

For Immediate Release

### **BC Farmers' Markets Conference Brings All Things Healthy to Kelowna**

February 17, 2016 (VANCOUVER, British Columbia) – B.C. farmers' markets will gather in Kelowna, March 4 to 6, 2016 for the BC Association of Farmers' Markets' (BCAFM) annual conference, *Nourish + Flourish*.

Over 100 farmers' market organizers, farmers and food producers, artisans, and community leaders from across B.C. will gather at the Delta Grand Okanagan Resort & Conference Centre to explore how healthy farmers' markets can support healthy communities in the coming season.

"Many of our 125 member farmers' markets are extending their reach beyond the market, to serve as community hubs where issues of healthy eating, food supply security and sustainability can be tackled," said BCAFM Executive Director, Elizabeth Quinn. "Farmers' markets, big and small, support healthy local economies, by bolstering small business development and keeping dollars within the community. In the past year, farmers' markets sales have increased by 11 per cent in B.C."

B.C. farmers' markets contribute significantly to the local economy, injecting nearly \$170 million annually, according to a 2012 Social and Economic Benefits study by the BCAFM and Dr. David Connell of the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC).

Over 15 events and workshops will be lead by B.C.'s health and local food experts on hot topic issues including, food waste reduction, farmland protection and food safety. Speakers will include Shauna MacKinnon from the Canada Organic Trade Association, Dr. David Connell from UNBC, and representatives from Interior Health, Kamloops Food Policy Council, and the Central Okanagan Food Policy Council.

The event will be held in partnership with the Kelowna Farmers' and Crafters' Market. It will include the third annual Farmers' Market Awards which celebrates those who have made outstanding contributions to B.C.'s farmers' market sector. The top farmers' markets, market manager, and vendor of 2015 will be honoured at a banquet dinner and awards ceremony, featuring locally sourced food and drink, Saturday, March 5 at Sandhill Winery.

The public and media are invited to attend. Tickets and more information are available on the [BCAFM website](http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org).

The BCAFM is a registered B.C. society that represents over 125 farmers' markets across the province. Its mission is to develop, promote and strengthen the capacity of farmers' markets. The BCAFM was founded in 2000 and operates out of Vancouver. Visit [www.bcfarmersmarket.org](http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org).

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**Website:** <http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org/markets/bcafm-conference-agm>

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/BCAFM](https://www.facebook.com/BCAFM)

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