



BC ASSOCIATION OF FARMERS' MARKETS

**For Immediate Release
September 6, 2012**

Buy local during 3rd annual BC Farmers Appreciation Week

VANCOUVER, BC – Celebration of food and farming will be in the air this September 8th – 15th as the BC Association of Farmers' Markets (BCAFM) proudly celebrates the 3rd annual Farmers Appreciation Week. British Columbians can celebrate local farmers and show support for BC agriculture by shopping at their local farmers' markets and choosing BC-grown produce throughout the week.

"Farming is far more than putting seeds in the ground and then harvesting," explains Jon Bell, President of BC Association of Farmers' Markets, "farmers must be versatile. They must be sales people, planners, personnel managers, agricultural researchers, pest managers, welders, equipment operators and more. They are also risk takers. They work hard, long hours, often alone, to bring us our food. Their efforts need to be recognized to support today's and tomorrow's farmers."

This year's celebration will draw attention to the need for young people in agriculture, and for long-term profitability in farming operations. This need is highlighted in the 2011 Canadian Census of Agriculture, which shows the average age of farm operators in BC is 55 years. For the first time ever, farmers in the 55 and over age group represented the largest share of total farmers in Canada (48.3% of farmers in Canada are 55 and over.)

"We need to support young people in agriculture to ensure that we continue to produce enough food in BC, lessen our reliance on imported produce, and continue to have enough farmers at farmers' markets," says Elizabeth Quinn, Executive Director of the BCAFM. "Buying local products enhances our economy and supports our communities. Together, let's see how much of our food can come from local sources during the week of September 8th – 15th."

Farmers' markets provide a low-cost and effective marketing channel and act as incubators for small producers and new farmers. Presently BC imports about 50 % of our food and despite growing demand for local products 70 % of imported fruits and vegetables come from the United States, with 50 % of imported fruits coming from California.

The BCAFM will co-host an event with the Abbotsford Farmers' Market on September 8th from 11:00am -1:00pm at Montrose Avenue at George Ferguson Way in Downtown Abbotsford. The event will include speeches by local farmers and the Executive Director of the BCAFM, antique farming equipment displays, activities for kids and more. Festivities at other other farmers' markets around the province will include farm tours, farm- inspired cakes, thank you cards, corn roasts, and harvest festivals.

To find a farmers' market near you, visit www.bcfarmersmarket.org.



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The BC Association of Farmers' Markets is a not-for-profit association, representing 103 farmers markets including 1000 farmer vendors. The Association is committed to developing and strengthening the capacity of BC farmers' markets in communities throughout BC.

Visit <http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org/ind/faw.htm> for more information about FAW and farming in BC.

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34 Farmers' Markets hosting events

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Find farmers' market dates, locations and contact info at
<http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org/findamarket.asp>

Participating farmers' markets include, but are not limited to:

- 1 Abbotsford Farm and Country Market
- 2 Armstrong Farmers' Market
- 3 Artisan Market - Lonsdale, Ambleside & Burnaby
- 4 Bowen Road Farmers Market
- 5 Duke Point Farmers' Market
- 6 Fort St. John Farmers' Market
- 7 Gibsons Landing Sunday Market
- 8 Granville Island Farmers' Market
- 9 Hedley Farmers Market
- 10 Kelowna Farmers' Market
- 11 Ladner Village Market
- 12 Langley Community Farmers' Market
- 13 Lantzville Farmers' Market
- 14 Mission City Farmers' Market
- 15 Oak Street Farmers' Market
- 16 Oliver Street Market
- 17 Osoyoos Market on Main
- 18 Pemberton Farmers' Market
- 19 Pleasant Valley Community Market
- 20 Port Alberni Farmers' Market
- 21 Quesnel Farmers' Market
- 22 Royal City Farmers' Market – New Westminster
- 23 Skeena Valley Farmers' Market
- 24 Surrey Market - City Hall
- 25 Surrey Urban Farmers' Market
- 26 Two Rivers Farmers' Market
- 27 UBC Farm Market



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- 28 Whistler Farmers' Market
- 29 White Rock Farmers' Market
- 30 Vancouver - Trout Lake, Kitsilano,
West End, Main Street Station & Kerrisdale Village