture

Buy Local program lets Farmers' Markets get social

KELOWNA – The BC Association of Farmers' Markets (BCAFM) is targeting new customers who want fresh, nutritious and local food through \$85,000 in funding from the B.C. Government's Buy Local program.

The campaign will take place across B.C. in the 2014 summer market season and will engage all of their 100 member markets.

To attract new and encourage repeat shoppers to the markets, BCAFM will:

- Build consumer awareness, preference and demand for B.C. agrifoods.
- Increase awareness of local farmers' markets across the province.
- Increase both market participation and purchasing of B.C.-grown products.

The campaign will use social media tools including Facebook and Twitter in combination with media ads and online incentives and contests to raise awareness of local farmers' markets across B.C. A video will also be produced for placement on the BCAFM and market websites.

The Buy Local program offers successful applicants matching funds up to \$100,000 to launch or expand local food marketing campaigns as part of a \$2-million B.C. government effort to promote B.C. foods.

Building the local market for B.C. foods is a key commitment of government's Agrifoods Strategy, a component of the B.C. Jobs Plan, to lead the agrifoods sector growth into a \$14-billion-a-year industry by 2017.

The provincial government's Buy Local program is administered by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C.

Quotes:

Minister of Agriculture Pat Pimm –

"This Buy Local funding will help BCAFM introduce even more people to the diverse range of locally grown agrifoods products we have here in B.C. Their use of social media will encourage a whole different crowd to shop at our farmers' markets, which in-turn puts money into the pockets of local farmers."

B.C. Association of Farmers' Markets, executive director Elizabeth Quinn –

“A campaign of this magnitude is a dream come true for farmers’ markets and local farmers. Coupled with other agri-industry buy local funding totalling nearly \$4 million this year, the campaign will be a huge boost to meet consumer demand for healthy B.C.-grown food, strengthen local economies and support farmers throughout the province.”

Kelowna Farmers & Crafters Market manager, Bob Callioux –

“Educating the public to shop at local farmers’ markets is key to a strong and healthy community and keeps small farmers in business.”

Learn More:

- The number of B.C. farmers’ markets has more than doubled in the last ten years.
- The BC Association of Farmers’ Markets represents a network of 115 markets throughout the province.
- B.C. farmers’ markets connect people directly to the source of their food and preserves small scale, family farms for future generations.
- B.C. farmers’ markets contributed \$170 million in economic benefits in 2012, a 146 per cent increase from 2006.
- British Columbia has the most diverse agrifoods industry in Canada, producing more than 200 agriculture commodities and 100 seafood species.

B.C. Buy Local program: <http://www.gov.bc.ca/agri/buylocal.html>

BC Association of Farmers’ Markets: <http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org/>

Locate a farmers’ market near you: <http://met.bcfarmersmarket.org/market-search>

Keep up to date on the latest in B.C. foods and beverages: <https://www.facebook.com/FoodsBC>

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