

**BRITISH COLUMBIA FARMERS' MARKETS
Sector
STRATEGIC PLAN
2011-2016**

**Developed by the BC Association of Farmers' Markets
(BCAFM)**

www.bcfarmersmarket.org

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1. PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The board of directors is pleased to present this 2011-2016 BC Farmers' Market Strategic Plan on behalf of the Farmers' Markets of British Columbia. We BC Association of Farmers' Markets wish to acknowledge the financial assistance of Agriculture and Agri Food Canada and the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC for making this project possible. The Board of Directors is grateful to members of the sector who attended meetings and gave willingly of their time and knowledge through surveys and interviews.

The suggestions and conclusions in this report were reached using the knowledge and experience of people involved in the industry. Kate Sutherland & Associates prepared this report on behalf of the BC Association of Farmers' Markets.

Comments and enquires about the report should be directed to the Manager of the BC Association of Farmers' Markets as indicated at the BCAFM website (www.bcfarmersmarket.org).

Participants in the BC Association of Farmers' Market Strategic Planning process include 63 member market survey respondents, the Board** and staff^^ of the association, 13 others✚ who attended the retreat (see below) and 10 who gave input during the research phase (See Appendix B).

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2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There has been significant growth in the number and vitality of farmers' markets in BC in the past five years, continuing the impressive growth of the 1996-2006 decade. This is thanks to the vision and hard work of countless people, policy and financial support from many sources, and to the markets' most compelling feature: being able to buy fruits and vegetables, fresh picked and direct from the farmers who grew them.

This 2011-2016 strategic plan reflects what the farmers market sector in BC considers important and is not a strategic plan for the BC Association of Farmers' Market.

Farmers' markets are the backbone of the local food movement. Markets have helped create a strong foundation to support further growth and diversification for the sector. The markets have increased demand for, awareness and supply of, and commitment to local fresh food. Collectively they have helped launch new small scale farms, incubated dozens of small scale food processing businesses, supported culinary tourism, worked synergistically with chefs to feature local produce, made local food issues a darling of the media and politicians, provided unparalleled opportunities for knowledge transfer, and more.

In parallel, the BC Association of Farmers' Markets and farmers' markets in BC have more experience, professionalism and capacity. In combination, this success has opened up newer channels for farmers to market their produce such as institutional procurement.

Thanks to this solid base and strong momentum, the BC Farmers' Market sector new strategic plan aims primarily to strengthen and grow the farmers' market sector. The second main focus will be to increase the capacity of BC farmers to sell at farmers' markets. Thirdly, to the extent possible with resources available, the BCAFM will support BC farmers to access the above noted additional channels for selling their produce.

The plan was developed with input from a survey of member markets, key informant interviews, and a two-day strategic planning retreat, broadly representative of the sector both by geography and by producer group.

The plan will build on the substantial strengths of farmers' markets to make the most of emerging opportunities while mitigating identified weaknesses and threats. It identifies five Key Performance Areas (KPA's):

1. **Marketing and Research** -- to increase the consumption of local food through farmers' markets and associated channels.
2. **Integrity in the Market Place** -- to maintain and enhance consumer confidence that a farmers' market will meet their expectations through transparency and clarity in the marketplace.
3. **Representation, Partnerships and Alliances** -- To act as a united voice that encourages collaboration with all levels of government and key stakeholders.
4. **Regionalization** -- to better understand, represent and meet the needs of Member markets, and the sector of farmers' markets in all regions of BC (Interior, Fraser, Vancouver Coastal, Vancouver Island, and Northern).
5. **Financial Sustainability** -- to build capacity for the BCAFM to become self-sustaining financially in less than five years.

The plan identifies expected outcomes, main strategies, and associated specific actions for each of these the five key performance areas. These broad directions will be detailed and expanded in annual work plans over the course of the five year plan, and they may be adjusted based on experience.

Execution of the plan will require leadership from many sides. Various initiatives will be spearheaded by the Association. For other projects the lead will come from the farmers' market sector. By linking together the different stakeholders, and taking advantage of the synergies between the different Key Performance Areas, (E.g. Regionalization and Financial Sustainability) it is envisioned that the association and its members, partners, stakeholders and allies can significantly increase the amount of local food consumed in BC and help make local food more accessible to people in all parts of the province and at all income levels.

The bottom line of the planning process is excitement about the opportunities for growth and commitment to working collaboratively with all stakeholders to support local farmers, consumption of fresh local food, and creation of a strong and dynamic farmers' market sector.

3. FARMERS' MARKETS IN BC

3.1 Current Situation

"Farmers' markets are the backbone of the local¹ food movement."

Claire Gram, Regional Coordinator for Healthy Communities &
Food Security for Vancouver Coastal Health

"It's not just a local food movement. We are at the beginning of a local food revolution."

Will Allen, CEO, Growing Power

Interest in farmers' markets and food from local farmers has been growing steadily in the past few decades. The number and popularity of markets has increased considerably in recent years. For example, it has been reported that fourteen new farmers' markets are in the planning stages for the Lower Mainland in 2011. Meanwhile some grocery retailers are jumping on the bandwagon by advertising "farmers' markets" in their stores, and others are looking for ways to source locally grown produce.

Some significant societal trends have supported this growth and seem likely to continue to do so. Over the past several decades there has been an increase in public consciousness about food quality as well as concerns over food security. The "slow food" movement has developed as a reaction to fast, often unhealthy, mass-produced food, while local chefs have set about creating a distinctively west coast cuisine that emphasizes the use of fresh local ingredients. As these ideas permeated the broader population more consumers have come to want the direct contact with their food sources that farmers' markets provide.

While BC communities are at different stages of farmers' market development, it is anticipated that interest in local food is here to stay. For example, health and wellness authorities, anxious to get a handle on burgeoning costs, note that 30% of cancers can be prevented by healthy eating.

Moreover it is clear that farmers' markets, in addition to incubating new farmers and small scale food processors, have also helped incubate new pathways for

¹ The Canadian Food Inspection Agency's technical definition of "local" is within 50 kms. Common usage is that "local food" refers to food grown by farmers in the local region or processed by small scale food processors in BC. For the purposes of this document, we have chosen "local food" over "regional food" to reflect the language used by the majority of our stakeholders.

farmers to market their produce. For example, some farmers active at farmers' markets have leveraged their exposure to interested consumers by creating CSA's (community supported agriculture). Inspired by readily available starter plants at markets, more urban dwellers are growing their own food, and there is a burgeoning interest in backyard chickens and urban farming.

Particularly noteworthy is the number of people under 35 who are passionate about local food and devoting themselves to learning organic gardening, bee keeping, animal husbandry and permaculture.

We may be at a tipping point: Institutional procurement of locally grown produce, long dreamt about, is being piloted by the University of Victoria, and by three RFP's (request for proposals) framed by Food Services² for health institutions or programs. It is possible that institutional procurement provides enough "market pull" to support the renewal of local produce distribution systems beyond farmers' markets, thereby opening the way for locally grown food to have a much bigger share of the grocery retail market.

Other "buy local" developments reflect this trend:

- The B.C. Chapter of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, kicked off its [Ten Percent Shift Campaign](#) to encourage British Columbians to shop locally and support local economies.
- A Think City [survey](#) of local government leaders in British Columbia found that 60 per cent already incorporate local procurement in their economic development strategies.

Another key development is the fact that Bob Chorney Executive Director of Ontario Farmers' Market (FMO) registered and now owns the Canada-wide trademark for the phrase "Farmers' Market". FMO is prepared to consider assisting in situations where someone blatantly calls himself/themselves a "farmers' market" while not being a farmers' market as defined by BCAFM and FMO. FMO will ask the complainant (an individual farmers' market or provincial association) for a full report. Then FMO will discuss it with its lawyer and determine if a "cease & desist" letter is appropriate.

Meanwhile, farmers' markets continue to be the backbone of this movement/revolution. All signs indicate that the farmers' markets sector will

² Food Services is now consolidated for BC Public Health Services Authority, Vancouver Coastal Health, Fraser Health, and Providence Health.

continue to grow. Furthermore, the sector acknowledges that this growth has been supported by specific government initiatives such as the Farmers' Market Nutrition & Coupon Program, the Community Food Action Initiative, the Farm to School program, and ActNowBC Healthy Eating Programs: the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program, Healthy Food and Beverages Program, Action Schools! BC Healthy Eating component, ShapeDown BC, Healthy Restaurant Program, and Partners in Healthy Eating.

