



Issue: Dec 2017

Message from the President

Farmers' Market Offer Support During Challenging Times

PHOTO: View of the wildfires on BCAFM President, Wylie Bystedt's ranch, Coyote Acres, in July 2017.

Welcome to the winter of 2017, and congratulations on making it through this year. This has been an incredible year for farmers' markets and I am so proud to be a vendor alongside you.

Last spring, we saw many of our farmers' market vendors hit by unprecedented spring flooding. Many vendors had to replant, and some experienced complete crop losses due to the severity of flooding. They took financial hits as they recovered, but we are proud to share that BC's farmers' market community stepped up and offered support to vendors in need.

Over the summer we also experienced severe wildfires in the Cariboo and other parts of the province. Personally, my ranch was involved in the first fire on July 6th, but as you likely know, the crisis soon grew to impact many of our farmers' markets and vendors. As communities were evacuated, farmers' markets closed as residents and vendors fled with their belongings. Farmers' markets that were able to remain open saw gaps in attendance, as vendors were not able to get to market. The impact of the fires was far reaching - vendors of all types lost product in the fires, and many were not able to travel due to highway closures or fear of losing their homes and businesses.

However, as we often see during difficult times, BC farmers' markets rallied to support vendors. You (our member farmers' markets) generously opened your doors to visiting vendors to help as you could. Unfortunately, it was difficult for vendors to take full advantage of these open doors due to product losses, or having to evacuate at a moment's notice with only a few belongings. But the fact that markets were willing and able to assist where they could was heart warming and appreciated.

I am now working with Wildfire Recovery, and one of the takeaways I continue to reflect on is that when communities were able to go home, it was farmers' markets that were able to provide fresh local food first. When grocery stores were waiting for staff to return, or for



product to be shipped in – it was local farmers and ranchers at the markets with fresh food. It was our local farmers, ranchers and market gardeners that were donating food to evacuees and to first responders – sometimes as they were fighting fires themselves. This aspect of food security and sustainability had not occurred to me before, but this summer drove the point home. Access to local food is always important!

Through all of this, the staff at BCAFM continued to work on supporting BC farmers' markets. Led by our Executive Director, Heather O'Hara, all the staff continue to do an amazing job – my hats off to Georgia, Peter, Anice and Melissa.

The BCAFM Board of Directors has spent over a year working on our new bylaws – the committee composed of Rubina, Vickey, Erna and myself and faithfully supported by Heather and Georgia – had long meetings agonizing over the details of the bylaws and I am excited that they were approved at the Extraordinary General Meeting on November 4th.

The Call for Nominations for the Board of Directors will be going out soon. We encourage you to look at joining the board if you aren't afraid of hard work and are excited about the future of BC farmers' markets.

All the best and see you at our annual conference in Victoria in March!

Wylie
BCAFM President

NEW! Bylaw Template for Member Farmers' Markets

The Long Awaited Bylaw Template for BCAFM Member Farmers' Markets is Ready!

To support our member farmers' markets in transitioning to the new Societies Act, the BCAFM invested in the legal services of [Norton Rose Fulbright legal firm](#) over the past year to design a customizable bylaw template for use by our farmers' market member societies. This bylaw template enables individual farmers' market member societies to comply with the new Societies Act, and adopt best practices for non-profit governance. The template was designed in conjunction with the newly approved BCAFM bylaws.

- For a copy of the template, please email: info@bcfarmersmarket.org

BCAFM has done our best to create a template that is applicable to the majority of member farmers' markets. If further legal assistance is needed, members are free to work with any legal firm of their choice to customize their bylaws. However, the lawyer that worked with BCAFM in the creation of our organizational bylaws and this member bylaw template is:

Michael Blatchford, Partner
Norton Rose Fulbright Canada
1800 - 510 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 0M3 Canada
E: michael.blatchford@nortonrosefulbright.com T: 604-641-4854
Legal Fees: \$410 per hour plus taxes and disbursements

[Click here](#) for more information on the new Societies Act and transition

Mary Forstbauer Grant

NEW - BCAFM Grant for Farm Vendors

Mary Forstbauer was a farmer and founding member and president of BCAFM. She was instrumental in building the local food movement and farmers' market community in BC, and her top priority was to get as many farmers involved in farmers' markets as possible. As many of you will know, Mary sadly passed away in November, 2015.

To honour her memory, the BCAFM is offering a new grant of \$500 to support a farmer selling at BC farmers' markets to implement a new initiative on their farm. The grant can be used towards supplies, training, new equipment, services, contractors, staff or consultants. Sample projects inspired by Mary might include regenerative agriculture, involving future generations in the farm lifestyle by making the farm more accessible to children, or increasing accessibility for those with physical or mental challenges.

