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Locally produced craft beer, wine, cider and spirits for sale at BC Farmers' Markets

KELOWNA, BC - The British Columbia Association of Farmers' Markets (BCAFM) is pleased to announce that in the near future, locally produced craft beer, wine, cider and spirits will be allowed for sale at BC Farmers' Markets. Premier Christy Clark announced the B.C. government's support for this.

Over the last year, the BCAFM has supported provincial initiatives, including the BC Wine Institute, to widen the sales boundaries for alcohol products within BC to include farmers' markets. During their presentation to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services earlier this year, the BCAFM encouraged provincial regulators to bring BC in line with other Provinces and States, to allow sales of local craft beer, wine and spirits at farmers' markets. Also, the BCAFM met with Parliamentary Secretary John Yap during the B.C. Liquor Policy Review.

"Offering regular market shoppers, as well as out of town visitors, the option to taste-test and purchase locally made wines, ciders and craft beer, while they shop for local fruits and vegetables will ensure support for a vibrant farming sector in B.C.," said Jon Bell, president of the BCAFM. "It's also a great way for small, local businesses which use BC grown farm products in alcoholic beverages to reach new customers, while providing increased selection and convenience."

"Farmers' markets are very effective incubators of small innovative businesses and farms in BC," explains Elizabeth Quinn, Executive Director of the BCAFM. "We are very happy to welcome the addition of local craft wineries, breweries, and distilleries to join in the enormous success of farmers' markets across the Province."

An economic benefit study completed in 2012, by the BCAFM and Dr. David Connell of the University of Northern British Columbia found that farmers' markets contribute significantly to the BC economy, injecting nearly \$170 million.

The Government said that they should permit B.C. liquor manufacturers to offer products for sample and sale at temporary off-site retail locations (e.g., farmers' markets), with appropriate conditions. The decision about whether to allow vintners, brewers and distillers to showcase their products at a particular location will be left to the location management (e.g., farmers' market association). The BCAFM will be working with the Ministry as this initiative develops.

The BCAFM is a not-for-profit association that represents over 125 farmers' markets across the province and works to support, develop and promote farmers' markets in all regions of BC. For more information on the BCAFM visit www.bcfarmersmarket.org.

Learn more: <u>find a farmers' market near you</u>. Follow us on Twitter <u>@BCFarmersMarket</u> & Facebook www.facebook.com/BCAFM

-30 -

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