3.2 Farmers' Markets and BCAFM

Founded in 2000, the BC Association of Farmers' Markets (BCAFM) has emerged as the leading organization and main voice for farmers' markets in the province. By BCAFM's calculation there were 125 farmers' markets operating in British Columbia in 2010, up from 100 in 2005/6.

Many have sprung up only in the last couple years. They range in size from six farmers selling off the backs of their trucks to large highly-structured urban markets serving thousands of customers with a variety of fresh produce and artisanal food products.

BCAFM has 93 member societies, representing 101 markets and these members represent around 3000 vendors.³ The average market season is 28 weeks, and during that season the average market frequency is once per week, with some markets in larger areas moving to twice per week. Some member societies operate more than one market in different locations. The BCAFM markets' total annual sales volume in 2010 is unknown since most members do not ask their vendors for this information.

BCAFM identifies itself strongly as an agricultural organization. Its mission has been:

“To support, develop and promote farmers' markets in British Columbia.”

The current strategic plan extends this mission from supporting farmers' markets to, resources permitting, advocating on behalf of BC farmers to open up their access to the new marketing channels that farmers' markets have helped to open

³ It may be more accurate to speak of the number of “vendor stalls,” since some producers sell at more than one market and would be counted in this number at every market in which they participate. In any case the number of vendors selling through farmers' markets is substantial.

up. The focus remains on supporting BC farmers as a means to ensure a vibrant local food system.

Member markets meet the following definition:

A "farmers' market" is a market comprised [sic] exclusively (100%) of vendors who make, bake, grow or raise the products they sell, of which **a majority of the vendors** are selling **farm products** of British Columbia origin. These markets must be British Columbia non-profit organizations, whether incorporated or not, with at least 6 vendors, that operate for 2 or more hours per day for a minimum of 4 markets in a year.

At the AGM in 2008 an Amendment to Market Member Definition was created:

A "governing body" that recognizes the definition and is operating a "farmers' market" that is striving to meet the tone of the definition. A Full or Voting member of BCAFM will pay a primary membership for the first market that it operates and an additional fee per market location that it operates.

BCAFM hopes at some point to represent all markets that meet this definition and will be working toward that goal. *Nevertheless, this plan is intended to benefit all farmers' markets in the province, regardless of whether they are members of the central organization or not.*

BCAFM's annual conference, held at various locations around the province, provides a valuable membership benefit. The conference serves as the organization's annual meeting and delegates benefit from educational workshops, hearing speakers, attending a trade show and networking with others including market directors, managers, vendors, staff, volunteers, and suppliers.

The conference is open to all, though members pay a lower conference registration fee than non-members. Over the past several years, conferences were organized in collaboration with other associations to expand the breadth and depth of the sessions.

Other member benefits include:

- Reduced premiums on market liability and directors' and officers' insurance
- Listing on the BCAFM website (273,000 page views including 78,000 visits in 2010)
- Access to highway signage

- Listing in annual directory with 16,000 printed and distributed to markets, Visitor Information Centres, libraries, and other locations in all regions of the province
- Preferential pricing for training and “how to” manuals — Market Safe, Market Manager, and Governance.
- Access to a business case for selling at a farmers' markets
- Representation to senior governments
- Connections to the national and international farmers' markets and related agricultural organizations
- A Resource Kit for a local Farmers' Market Nutrition & Coupon program.
- Reduced fees at BCAFM conferences and workshops.

Member dues in BCAFM are range from \$200 to \$300 per year depending on the maximum number of vendors in the society in the previous season. As the 2011-2016 strategic plan is implemented the association expects to increase the portion of its revenue generated from markets, through a new fee structure for vendor and market certification.

Additional services explored in the strategic plan include:

- Support for recruiting farmers to sell at markets (the Business case)
- Support for attracting new customers to farmers' markets
- Better tailoring of education, promotion and advocacy thanks to regional representation and networking
- Greater brand clarity through vendor and market certification and associated public awareness campaigns
- A policy framework for how local governments can support farmers' markets
- Liaison with regional health authorities, universities and municipalities to support institutional procurement.
- Group Commercial General Liability Insurance for vendors
- Increased demand for farmers' produce thanks to partnership development with provincial foodbanks, a grocery chain and the general public to make healthy local produce available to people accessing food banks.
- Increased training and educational opportunities for vendors, directors

and managers

- Joint advertising and public relations initiatives
- Trouble-shooting and consultations for markets in difficulty.

Again, these services are available to all markets in the province with differential pricing for members and non-members. This pricing policy reflects the fact that members pay dues, but it should also act as an incentive for non-members to join the Association.

3.3 Vision and Purpose of this plan

BC farmers' markets anticipate the execution of this plan will produce a provincial farmers' market sector and associated farmers' marketing initiatives that are larger, more visible and more professionally run — ones that contribute significantly to farm incomes including profitability and to the economy of communities. BCAFM will become a stronger voice for farmers' markets — a self-sustaining organization that is an asset to this sector and provides good value and a high level of service to members and others.

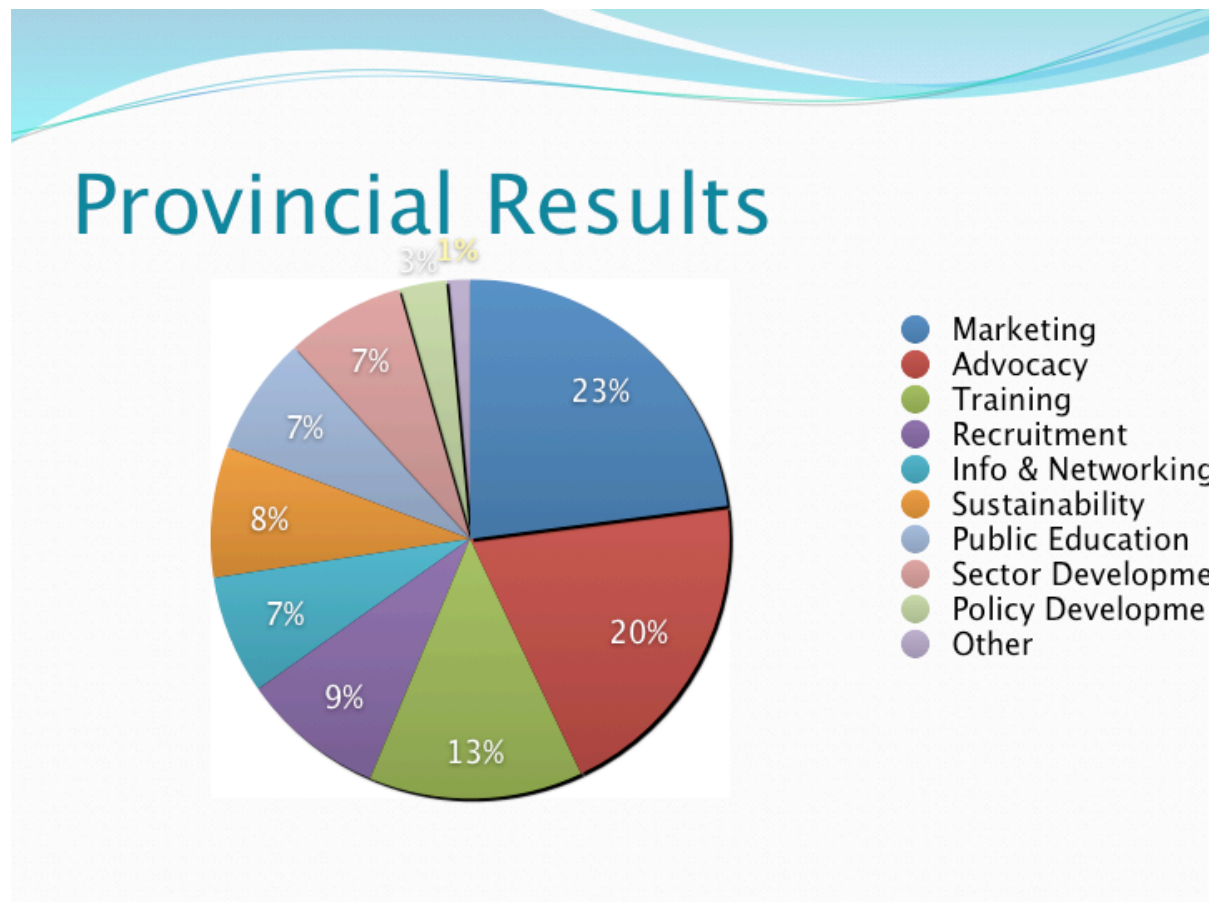
Specific goals, strategies, actions and their expected outcomes are described in subsequent sections.

4. THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

At the outset of the process, the BCAFM circulated a survey inviting members to list their top three priorities for the 2011-2016 strategic plan. The questions were open-ended, giving respondents the freedom to name issues, rather than choosing from a predetermined array of options. Fifty-seven members completed the survey out of a possible 90 for a 63% response rate.

The pie chart below summarizes the responses for the province as a whole, indicating that respondents' top three priorities are **marketing** (markets) (23%), **training** (20%), and **advocacy** (13%).

BCAFM also analysed the responses by region (see Appendix A) and found considerable variation. For example the top issue in Northern BC is **training** (29%), while the top issue is **advocacy** for Thompson-Okanagan (29%), and **marketing** for Vancouver Island (30%) and Vancouver Coast (20%). The BCAFM has long recognized that different regions of the province have different needs and priorities. The new plan includes regionalization as one of five Key Performance Areas to facilitate training, marketing and advocacy tailored to the needs of different regions in conjunction with local partners and allies.



Wider consultation with the remaining farmers' market sector took the following forms:

- Interviews with 151 farmers as part of the BCAFM's work on the business case for participating in farmers' markets.
- Key informant research — 10 interviews to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and significant trends. (For a summary of this research, contact the Manager of the BCAFM .)
- Input from 54 markets.
- Director and staff visits to both member and non-member markets during the growing season to solicit opinion on matters of interest or concern.

The draft strategic plan was developed by working groups during a two day planning retreat attended by 25 people (one of whom participated on the second day only). Those present included eight of the nine members of the board of the BC Association of Farmers' Markets, the Manager and Administrative Assistant, an Intern, and fourteen stakeholders from member markets and other organizations. The planning process has been conducted with the assistance of Kate Sutherland & Associates and input from ten key informants, including two staff from the Ministry of Agriculture. BCAFM's board is broadly representative of

the farmers' market sector as a whole. The present board comprises nine directors from four regions of the province. Four are primary producers.

4.1 Planning Sessions

The two day planning retreat was held January 15-16, 2011 and attended by 24 people on the first day and 19 people on the second day.

The planning sessions were preceded by a Friday evening meeting of the BCAFM Board of Directors, which included developing a timeline for the BC Farmers' market sector stretching from 1899 (the year of the first farmers' market in BC) to date. This helped set the context that farmers' markets are universal — existing in all parts of the world, and that the current renaissance of farmers' markets is actually the restoration of a social structure with a long and important pedigree.

Using the pre-planning information as a basis for discussion, the planning retreat's work was to:

- Identify the sector's main strategic issues or what the plan calls "Key Performance Areas" (KPAs)
- Derive goals, strategies and actions for each KPA
- Specify desired outcomes for each goal
- Identify strategic partners that can assist or work with the sector to achieve its goals
- Begin to estimate costs and possible funding sources for the desired activities.

To stimulate fresh perspective and creative thinking at the outset of the planning process small groups brainstormed the "Big Picture", identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and significant trends.

Reflecting on the Big Picture identified that the sector has developed positively over the past five years, and that its very success has changed the context in ways that open up important new channels for supporting farmers and local food production.

The retreat reflected on the current framing of the BCAFM purpose and unanimously agreed that it needed to be adjusted to embrace helping farmers to market their produce in ways beyond what will always be the core mandate of the association: supporting, developing and promoting farmers' markets in BC.

However, upon further reflection the Board of Directors determined that too broad a purpose would dilute the efforts of the BCAFM. Instead they decided

broaden the purpose to “increase the capacity of BC farmers to sell at farmers’ markets.” Resources permitting and for highly leveraged strategic opportunities, the BCAFM will gladly partner and collaborate to help grow the capacity of farmers’ market farmers to sell through additional channels.

As part of the planning retreat, participants were invited to identify an image that expressed the essence of the BCAFM purpose, and to draft new purpose (mission) statements. There was not time to distil these into a single statement during the two days. The BCAFM Board plans to update the BCAFM mission in consultation with its members.

After this review of the purpose for the Association, participants reviewed the parameters and principles that have guided the BCAFM’s work to date. These were embraced, and are attached as Appendix C.

The next step was to identify all the people and organizations with a stake in the BCAFM’s purpose.

Informed by the identified purpose, principles and stakeholders, retreat participants worked in small groups to brainstorm their response to the following question: What are the top one to three strategies for achieving our purpose? There was a high degree of coherence in what emerged from these small groups — resulting in six clusters that the whole group voted on using dot democracy. In this way the retreat identified the five key performance areas that are at the heart of this strategic plan.

The group then considered financial sustainability, developing a list of possible partners and sources of revenue, and brainstormed possible partners and allies to support the work.

The next day, the goals, expected outcomes and key strategies were developed in small groups (one group for each KPA), then shared with the larger group for feedback, input, and to ensure consistency. Then the same small groups continued to flesh out the plan, adding actions, cost factors, and possible resources.

Meanwhile the BCAFM had commissioned a report from Brent Warner, a consultant with White Loaf Ridge Management Company (also formerly with the BC Ministry of Agriculture and the former Executive Director of Farmers’ Market Canada) for his recommendations on strategies for the financial sustainability of the BCAFM.

All input was integrated into a draft strategic plan by Kate Sutherland & Associates and circulated to everyone who had had input thus far, prior to

presenting a draft plan at the Annual Conference of the BCAFM on March 12, 2011.

4.2 Sector Response

Response to the draft Strategic Plan was generally appreciative and favourable. There is support for all five of the key performance areas and the broad strokes of the plan.

The KPA for Integrity in the Marketplace received the most specific feedback. While many market managers agreed that standards for markets need to be established, there was concern over making certification of vendors and markets mandatory. It was also proposed that some guidelines be common to all markets, and that other guidelines differ by region.

Finally, enforcement of guidelines is important. Enforcement can also cost a lot, especially in larger markets, and where suppliers are coming from a great distance. There is interest in collaborative ways to enforce guidelines. E.g. if a farmer is based in Cawston and selling in Vancouver, a market local to Cawston might help with verifying that the vendor is “make, bake or grow”.

5. The Situational Analysis—Where Are We Now?

This section of the plan reviews and examines those strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats or challenges that were mentioned most frequently or elicited the most discussion during the planning process. For a complete list of issues raised in the key informant interviews and at the strategic planning retreat, contact the Manager of the BCAFM.

5.1 Strengths

The most clearly identified strength of farmers' markets is the central role they play in what some are now calling “a local food revolution.” The significant growth in the number and size of farmers' markets over the last five years has been the backbone of a movement that is active, engaged, and propagating in hundreds of new initiatives⁴.

Underpinning this growth and arguably the greatest appeal of farmers' markets is their ability to bring fresh, safe, high quality food direct from the farm to the consumer. In the process, markets are able to foster relationships among

⁴ This includes CSAs, local procurement, urban agriculture, community gardens, and more.

producers, and between producers and consumers. Through those relationships they build a sense of community as well. That community-building process is both a social and an economic one. It has meant that most markets now rest on a base of consumer loyalty and public support that is another of their key strengths.

For agriculture as a whole, markets act as important promoters of local and regional farm and food products. For consumers, the growers and producers who sell those products at farmers' markets are "the face of agriculture" in BC.

In 2009 the BCAFM won the Advancing Marketplace Trust Award of the Better Business Bureau of the BC Lower Mainland. As the trusted voice for farmers' markets in the province, and a conduit for communication between them, BCAFM is seen as a way to gain more respect and credibility for the sector with both governments and the public. Thus, a strong central organization also means stronger individual markets.

In the past five years the BCAFM has built capacity internally including hiring a full time Manager. Thanks to greater project management capacity afforded by the Manager, the Association has developed the highly successful Farmers' Market Nutrition & Coupon Program, many mechanisms for market promotion, numerous sponsorship relationships, partnerships for marketing and outreach, higher profile in the sector, professional training programs (Market Manager, Market Safe, and Governance training) and an excellent track record with funders and partners.

5.2 Weaknesses

While a growing number of successful markets have achieved the status of community institutions, poor advertising, too few farmers, coupled with a lack of resources (financial and manpower) required to grow, have meant many markets have a low profile. Competition between farmers' markets where two or three are in close proximity was also seen as a weakness in some areas of the province.

Recruiting farmers to sell at farmers' markets is a big challenge outside of heavily populated areas. Many noted the average age of farmers (57), the high cost of land, and the many barriers to new farmers getting started.

Although BCAFM has brought markets together to form a cohesive sector, the extent to which it can actively provide support for sector development is also hampered by a lack of resources.