- [Learn more](#) about the grant and eligibility criteria.
- Deadline to [apply](#) is January 16th, 2018.



2018 BC Farmers' Markets Conference: "Growing Together" March 2-4, 2018



Save the date! Join us in Victoria for our annual conference, "[Growing Together](#)," March 2-4, 2018. We hope you can join us for a weekend packed full of practical workshops, networking, social activities, and our annual Farmers' Market Awards! Learn and network with other farmers' market leaders, farmers and vendors. Come away inspired to strengthen BC's local food system.

- Want to present a workshop at our conference? See our [Call for Workshop Proposals](#)
- Early bird registration coming soon

*** [NEW BCFAM Program! Farmers' Market Mentorship](#)**

We're excited to launch our pilot [Farmers' Market Mentorship Program](#), supported by the Vancity enviroFund. The program will offer BC farmers, market managers/staff, and farmers' market boards one-on-one guidance, resources and networks to overcome challenges, achieve business goals and success at your farmers' markets!

Want to be mentored?

We're seeking interested - farmers, market managers/staff, and board directors - to participate in this year's pilot program.

Want to be a mentor?

We're seeking interested farmers, and board directors to be mentors.

Mentors are expected to meet with their mentee at least once every two weeks (by phone, online, or in person), and commit to 15-20 hrs from December 2017 to April 2018. A \$450 honorarium is offered for each mentoring relationship.

- Let us know if you are interested - Email info@bcfarmersmarket.org
- [Learn more](#) about the mentorship program



BC Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program



A New Online Fundraising Platform with Vancity - Just in Time for the Holiday Season!

The BCAFM has a [new online fundraising platform](#) to provide fresh, locally grown food to thousands of British Columbians facing economic barriers, while directly supporting local farmers across BC. Individuals, local businesses, sports teams and other organizations can now donate directly to the Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program and be eligible for a charitable tax receipt.

- Help spread the word this holiday season! Share the link: bcfarmersmarket.org/donate

BCAFM Out and About

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **January 24, 2018**
We will be attending the [Pacific Ag Show Industry Gala](#) to represent BC farmers' markets.
- **February 2-3, 2018**
[Islands Ag Show](#): In addition to having a trade show booth alongside MarketSafe, we will be presenting a workshop on, "Opportunities for Regional Collaboration through BC Farmers' Markets."
- **February 23-25, 2018**
[COABC Conference](#): We're presenting on [Best Business Practices and Marketing Tools for Farmers Selling at BC Farmers' Markets](#) - our most recent research project with the Institute for Sustainable Food Systems.

WHERE WE'VE BEEN:

□ September 27-28, 2017

[Union of BC Municipalities](#): This was the BCAFM's first time at this event, and it was a great success. Heather O'Hara (BCAFM Executive Director) and Wylie Bystedt (BCAFM President) developed new contacts with municipal and regional governments, while promoting the benefits of BC farmers' markets.

□ October, 2017

The BCAFM presented to the Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services to inform the 2018 BC Government Budget. We're happy to share that the report released last month makes direct references to BC farmers' markets. [Read the full report](#) (references to farmers' markets on pages 47 to 49).

□ November 7, 2017

[BC Agriculture Council's](#) Ag Day in Victoria reception: This invite only event offered a chance for our organization to network with agriculture representatives and elected and government officials from across the province.

□ November, 2017

[Vancouver Island Good Food Summit](#) participant.



Heather O'Hara (Executive Director, BCAFM) and Wylie Bystedt (President, BCAFM) at the UBCM tradeshow

Member Farmers' Market Highlight



Ricardo Sáenz-Saldaña, Paige Dampier and Cherise McGee (2nd, 3rd & 4th from left) of the Langley Community Farmers' Market receive the Business Excellence Award. Oct. 2017.

Langley Community Farmers' Market Earns Recognition

Congrats to the [Langley Community Farmers' Market](#) for winning the Community Impact of the Year award at the Greater Langley Chamber of Commerce's [Business Excellence Awards](#) ceremony last October.

The market is also nominated in two categories ([Community Impact](#) and [People's Choice](#)) for the Small Business BC Awards. We wish you good luck!

Social Media Tip

Keep Engaging Your Network Year Round!

Eating local is not a one season thing, and your social media shouldn't be either. Though many farmers' markets have closed for the 2017 season, it's important to continue engaging your social media audience year round.

Share what your vendors are up to (think farm planning, pouring over seed catalogues and testing out new recipes), post seasonal recipes, or thank your supporters and sponsors. Keeping up with your online engagement will keep your farmers' market top of mind when the 2018 farmers' market season comes around.

Thank you to our partners



& conference sponsors:

