



News Release

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Farmers' Market Coupon Project a First for Canada *Project Helps BC Families Add Fresh Local Food to their Diet*

Vancouver, BC – A pilot project to help low-income families buy and consume more fresh BC-produced food was launched by the BC Association of Farmers' Markets today in five British Columbia communities.

“Encouraging people to buy fresh produce directly from farmers at their local farmers' market provides strong support for the rural economy of this province and helps strengthen local communities,” said Mary Forstbauer, president of the BC Association of Farmers' Markets.

The Farmers' Market Nutrition and Coupon Project (FMNCP) is the first project of its kind in Canada. Funded by the provincial government, this one-time pilot project will provide coupons to eligible low-income families that can be used for buying fresh farm products directly from BC farmers at farmers' markets in Vancouver, Courtenay, Kelowna, Prince George and Coquitlam. In each community a total of \$7,000 in farmers' market coupons will be distributed throughout the summer.

“This unique project provides a ‘win-win’ situation for local farmers and for British Columbian families on low incomes who want to add more fresh foods to their diets,” said Devorah Kahn, Food Policy Coordinator for the City of Vancouver.

In addition to promoting increased consumption of fresh BC produce and farm products, the project will also help coupon recipients expand their food preparation skills and nutritional knowledge through connections with local cooking and skill building programs.

“By raising awareness of the importance of fresh wholesome foods for a healthy balanced diet and supporting the purchase of those foods, this project is taking steps to address the serious and growing problem of childhood obesity in this province,” said Brent Warner, an industry specialist with the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.

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