5.3 Opportunities

The list of opportunities identified in the situational analysis is long, stemming from the wave of interest and activity for local food. For example, the public's growing interest in local food has led the Vancouver Sun to dedicate a reporter to covering local food issues, which in turn opens opportunities for reaching people not currently aware of farmers' markets and the importance of local food. This can also raise the profile of the BCAFM and therefore its potential to shape public policy.

Many new opportunities relate to "helping farmers market" their food beyond farmers' markets, while continuing to foster demand for farmers' markets. There is latent demand for local food, and high interest in local food initiatives. There are real opportunities for institutional procurement, supplying mainstream grocery stores, coupon programs to get fresh healthy local produce to food banks and more.

BCAFM's excellent track record for developing training programs over the past five years gives the association credibility for creating vendor and market related education programs. New opportunities include workshops on how to: increase the appeal of your market and booth, promote your market on a budget, improve customer service, recruit and retain volunteers, strengthen your market through CSAs, and more.

The BCAFM's increased professionalism also gives it credibility for creating vendor and market certification programs. While the prime impetus is ensuring customer confidence, certification programs are likely to also provide an ongoing revenue stream to the association.

BCAFM website received 273,159 page views in 2010, up 16% over 2009, creating opportunities for advertising revenue, advocacy and education.

5.4 Threats or Challenges

Finding the money and staff resources (both paid and volunteer) needed for the next stages of growth and development was seen as most important challenge for farmers' markets generally and for their provincial association.

Coming a close second is importance of maintaining the brand of farmers' markets as "make, bake or grow" markets. In this way customers can be confident that there are no "resellers" at their market. Ensuring vendors are "make, bake or grow" also keeps the authenticity and appeal of farmers' markets

from being diluted by “flea market” type vendors

The other main threat mentioned was the possibility of one food safety or public health scandal relating to markets damaging both public confidence in farmers' markets and for the possible disruption due to regulatory interventions.

Finally, as part of the wider picture, the group named the threat of climate change and rising fossil fuel costs, noting that they will affect the cost of food and make it that much more important to have strategies for making fresh produce available to people with lower incomes.

The planning process identified concrete and proactive strategies for addressing each of these threats.

5.5 Potential Partners

As a first step in identifying partners who could assist or co-operate in the implementation of this plan, the committee brainstormed a fairly complete list of organizations and institutions with potentially similar values. For example, regional health authorities, BC's Community Food Action Initiative, the media (given the growing interest in local food), food banks, chefs, and local chambers of commerce. Later in the planning process participants focused on selected *strategic* partners they might use to help them carry out specific activities. These potential partners are noted in the summary tables that comprise **Section 7.2**

6. Key Performance Areas and their Goals

The planners have set goals for the farmers' market sector that are ambitious but achievable. They are grouped under five main headings or Key Performance Areas:

1. Marketing and Research
2. Integrity in the Market Place
3. Representation, Partnerships and Alliances
4. Regionalization
5. Financial Sustainability

The goals, their expected outcomes and main strategies for each key

performance area are summarized in this section. Further implementation activities, cost factors, sources of matching funds and potential partners are detailed in table form in **Section 7.2**.

6.1 Marketing and Research

GOAL: To increase the consumption of local food through farmers' markets and associated channels.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: Through the strategies in this KPA, it is anticipated that there will be increased capacity of farmers' markets to promote themselves; increased awareness/understanding by the general public about multiple benefits of local food (fresh and processed); greater consumer demand for local food; more younger people becoming farmers, more producers choosing to sell at farmers' markets, enhanced communication and information between markets, vendors and customers, more financially viable and sustainable markets, more reliable and secure local food sources, and more farmers selling fresh produce beyond farmers' markets.

MAIN STRATEGIES: Implementation strategies for this goal include: developing branding and marketing resources; increasing the number of farmers selling at farmers' markets; supporting markets to assess economic impact. and (resources permitting) promoting other models for farmers to market fresh produce. These are detailed in Section 7.2.

6.2 Integrity in the Market Place

GOAL: To maintain and enhance consumer confidence that a farmers' market will meet their expectations through transparency and clarity in the marketplace.

OUTCOMES: The key objectives of this KPA are increased consumer spending and consumer confidence, increased farmer participation, decreased conflict amongst vendors, improved image (non swap meet, craft sale or flea market image), and better educated consumers.

MAIN STRATEGIES: An immediate priority is to develop certification programs for both vendors (make, bake or grow) and farmers' markets (majority of vendors are certified, market management has completed Market Safe and Market Manager and Director trainings, etc.). Once developed, certification programs will be piloted in selected markets and then rolled out to all markets in conjunction with a branding process to create an identifiable logo for both

vendors and markets, and a public education program to let the public know to look for certified markets and vendors.

6.3 Representation, Partnerships and Alliances

GOAL: Act as a united voice that encourages collaboration with all levels of government and key stakeholders.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: The intention is to leverage the general public's growing interest in local food into making healthy farm fresh BC product available to all BC citizens while helping smaller scale farmers to become more financially viable.

Through representation at all level of government, this plan supports farmers' markets to obtain secure locations, and encourages purchasing of local farm product among institutional buyers. Position papers related to farmers' market sector will be developed.

MAIN STRATEGIES: The Association will develop a professional communications and publicity plan, including consideration of social media and website development, to improve its effectiveness at representing farmers and farmers' markets. A key part of this communication readiness will be development of critical incident response strategies and process(es) that markets and the BCAFM can follow in the event of a critical incident involving the market sector.

6.4 Regionalization

GOAL: To better understand, represent and meet the needs of Member markets, and the sector of farmers' markets in all regions of BC (Interior, Fraser, Vancouver Coastal, Vancouver Island, and Northern).

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: For years the BCAFM has wanted to better serve farmers and farmers' markets in the five health regions of BC. In 2011, they have the organizational capacity, energy and commitment to take on this goal. Central to the work with be supporting better links and networking between markets and farmers at the regional level, and cultivation of strong regional partnerships with local health authorities, local governments, and other regionally based partners and sponsors.

MAIN STRATEGIES: The anchor strategy for regionalization is instituting regional representation for the BCAFM Board of Directors, by ensuring at least one

director for each of the five health regions in BC. The association will work to support two regional meetings per calendar year, which will start as early as the fall of 2011 to support information sharing, joint projects, partnership development, and identify local sponsors and funders. Also part of the KPA is adaptation or development of educational programming tailored to the specific needs of each region, and a Train the Trainer program to facilitate responsiveness and cost effectiveness of delivery of core training (e.g. Market Manager, Director, and Market Safe).

6.5 Financial Sustainability

GOAL: BCAFM to become self-sustaining financially in less than five years.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: It is expected that work on this goal will create reliable non-project revenue streams sufficient to meet annual core expenses within five years. Once this base is established the intention is to create a contingency fund for projects and possible emergencies. This financial self sufficiency will allow the BCAFM to be nimble and responsive, and help it to be a strong voice for farmers and farmers' markets.

MAIN STRATEGIES: Renew existing relationships and cultivate new sources of funding.

7. Implementing the Plan

7.1 Administration and Disbursement of Funds

As with the previous strategic plan, this is a plan for the farmers' market sector as a whole, and its outcomes are intended to serve the sector as a whole (along with the people of BC).

The plan can only be implemented through collaborations involving the Association, member markets, partners and allies. To repeat: this is not a strategic plan for the BCAFM. It is a strategic plan for the sector as a whole.

While many strategies may be centrally initiated, their success will be expressed by the extent they cultivate sustained engagement, capacity building and leadership in different regions and by different sector partners (including member markets). Furthermore some initiatives may be better handled at the member

market level, based on real practice, and articulated as transferable templates that others can adopt.

7.2 Summary Tables

Where **Section 6** gave a general overview of the plan's most important elements, the following tables provide a more detailed transcription of strategies developed in the planning process, as well as some of the actions that will be required to carry out the strategies.

The Key Performance Area, goal, expected outcomes and selected performance measures are shown at the top of each table.

The strategies in Column One are divided by years, and for each strategy bulleted in Column One there are usually some corresponding actions in Column Two. These actions generally become sparser for the later years of the plan, as they will be fleshed out in the annual work plans and budgets.

For the same reason, specific costs are not attached to the actions in these tables, but factors that will need to be costed in the annual budgets are identified.

In the final column "Possible Resources" include both potential sources of matching funds (marked \$) and potential strategic partners (marked >).

TABLE ONE

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA: **Marketing and Research**

GOAL: To increase the consumption of local food through farmers' markets and associated channels.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: Increased capacity of farmers' markets to promote themselves; increased awareness/understanding by the general public about multiple benefits of local food (fresh and processed); greater consumer demand for local food; more younger people are becoming farmers, increased sales (volume) at BC farmers' markets.

