



Celebrating Local Farmers with Farmers Appreciation Week September 12-18

For Immediate Release

September 8, 2016 (VANCOUVER, BC) – British Columbians will be celebrating local farmers as part of the BC Association of Farmers' Markets' (BCAFM) seventh annual [Farmers Appreciation Week](#), September 12-18. Farmers' markets throughout the province will be hosting special events during the month to mark the occasion and the public is invited to join in the festivities in [communities across BC](#).

According to the most recent Statistics Canada [census of agriculture](#) data from 2011, BC is home to over 19,000 farms. Ninety eight per cent of those are family farms. The average age of Canadian farmers has increased in every province, but BC continues to have the oldest farmers in the country, with an average age of 55.7 years. Despite this trend, BCAFM executive director, Heather O'Hara is hopeful about the future of farming in BC. "There is a burgeoning community of young and new farmers in BC that are using farmers' markets to grow their farms, learn the ropes, and test out new products. We've seen the development of new farm schools at academic institutions throughout BC and the growth of organizations like the [Young Agrarians](#). These young farmers are bringing new life into BC's farming sector and they're building on the legacy that's been established by the farmers that have come before them," said O'Hara.

Special events at local farmers' markets will include fall festivals, barbecues, corn roasts, cake cutting ceremonies, a parade for young future farmers, and more. In addition to special events, the public can pay tribute to BC farmers by entering the [Ode To a Farmer poetry contest](#). Poets of all levels are invited to show their appreciation for farmers in the form of a poem, for a chance to win \$150 to spend at their favourite farmers' market. Submissions are being accepted until midnight, September 18.

"We have farmers to thank for the food we eat and enjoy every day. They are the dedicated stewards who grow, harvest and bring the food we eat to life. Farmers, and their deep and vast skills and knowledge, are to be admired," said O'Hara.

British Columbians can support local farmers by joining in the Farmers Appreciation Week celebrations at their local farmers' market. Details for over 135 BC farmers' markets can be found online at markets.bcfarmersmarket.org.

The BCAFM is a not-for-profit association that represents 135 farmers' markets across the province and works to support, develop and promote farmers' markets in all regions of B.C. For more information on the BCAFM or to find a farmers' market near you, visit www.bcfarmersmarket.org.

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BC ASSOCIATION OF FARMERS' MARKETS

Farmers Appreciation Week 2016 on Social Media:

- Webpage: <http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org/fresh-market/farmers-appreciation-week-2016>
- Twitter: [@BCFarmersMarket](https://twitter.com/BCFarmersMarket)
- Instagram: [@BCFarmersMarket](https://www.instagram.com/BCFarmersMarket)
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BCAFM>
- Hashtag: #BCFarmersWeek and #LoveYourLocalFarmer

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