



BC ASSOCIATION OF FARMERS' MARKETS

Issue: March 2018

Message from the President

I'm not sure what it's like across the province, but I am staring out my window on the first day of spring and it is snowing! These unusual weather patterns appear to be the new normal in many parts of BC. For those vendors with heated greenhouses and basements, I know your farm work has already been underway for a month or two, including all the preparations, such as starting plants and much more. By this time, many seedlings will have broken ground and farmers are looking forward to a busy season.

For ranchers in the wildfire zone, we are still feeling the effects of the fire. So far, from an expected spring crop of 20 lambs, I have 6 on the ground. The stress, heat, smoke and movement of the fires was no friend to breeding schedules and so I, like many of our ranchers, am going into the season already knowing that I am behind the eight ball - hopefully fall lambing will be better.

In the meantime, life for our markets and market managers goes on. Markets are busy taking vendor applications for the summer season and vendors are working to make sure they have checked off all the right boxes, and done their due diligence to fulfill the many requirements of selling at markets. New organic regulations, bylaws, plus ensuring adherence to guidelines on cosmetic products, the Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program, local health authorities and municipal concerns are all helping to make spring just a little busier.

The BCAFM office is growing and changing as well, and we are excited about what this year has in store. If you have questions please call the office staff – Georgia, Peter and Heather stand ready to help.

I would also like to welcome [Patty Hollister](#) to the board. Patty's work brings her a breadth of valuable experience, from running a small-scale organic farm, to work with seed companies, volunteering with the Vancouver Farmers Markets, and her most recent position on staff with the Moss St Market in Victoria for 9 years! As our new secretary I know that she will be keen to learn and contribute to BCAFM initiatives, and I look forward to working with her.

Also, a big congratulations to Erna Jensen, our past BCAFM board secretary, who recently got married! All the best to Erna and Randy!

All the best to managers, vendors, and boards as we get ready for the 2018 season – here's to busy markets and busy vendors – a great growing season and a great selling season!

Wylie
BCAFM President

Staff Changes + Two New Job Openings at BCAF



Farewell + Thanks Melissa

This week, the BCAF said farewell to Melissa Maltais who provided great administrative and communications support to the Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program. Thank you Melissa and we wish you all the best in your new position at the Ridge Meadows Chamber of Commerce.

Two Job Openings at BCAF

Please help us spread the word to your networks in the Vancouver area - apply by Tuesday, March 27.

- Farmers Market Nutrition Coupon Program Coordinator** (full-time)
- Administration and Special Projects Coordinator** (part time) NEW!

BCAF Membership - don't delay, renew today!

As the 2018 BCAF farmers' market **membership renewal** date quickly approaches (April 1st!) – we know that many of you have been taking a closer look at the updated **bylaws** and **policies**.

These documents are the product of a robust member consultation process, and demonstrate BCAF members' ongoing dedication to integrity, and 100% grow, make, bake, raise, wild harvest farmers' markets.

This commitment is especially important in light of concerns that were raised last fall by CBC

Marketplace, which exposed a lack of integrity and transparency at some Ontario farmers' markets. With this in mind, we are proud of the member bylaw consultation results, and pleased with the increased clarity these documents offer members.

The BCAFM will continue to share [tools](#) that support member farmers' markets in maintaining integrity, public trust, and support for farmers. We look forward to working with you over the 2018 season to bring fresh, local, in season products to communities across the province. As always, we encourage you to reach out to us with questions or comments.

REMINDER: April 1st is the deadline to be included in the provincially distributed BC farmers' market directory

- ☐ [Click here](#) to renew your BCAFM Farmers' Market Membership

[2018 BC Farmers' Market Conference - View Workshop Presentations](#)



Thank you for joining us at *Growing Together* in Victoria earlier this month. Over the weekend, 170+ attendees from all regions of BC, representing 48 BCAFM member farmers' markets, participated in 14 plenary sessions, workshops, roundtables, and networking events.

Did you miss the [2018 BC Farmers' Markets Conference](#)? Fear not! Many of the workshop presentations are available on our website for you to review and share. Check back frequently as we update the page with additional presentations.

- ☐ [View the workshop presentations](#)
- ☐ [View the 2018 BC Farmers' Markets conference photos](#)

Share your ideas for revitalizing the ALR and ALC



The Ministry of Agriculture is forming an independent committee to lead a public engagement process and provide recommendations to the provincial government around the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). The Advisory Committee is seeking your input on recommendations for a strong and robust ALR.