Also: More producers involved with farmers' markets. Enhanced communication and information flow between markets, vendors, and customers. More financially viable markets. more reliable and secure local food sources, and more farmers selling fresh produce beyond farmers' markets.

MAIN STRATEGIES: Implementation strategies for this goal include: developing branding and marketing resources; increasing the number of farmers selling at farmers' markets; supporting markets to assess economic impact. and (resources permitting) promoting other models for farmers to market fresh produce. These are detailed in Section 7.2.

SELECTED PERFORMANCE MEASURES: Year over year increases in number of farmers' markets and other initiatives linking buyers and sellers of food grown and/or processed locally. Greater sales per vendor. Decrease in number of market failures. Number of new younger farmers incubated through farmers' markets. Number of new small-scale food processors incubated through farmers' markets.

STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES
			\$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner

STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
<p>YEAR ONE+ Increase number of farmers selling at farmers' markets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop tools farmers' markets can use to attract farmers to build on the business case study. - Share information about opportunities for farmers from one market to sell at other farmers' markets. - Attend farmer related events to build relationships and recruit farmers (E.g. through the business case study project in 2011.) - Research barriers to farmers who are not selling at markets. <p>YEAR 2-5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop strategies to address barriers and to optimize opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff time - Consultant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Communications firm (Pro bono) \$ IAF Business Case Study > Directors of local markets?
<p>Business development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helping farmers' market incubate new businesses and hubs for local food businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff time - Consultant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ Western Economic Diversification (Tara has written proposal)
<p>Help BC farmers to market their produce outside of farmers' markets (to be done by individual farmers' markets if resources permit)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage government institutions and other institutions (e.g. universities) to make a portion of their procurement from farmers in the region. - Possibly create a pilot project(s) that aggregate supply of fresh produce to meet demand from local institutions (Students have done work around this at UVic- it took along time but Uni. Is now able to include some/ more locally produced offerings. May consider contacting to ID barriers to institutional procurement policy- supply/ demand. <p>-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultants - Local FM managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ IAFund \$ WD \$ FN Agricultural Funding > PHSA > Local Fresh > BCATA

STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
<p>YEAR TWO Develop branding and marketing resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rebrand “Farmers’ Market” to raise profile and attract more customers. [Link to Integrity: raise awareness of certified markets: Make, bake, grow] - Develop a marketing plan to reach public who don’t yet go to markets. Explore social media strategies; capture momentum of public interest in local and healthy food. - Create marketing tools that demonstrate the value of food available at farmers’ markets (health, economic, social, ...) - More educational and capacity building resources available on the BCAFM website.** - outreach to disseminate marketing resources. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure farmers’ markets are in municipal publications listing local services.** 	<p>Staff time Consultants</p>	<p>> possibly contributed services by hip communications and branding firms > Farmers’ Market Coalition online resources. > Strategic partners, like Overwaitea, Starbucks, BC Liquor stores and other channels to reach the general public.</p>
<p>YEAR TWO Develop “What’s at the Market” internet service</p>	<p>-undertake a business plan/cash flow mapping project for the “What’s at the Market” service.</p> <p>-Initiate “What’s at the Market” service – likely beginning with a few markets as a pilot</p>	<p>Consultant – Karen Fensky or similar, Staff</p> <p>Ivan Kalley, staff</p>	<p>\$VanCity \$ Enterprising Non Profits fund \$ Farm Credit Corporation >Ivan Kalley >markets already participating in My Markets News service</p> <p>\$ BCAFM to supply seed funding, \$ VanCity ENP fund >participating markets >participating vendors</p>

STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
YEAR TWO Economic Impact resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a kit (based on the initial UNBC study) that markets can use to measure economic impact of their markets, and a protocol for having markets do these measurements in ways that support comparability of results between markets and from year to year (Same period (two weeks in the high season), same questions). Could also be of a representative sample of markets (Small, medium, large). - Collate and analyse data. Explore trends. - Research benefits to small businesses in the vicinity of markets. - Develop BCAFM policy response to the “unfair competition” allegations raised by some local businesses based on farmers’ markets being “make, bake, or grow”. 	Staff Coordination Website or printing costs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Member markets > Partnership with University or College for research study > Farmers’ Market Coalition for precedents.
Talk to the people of BC about the importance of local food available at farmers’ markets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness and education campaign - gap analysis study on customer perception/experience of farmers’ markets 	Staff and board Materials Consultant	> Health authority
YEAR TWO+ Other models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support emergence of new models through communications, advocacy, and collaboration. - Explore possibilities for farmers to market produce to local grocery stores (E.g. one BC grocery store is stocking local corn only. Costs a bit more. Guaranteed that picked within 24 hours. The store is being public about supporting local farmers, and is interested in helping people learn where their food comes from. - Explore SaveOn Foods offer of a pilot in-store market in their Chilliwack Store — setting up a farmers’ market area inside a SaveOn Foods store – stocked with market products and staffed by vendors and market personnel. <p>Links to Grocery chain/Foodbanks coupon initiative (Financial Sustainability)</p>	Staff time Consultant Staff time Market manager time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Pioneers of other models: NOW BC, Home Grow-In, CSAs, Procurement > Local Fresh > WED, Community Futures > Grocery chain > Large <p>\$ BCAFM Staff SaveOn staff</p>

STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
YEAR THREE+ Help more farmers to market their produce through farmers' markets	- Possibly create one pilot project per region to support First Nations farmers to market agricultural products to farmers' markets.	- Consultant - Staff time	\$ IAFund \$ First Nations Agriculture Association > Brian Harper, MAL, FN Agrologist
YEAR THREE Expand What's at the Market beyond pilot to all member markets and all vendors	- Educate and enlist all member markets to participate	-staff -Ivan Kalley	\$ self-funding

TABLE TWO**KEY PERFORMANCE AREA: Integrity in the Market Place**

GOAL: To maintain and enhance consumer confidence through transparency and clarity in the marketplace.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: Increased consumer spending and visits to the markets, consumer confidence and trust, increased farmer participation, decreased conflict amongst vendors, improved image (non swap meet/craft sale or flea market image), better educated consumers.

SELECTED PERFORMANCE MEASURES: Number of markets certified, percentage of vendors certified/vetted, reduced number of conflicts between vendors,

STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
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STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
<p>YEAR Two Vendor Certification, Phase One: Criteria and process for certifying that vendors “make, bake or grow” the products they sell at farmers’ markets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a province-wide vendor only advisory committee to work on vendors behalf - Develop criteria for vendor certification in consultation with vendors and markets and informed by certification programs from other jurisdictions. (E.g. FM Ontario) - Define a process for vendor certification including fees, admin, consequences, scaling for different types of vendors. - Circulate proposal to member markets. - Collate responses and adapt as appropriate - Develop logo and signage for certified vendors - <p>OR — the Working group proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a peer vendor vetting model (farmers and other vendors), including a checklist. Research best practices in other jurisdictions. - Train peer vendor vetters — professional, clear criteria for vetters (Must be knowledgeable about products), clear criteria for vetting process. - See Appendix D – California Certified Markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Staff time -Consultant -Designer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Volunteers > Existing certification groups like COABC & SPCA > Possibly a university/college student project \$ - IAF
<p>YEAR Three Pilot Vendor certification</p> <p>Links to Financial Sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pilot vendor certification process in 6-8 more established markets - Certification is overseen by the BCAFM in collaboration with organizations like COABC that already have a team of inspectors. - Frame certification as a marketing tool for vendors rather than as enforcement. - Supply a branded, beautiful laminated card to certified vendors - Evaluate pilot and adjust as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design costs - Printing costs - Admin - Staff coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > COABC > \$ Vendor fees for certification > Phase One Pilot partners: Vernon, Vancouver, Ladner Abbotsford, Coquitlam, Haney, Comox, Kelowna &

STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
Certify Farmers' markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research market certification programs in other jurisdictions - Develop criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Require training (Market Manager, Governance, Market Safe, Food Safe. - Require comprehensive vendor vetting (or certification) process. - Clarify consequences of non-compliance: clear policy - Include health assessment - certification is renewed each year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - logo design - printing - staff time - Consultant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > private agency \$ IAF Fund \$ fees from markets
Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create clearly defined brand for Certified Farmers' Markets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop logo - promote logo - utilize logo in printed materials, website, etc - trademark the logo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - staff time - contractor (probono?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Emily Carr's commercial design department (Student project?)
Communicate benefits of integrity in the market place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advise MLAs on projects - Public outreach campaign to raise awareness of the Brand of Farmers' markets (Links to Marketing and Research) - Training program for Market Managers re benefits of integrity and transparency in the market place, and how-tos of vendor vetting. - Outreach to non-member Farmers' Markets, encouraging them to get certified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff time - contractor (probono?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Contributed branding expertise. > Piggy back on Provincial Ministries of Health, Economic Development, Environment, Agriculture.
Education of vendors and managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expand the amount and type of information available to vendors and managers on the website — e.g. best practices guide, courses.** - Work with CFMBC to deliver webinars for farmers' markets vendors.** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Web developer - Video camera 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ - CFMBC
YEAR THREE-FIVE Roll out of Certification to all markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Roll out of vendor certification based on provincially determined process and criteria. - Roll out of farmers' market certification. - BCAF website includes a provincial database of certified vendors. Vendors certified in one market do not need to be certified for other markets. - Ongoing monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 	

TABLE THREE

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA: **Representation, Partnerships and Alliances**

GOAL: Act as a united voice that encourages collaboration with all levels of government and key stakeholders.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: The intention is to leverage the general public's growing interest in local food into making healthy farm fresh BC product available to all BC citizens while helping smaller scale farmers to become more financially viable.

