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Farmers' markets listed in new brochure

With the assistance of the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, the B.C. Association of Farmers' Markets (BCAFM) has compiled a brochure that contains all the locations, times and dates for farmers' markets across the province.

The listings will be available at visitor information centres in most B.C. towns and communities by next week, the Ministry of Agriculture said this week in a news release.

"More and more people are realizing the health and environmental benefits of buying locally produced foods," said Agriculture Minister Stan Hagen. "One of the best ways to access these quality products is by supporting community farmers' markets and with the listings now available it will be easy to find a farmers' market in your area."

"Farmers' markets are essential to a healthy agricultural sector because they support family farms," said Mary Forstbauer, president of the BCAFM. "It's been great having the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands' collaboration in bringing public attention to a great source of local products."

Farmers' markets are an excellent place to socialize, try new local foods and connect with the people who produce our food. They also represent a value of more than $118 million each year to local economies, said the news release.

This year, as part of BC150 celebrations, many markets are holding special "feastivals" where families can enjoy special items prepared by local chefs, contests and celebrations of agriculture's heritage in B.C., from First Nations' early innovations to modern family farms.

As part of its recently released B.C. Agriculture Plan: Growing a Healthy Future for B.C. Families, the government has made support for farmers' markets a priority because the markets provide an opportunity to buy local and promote a sustainable agriculture industry, Hagen said in the release.

To pick up a copy of the farmers' market listings, check with your local visitor info centre after Aug. 8, or visit www.bcfarmersmarket.org.

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