- [Read more and submit your ideas](#) before April 30, 2018 at 4:00pm

Mary Forstbauer Grant Winner: Barndance Farm

Congratulations to Kristi McCrae and Paul Keays of Barndance Farm in Powell River, the first ever recipient of the Mary Forstbauer Grant. Kristi and Paul will use the \$500 grant to build a concrete compost bay at their greenhouse to more efficiently collect, store and turn their garden compost.

- [Learn more](#) about the Mary Forstbauer Grant

Update: Cannabis Sales at BC Farmers' Markets

During our recent AGM there was a lot of robust discussion about cannabis and its potential impact on both farmers' markets and farming in general within BC. The BCAFM will continue to gather information on this subject and has connected with the Cannabis Policy Liaison with the BC provincial government. From our conversations to date we have received this clear feedback.

For now, the sale of cannabis and cannabis products, including health products and cosmetics, are not allowed at farmers' markets. Initially, non-medical cannabis sales will only be permitted at licensed retail sites in British Columbia. Offsite sales may be considered in the future. Furthermore, the federal government has stated that edibles will only be regulated within 12 months of legalization.

We will continue to share and communicate updates with the BCAFM membership as we receive more information and inform stakeholders about the needs of our sector.

In the meantime, for your interest, additional information can be found at the following government links:

Federal Government:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/drugs-health-products/summary-comments-public-consultation-regulation-cannabis.html>

BC Government:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/employment-business-and-economic-development>

Member Farmers' Market Highlight



Cranbrook Farmer's Market Nominated for Award

Congrats to the [Cranbrook Farmer's Market](#) for their nomination in the Non-Profit of the Year category in the Cranbrook Chamber of Commerce's [Business Excellence Awards](#). Good luck at the awards ceremony on April 14!

BCAFM Out and About

UPCOMING EVENTS:

☐ **Spring + Summer**

We're hitting the road again and coming to see you! Starting in May, BCAFM staff will visit member farmers' markets for regular site visits as well as Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program orientations. See you soon!

WHERE WE'VE BEEN:

☐ **March 2-4, 2018**

[19th Annual BC Farmers' Markets Conference and AGM](#) (Victoria)

- **March 1, 2018**
[Farmer2Farmer](#) (Victoria): Presented on "Best Business Practices and Marketing Tools for Farmers Selling at BC Farmers' Markets"
- **February 27, 2018**
[Columbia Basin Agriculture Forum](#) (Cranbrook): Hosted a regional roundtable gathering for Kootenay farmers' markets and participated in a panel on supporting farm direct sales in the region
- **February 23-25, 2018**
[COABC Conference](#) (Abbotsford): Presented on "Best Business Practices and Marketing Tools for Farmers Selling at BC Farmers' Markets"
- **February 10, 2018**
[Young Agrarians Mixer](#) (Shawnigan Lake): Workshop presenter
- **February 2-3, 2018**
[Islands Ag Show](#) (Duncan): Trade show booth in partnership with MarketSafe FOODSAFE, and presented on, "Opportunities for Regional Collaboration through BC Farmers' Markets"
- **January 26-27, 2018**
[Young Agrarians Business Intensive and Mixer](#) (Kelowna): Workshop presenter
- **January 24, 2018**
[Pacific Ag Show Industry Gala](#) (Abbotsford): Represented BC farmers' markets at the provincial level

Marketing Tip

Lighted your load & attract more customers with cross promotion

Join forces with other local or regional groups like the ones listed below, whose mandate is to support your local economy and small businesses, including farmers' markets and farms. Find your region's local champion, and see how your farmers' market can tap into their promotions. Here are some examples in several regions of BC to get your brainstorming:

- [LOCO BC](#)
- [Love Northern BC](#)
- [Think Local First](#)

A Message from Vancity

Farmers' Market Champion & Presenting Sponsor at the 2018 BC Farmers' Market Conference

We realize the importance of creating a sustainable local food system, which is why we invest in local producers, processors, manufacturers, whole-salers, distributors, the retail/food service sector, and waste management businesses that are enhancing the economic, environmental and social health of our communities.



Connect with us to learn more about how Vancity can help your small business or not for profit organization with:

- Financing
- Grants
- Partnerships
- Learning and networking events, resources
- Impact investment food stories

Thank you to our partners and sponsors