Through representation at all level of government, this plan supports farmers' markets to obtain secure locations, and encourages purchasing of local farm product among institutional buyers. Position papers related to farmers' market sector will be developed.

SELECTED PERFORMANCE MEASURES: Growth in sales of farm produce at farmers' markets, number of secure locations, number of permanent locations, hourly compensation for farmers increases, number of media appearances, numbers of meetings with politicians and bureaucrats, number of press releases, number of email action alerts.

STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
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STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
<p>YEAR ONE Develop a policy platform and related questions for leadership and other political candidates in provincial elections.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define strategic policy objectives in at both the provincial and federal level (Wish list) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make the link to climate change, health, energy security, environment. - Create 1-2 pager to support interested allies to ask political candidates to endorse the policy platform Include mention of the Farmers' Market Nutrition & Coupon Program, saying what was done, what the program has achieved and asking for support to continue the program. Involve the Ministry of Social Development. Create an "Action Alert email distribution list through partnerships with member markets. 	Staff time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Member markets for their email lists, and for possible policy development input. > sister organizations for policy input
<p>Develop strong alliances with media, sister organizations, and potential allies/funders relating to priority issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - attend meetings (UBCM, BCAC, Food Systems related meetings) - make phone calls - organize meetings - invite partnerships for the BCAFM conference - Cultivate relationships with the BC Chamber of Commerce, Real Estate Board - Create forum to launch strategic plan (Gala) - identify ag sector friendly journalists <p>(links to Communications plan)</p>	Staff time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > SSFPA > BCAC > Farm folk, City Folk
<p>YEAR ONE - FIVE Advocate for permanent locations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disseminate the 2010 Select Standing Committee Recommendation about permanent locations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage local market societies to take the recommendations to local MLAs and municipal governments. 	Staff time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Member markets

STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
Local government support for farmers' markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce document for markets to use on how local government can help to support farmers' markets (Year 1). Already approved by IAF and will be developed in 2011. • Co-operate with local government in getting electric power and other infrastructure to market sites (Year 1 and 2) • Provide markets advice and assistance with site and facility development (Year 3-5) 	Consultants Staff time Printing and distribution Advisory Council members	\$ - UBCM \$ - IAF (Best Practices Guide) \$ - Local Governments
YEAR TWO Accessibility of healthy fresh, BC produce for people with low incomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultivate relationships with government health bodies: PHSA, Regional Health Authorities, Community Food Action Initiative, etc, - Cultivate relationships with non-governmental health-related organizations like BC Diabetes, BC Cancer, Heart and Stroke Foundation, Dieticians, community service agencies, cooking and skill building programs, etc. - Partner with health related allies for projects to get healthy BC produce to people with low incomes — Gleaning, preserving, cooking skills. - Partner with health related allies for conference planning and implementation. 	Staff time, and Advisory Council	> PHSA > Community Food Action Initiative > BC Diabetes > BC Cancer > Heart & Stroke > Dieticians > Nutritionists >\$ Overwaitea coupons??

STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
<p>Communications Plan to raise profile of BCAFM</p> <p>Links to Financial Sustainability: stronger website, higher profile and clearer messaging lead to better potential for advertising and for donations from the general public to support key initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarify key objectives - Identify key strategies (i.e. who are strategic audiences and potential allies) - Identify key messages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a consistent media message - Issue press releases based on the plan - Restructure BCAFM website to make it more user friendly. - Develop simple social media strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If feasible, create an "infomercial" on farmers' markets to use in sector development and to run on local cable stations.** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communications consultant - Website developer - Social media consultant 	<p>\$ In-kind contribution from BC communications firm.</p> <p>> FarmFolk, City Folk</p>
<p>Develop Critical Incident Response Capability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Develop a process for dealing with the media and others in the case of a critical incident -Develop and implement critical incident response training including drills simulating incidents (scenarios). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communications consultant 	<p>\$ IAF</p> <p>>consultant</p> <p>> BCAFM staff</p> <p>>selected market managers</p>
<p>YEARS TWO TO FIVE</p> <p>Initiatives to help make agriculture financially viable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mention the idea of local procurement by government funded institutions and agencies at meeting with government if time permits. - Advocate at the Federal level to make sure that trade agreements don't jeopardize food security capacity building based in local procurement strategies. (This is very high level and may not happen unless a committee is developed.) - Advocate for Buy BC program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff time 	<p>> Member markets for their email lists, and for possible policy development input.</p> <p>> PHSA</p> <p>> Local Fresh</p>

TABLE FOUR

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA: Regionalization

GOAL: To better understand, represent, and meet the needs of member markets, and the sector of farmers' markets in all regions of BC.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: Farmers' markets and BC farmers who sell at farmers' markets in BC's five regions better served by the BCAFM, and by policies and projects designed and implemented at the regional level; markets and farmers better networked with each other at the regional level. More collaboration between farmers' markets, farmers and their allies at the regional level.

SELECTED PERFORMANCE MEASURES: Number of BCAFM directors by region, number of regional meetings, number of regionally initiated projects and initiatives, dollar amount of funding raised on a regional basis, number of regional partners and sponsors.

STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
<p>YEARS Two to FIVE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate better regional representation on the BCAFM Board, with the goal of regional representation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recruit potential directors from each region of BC. Regions determined by the BC health regions (large areas have 2 reps) - Representation = director on BCAFM Board • 9 board members total • Define Terms of Reference for regional chapters of BCAFM, including membership, decision making, and mandate (e.g. Education, Funding, Board representation, regional policy on vendor mix, shared services, joint advertising, collaborative projects) for inclusion in the BCAFM constitution. - Create a Nominating Committee. - Yearly work plans for BCAFM and regional representatives. - Clarify expectations for each Board Member (for each region) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Filing fee to change constitution - Office admin fees - Travel costs for directors to attend provincial meetings, especially from Northern BC (\$600 per director per meeting) - Skype fees 	<p>Not eligible for IAF funding. Considered capacity building.</p>

STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
<p>Initiate regional meetings twice a year (pre and post market season). Encourage regions to initiate collaboration for fall of 2011.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invite member markets, producers, vendors, market managers - Outreach to non-member markets and farmers at the regional level - Outreach to food system allies (health, funding, education, farm direct marketers, culinary tourism, economic development etc) at the regional level - Perhaps include a piggy-back meeting open to anyone interested in starting new farmers' market(s) in the region. (Hosting role only. Main impetus needs to come from the grassroots.) - Support regional groups with development of their agenda: what are barriers, policy gaps, possible projects? - Network different regions to support knowledge sharing - Piggyback regional professional dev't sessions on regional meetings including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Market Manager training - Vendor Training (Priority area as there is currently no vendor training program on or off line in Canada. Potential revenue stream.) - Board of Governance training - Market Safe - Add possible new training programs on subjects like how to: increase the appeal of your market and booth, conflict resolution, promote your market on a budget, improve customer service, recruit and retain volunteers, strengthen your market through CSAs, and more. - Train the trainer for the above prof dev't - Ongoing liaison with BCAFM to facilitate knowledge sharing between regions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultant to initiate the Regional Meeting process and related travel costs with the intention that these become self sustaining thanks to support from the regional rep on the BCAFM board. (\$50,000) - Workshop presenter fees and travel \$1000 - Skype fees - Contractor (Two years) for training sessions and training trainers. (\$50,000) - Staff and Admin time 	<p>(not eligible for IAF funding. Extension must be built into other projects.)</p> <p>Other \$ Regional funding/ Sponsorships \$ Credit Unions \$ and > PHSA, Ministry of Health, or Regional Health Authorities</p> <p>> Partner with UNBC (distance learning programs) for vendor training, and possibly David Connell</p> <p>> Growing Forward Funding for Human Resources workshop</p> <p>\$ Registration fees to courses \$ Possible matched funding (Banks, local sponsors)</p>
<p>Assess availability of appropriate & accessible on-line training**</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigate use of "webinars" for training in partnership with Canada Farm Business Management Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [None for investigation] 	<p>> CFBMC as strategic partner (Possibly based on work with UNBC...</p>

STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
Through regional chapters, cultivate regional funding relationships and potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BCAFM staff draft a form letter for regions to take to local gov't and MLAs promoting politician involvement in markets with anticipated spin off that politicians will promote markets in their own publicity, and be more supportive through their work. - Create templates for potential funders - Support regions to frame projects that might be funded by local health authorities, Community Futures, local sponsors and others. - Share stories in newsletter of what different regions are doing <p>(Link to Advocacy)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff/admin: draft letters, newsletters, linking. - Portion of revenues would be distributed provincially and regionally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ Local, Provincial and Federal Government \$ Local banks and credit unions \$ Local sponsors \$ Regional Health Authorities > Health organizations (Diabetes, Cancer, etc. re healthy food options) > Regional media
- Continue to support regional meetings, two times per year.	Staff oversight of consultant. Key objective that regional groups become strong enough to be self sustaining by year four.	Ongoing from year one.	

TABLE FIVE**KEY PERFORMANCE AREA: Financial Sustainability**

GOAL: BCAFM to become self sustaining financially in less than five years.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES: Financial security for annual core expenses; create a contingency fund for projects and possible emergencies. Financial self sufficiency allows the BCAFM to be nimble and responsive.

SELECTED PERFORMANCE MEASURES: Non-project revenue covers core staff (one professional FTE, one admin support FTE) and office/admin/marketing/board expenses.

STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
YEAR ONE Sponsorships and partnerships	- Contact past partners and sponsors about renewing support.	- Staff time	\$ - Existing sponsors
Vendor Supporter program	- Continue to market BCAFM "Vendor Supporter" memberships with insurance savings as one of many benefits.	- Staff time	\$ - Vendors membership fees.
Linking Farmers and Food Banks At-the-till coupon program to raise funds from grocery chain customers to supply fresh BC farm produce to people accessing food banks. Similar program already exists through RONA. This idea is a variation of the "Share BC" coupon.	- Develop proposal to food bank - Develop proposal to grocery chain — where a portion of revenues raised go to the BCAFM for brokering and coordinating the deal. YEARS 3-5 - Partner with nutritionists, dieticians and cooking and skill building programs to supply recipes and support to know what to do with fresh produce.	- Staff time - Accounting - Coordination	> Grocery chain > Foodbanks \$ General Public \$ Sponsorships \$ Health Authorities YEARS 3-5 > Cooking and skill building programs

STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
Municipal government grants	- draft a letter to the UBCM proposing a resolution calling for municipalities with farmers' markets to support the BCAFm with an annual grant of \$500-1000.	- Staff time	UBCM
YEAR TWO Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program See Appendix D – Coupon Programs in USA. Great for farmers, markets, image of BCAFm, families...	- Explore reviving the FM Nutrition Coupon Project and extend it to more markets, working at the regional level with local health authorities. - Require that Markets have majority of certified vendors to participate in the FMNCP. - Promote as a strategy that changes lives: healthy eating habits, shift needle on obesity and diabetes, supports local farmers and farmers' markets	- Staff time - Accounting - Coordination	\$ Ministry of Health \$ Sponsoring partners > community organizations > local health authorities > cooking and skill building programs
YEAR TWO Vendor certification	- See Table Two: Integrity in the Market Place.		
Friends of BC Farmers' Markets partnership programs	- Develop a sponsorship program that runs from individual consumers to BC companies. - Individuals could receive a newsletter and a reusable shopping bag, "bond" certificate, or decal. (Could link to Advocacy) - Corporations: tailor partnership to business. E.g. White Spot could have display cards on each table stating how they use as much local food as possible, and every farmers' market could hand out coupons for a "free" BC salad at White Spot (Cross merchandising opportunity). - Municipalities: In collaboration with UBCM, have category of Friends that are municipalities — small annual grant: \$1000.	Staff time working with professional fundraiser Board and staff time in meeting with potential partners	> Possibly a professional fundraiser on a percentage basis. > BC Chamber of Commerce \$ Possibly large production Ag (Egg, dairy, poultry) based on FM being "face of agriculture", and on grounds of business development — economic impact. \$ Real Estate Foundation \$ Lululemon and other broad appeal BC companies

STRATEGIES	RELATED ACTIONS	COST FACTORS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES \$ - Matching funds/contribution > - Strategic Partner
Government Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify BCAFM project priorities - Meet with Ministry reps (Agriculture, Environment, Health, Tourism) to see if there's a fit between what government needs and what BCAFM can offer, aiming for long term partnering relationships - Frame proposals that bring multiple stakeholders to the table: Ask government to match funds raised from corporate sponsors and market customers. - Explore if there are government initiatives relating to farmers and marketing that BCAFM can deliver - Follow up - PR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time Travel costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Directors > UBCM?? \$ BC Health \$Ministry of Social Development
Regional Galas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fundraising - Sponsorships - Announcing the new strategic plan to friends, allies, consumers, sister organizations - Outreach to sister organizations, such as organic delivery services, Home Grow-in, NOWBC, FarmFolk/City Folk - Publicity - Silent auction? - BCAFM creates TOR and oversees project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 70% overhead 30% ?? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Professional fundraiser, caterer, entertainment > Sponsors of the event — Board of Change, Vancity? Real Estate Foundation? Intrawest? \$ Ticket sales > Celebrity support > contractor on percentage basis \$ Real Estate Marketing Board

9. Conclusion

Farmers' markets are becoming a major player in the agricultural landscape of British Columbia. They are a significant source of income for vendors who sell through them and thereby bring some stability to the perennially risky business of farming. In addition, the very success of farmers' markets has helped open up

other channels for farmers to market fresh produce — through growth in the number of farmers' markets, CSAs, institutional procurement, food banks and grocery retailers.

Although these additional marketing channels are key to a farmer's success, the BCAFM will focus primarily on its core mandate of developing, supporting and promoting farmers' markets. Resources permitting, and where there are highly leveraged strategic opportunities, the Association may support BC farmers to market their produce through the additional market channels.

Either way, the BCAFM will work to help more BC farmers to market through farmers' markets, and will develop policy platforms on key identified issues for posting on our website. This will allow us to form relationships with groups that advocate for issues such as preservation of the Agricultural Land Reserve and the financial viability of small-scale farmers.

Farmers' market vendors are the "face of agriculture" for urban consumers in BC, and for this reason the growth, professionalism and greater cohesion in the farmers' market sector is good for agriculture as a whole. By creating a direct link between urban consumers and the people who grow their food, farmers' markets help raise public awareness of food issues. By providing those consumers with fresh and wholesome produce they contribute to population health. And by cementing consumer loyalty to known producers markets have a key role to play in ensuring local food security.

For all these reasons farmers' markets and their organizations warrant the support by consumers, politicians, health authorities, municipalities and civil society.

Appendix A: Member Markets' Survey Results

For a PowerPoint summary of the findings, contact the Manager of the BCAFM.

Participating Markets:

- Abbotsford Farm and Country Market Society
- All Organic Farmers' Market
- Agassiz Farm Fresh Steering Committee
- Bowen Road Farmers' Market Society
- Bulkley Valley Farmers' Market Association
- Cloverdale Country Farms
- Clearwater Farmers' Market
- Cherryville Farmers' Market
- Chetwynd Social Planning Society-the Sukuuka Group
- Chilliwack Farmers' Market
- Coquitlam Farmers' Market Society
- Colwood Farmers' Market Society
- Comox Valley Farmers' Market Association
- Cranbrook Farmers' Market Society
- Cedar Farmers' Market Society
- Creston Valley Food Action Coalition (FM)
- Fresh Alternatives Society
- Fort St. James Farmers' Market Association
- Fernie Mountain Market
- Fort St. John Farmers' Market Association
- Gibsons Landing Sunday Market
- Golden Farmers' Market Society
- Goldstream Station Market Society
- Harvest-Cariboo Agricultural Producers Association
- Hazelton Farmers' Market Society
- Haney Farmers' Market Society
- Hedley Farmers' Market
- Healthy Options for People and the Earth Society
- Kamloops Regional Farmers' Market Society

- Langley Community Farmers' Market Society
- Lake Country Farmers' Market Association
- Naramata Community Market Society
- North Kootenay Lake Arts and Heritage Council
- Our Neighborhood Farmers' Market Association
- Pier Street Association
- Pemberton Farmers Institute
- PF&C Market Society
- Powell River Open Air Farmer's Market
- Peninsula Country Market Society
- Port Alberni Farmers' Market
- Penticton Farmers' Market
- Prince George Farmers' Market Association
- Qualicum Beach Farmers' Market
- Rossland Real Food
- Revelstoke Farm and Craft Market
- Royal City Farmers' Market
- Richmond Agricultural and Industrial Society
- Salmonberry Trading Co. Society
- Shuswap Farm and Craft Market Society
- South Cariboo Farmers' Market Society
- Squamish Farmers' Market Association
- Sun Peaks And Region Farmers' Market
- Surrey Urban Farmers' Market Association
- Two Rivers Farmers' Market Lytton
- Vanderhoof Farmers' Market Society
- West Kootenay EcoSociety
- Vernon Farmers' Market
- Vancouver Farmers Markets
- Vernon Friday Night Farmers' Market
- Women's Food and Water Initiative for a Sustainable Vancouver Island Bioregion

Appendix B: Starting Points

At the beginning of the planning process, the consultant reviewed the BCAFM's core activities, member survey results, and accomplishments prior to conducting ten key informant interviews.

BCAFM's Core Activities

- Development services — for existing and new farmers' markets
- Communications — website, e-newsletter, conference, twitter, facebook, personal phone calls and meetings
- Training
- Advocacy and representation, including Government Relations
- Implementer of choice, for programs and projects in the FM sector
- Insurance

A survey of member markets on issues they would like to see addressed in the Strategic Plan indicates the following **priority areas**:

- 23% — Marketing
- 20% — Advocacy
- 13% — Training
- 9% — Vendor recruitment
- 8% — Financial sustainability
- 8% — Public Awareness

Accomplishments: see www.bcfarmersmarket.org/ind/about_ind.htm

To inform the planning process, the consultant conducted key informant interviews with:

1. Brent Warner, Past Executive Director of FM Canada and past Ministry of Agriculture ex-officio member
2. Claire Gram, Regional Coordinator for Healthy Communities & Food Security for Vancouver Coastal Health
3. David Coney, Ministry of Agriculture, Policy and Planning
4. Brian Harris, First Nations Agrologist, Ministry of Agriculture

5. Stacy Miller, Farmers' Market Coalition — a US national umbrella organization for state associations of farmers' markets
6. Kevin Damaskie, Sustainability Coordinator for Whistler 2020
7. Bob Thompson, knowledgeable about Agri Tourism.
8. Jasmina Engler, Vancouver Coastal Health, re Food safety
9. Mairi Campbell, Personae Communications
10. Elizabeth Quinn, BCAFM

Key informant research included three main elements: a SWOT analysis; identification of potential revenue streams; and identification of potential partners and allies. For more information on the results of this background research, contact the Manager of the BCAFM.

Appendix C: Parameters and Principles

Here are parameters and principles that have guided the BCAFM in the past:

- **Definition:**

A “farmers’ market” is a market comprised [sic] exclusively (100%) of vendors who make, bake, grow or raise the products they sell, of which a majority of the vendors are selling farm products of British Columbia origin. These markets must be British Columbia non-profit organizations, whether incorporated or not, with at least 6 vendors, that operate for two or more hours per day for a minimum of 4 markets in a year.

- The current BCAFM **Mission** is: “To support, develop and promote farmers’ markets in British Columbia.”
- The BCAFM constitution and bylaws state the **purposes** of the society are:
 - to support British Columbia producers of agricultural products, food products, and crafts;
 - to promote, educate, encourage, develop and support farmers' markets in the communities of BC;
 - to educate the public to choose healthy British Columbia grown agricultural products to ensure a secure food system, to reduce the carbon footprint and to ensure the viability of farming into the future;
 - to represent the farmers' markets of BC in all matters in which they are generally interested; and
 - to advocate to industry, government, agencies, commissions and boards on matters which impact and interest the members.
- The BCAFM is **province-wide** association. It represents farmers’ markets in communities that are small, medium and large, and that range from fledgling to established.
- The Association is a **non-profit** organization with a board of directors elected at its annual general meeting. To qualify for election as a director, a person must be a member of a farmers' market that is a member of the society and, before accepting nomination, provide to the president or the executive director of the society verification in writing, signed by the member market's president or

secretary, that the membership of the member market have supported the nomination by way of an ordinary resolution.

- Strategic planning is for the **sector**. Some elements of the plan will be implemented by the Association. Other elements will be implemented by member markets and other partners.
- The Strategic Planning process is intended to benefit all farmers' markets in the province, whether they are members of the Association or not.

Appendix D: What's Happening at Selected Markets in North America

1. NEW YORK

- **EBT/FOOD STAMP/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) PROGRAM**

The New York Farmers' Market Federation partnered with the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) for FMs to apply to accept SNAP benefits. These are provided through an electronic benefit card, similar to a bank debit card or credit card. This process is called Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT). If one is eligible, he will be issued an EBT card, an account will automatically be set up, and every month benefits will automatically be deposited into his account. The EBT card and Personal Identification Number (PIN) is used to pay for food at authorized FM vendors.

- **MENTORING PROGRAM AND MENTORING BLOGS**

The primary goal of the Farmers' Market Managers' Mentoring Program is to increase farmers' market manager skills through a mentoring process, effecting positive change in management practices, market policies, procedures and programming. There are also various blogs focused on marketing, farmer recruitment, governance, community relations and partnerships.

- **OTHERS:**

- Federation of NYFM has publications including Training Manuals, Resource Guides to Direct Marketing, FM Evaluation Forms, Tools for Rapid Market Assessments, FM Rules and Regulations
- Resources such as PowerPoint Presentations from annual conferences are available on their website
- Events Calendar

2. MASSACHUSETTS

- **FOOD STAMPS**

Through a partnership between the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) and the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), 22 organizations received grants to help farmers' markets accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits for food purchases. The grants allow farmers' markets to buy or rent equipment to process SNAP benefits through the Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system. This program increases access to farmers' markets for low-income residents.

- **PARTNERSHIP WITH INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH**

The overarching goals are to support local agriculture and to help meet the nutritional needs of low-income public school children. The programming consists of a Farm to Cafeteria Project where business relationships between farms and schools are

established; a School Gardening Project that focuses on increasing student and family awareness of food production; and a project focusing on Promotion of Local Food Purchases by hosting events at local farmers' markets.

3. NEW MEXICO

- **UMBRELLA NURSERY LICENSE:** The umbrella license covers all those vendors of nursery stock at the market who have been registered on a list compiled by the market manager. This inspection certificate covers growers only while they are selling at the farmers' market. They need their own individual license if they wish to sell at other locations.
- **FARMER MICRO-LOAN PROGRAM:** a low-interest micro-loan program for small-scale farmers who sell at New Mexico farmers' markets. Loans are available for amounts between \$500 and \$2500, must be paid back within 40 months, and have a fixed interest rate of 6%.
- **ADVERTISING/PROMOTION GRANTS:** These grants can be used for any kind of promotion, outreach and marketing. Funds for this program come from the New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) and the New Mexico Economic Development Department. This funding is not competitive, but strict adherence to guidelines for logo usage is mandatory.
- **RESOURCES ON:**
 - Collecting Market Data (Dot Surveys, Rapid Mkt Assessment, Customer Count)
 - Sampling Guidelines
 - Bilingual Nutrition Brochures

4. CALIFORNIA

- **CERTIFIED MARKETS:** California Farmers' Markets Association's system of farmers' markets serves over 22,000 Bay Area households each week. It is illegal for farmers to buy and re-sell agricultural products at a Certified Farmers' Market. A Certified Farmers' Market is a location, certified by the Agricultural Commissioner, where a producer sells only their own fruits and vegetables directly to consumers.

Sources:

- Farmers' market association websites for New York, Oregon, Massachusetts, Washington, New Mexico
- farmersmarketcoalition.org, Farmers' Market Coalition -- a nonprofit organization supporting nationwide (US) farmers' markets associations and FM's, contains directory and resources for FMAs and FMs.
- <http://cafarmersmks.com/about/gail> for information about certified markets in California.