

Farmers' Market Nutrition & Coupon Project Cancelled Due to Lack of Funding

Vancouver, February 17, 2010 — The BC Association of Farmers' Markets (BCAFM) regrets to announce that the successful Farmers' Market Nutrition & Coupon Project (FMNCP) will be cancelled for the 2010 season, due to lack of funding. A province wide initiative of the BCAFM, the FMNCP has brought dollars to local farmers & farmers' markets and supported close to 3000 low income families and children in accessing local, nutritious food since its inception in 2007.



"The FMNCP excites me. In the three years that BCAFM has offered this program we have had only positive feedback. This is a sign of success! Our partners want the program to continue. The BCAFM is still looking for a champion to fund the FMNCP. If you are interested or have any ideas please contact Elizabeth Quinn, BCAFM Manager to get more information." Mary Forstbauer, BCAFM President

An innovative project, the first of its kind in Canada, the FMNCP provided low-income families with children and low-income pregnant women coupons to access fresh fruits, vegetables, meats, eggs, dairy or fresh cut herbs at participating farmers' markets across BC. Participating families were actively participating in a designated cooking & skill building program, allowing families to develop & build knowledge and skill in the preparation of healthy, nutritious meals using fresh, local foods.

The FMNCP coupons brought families to their local farmers' market and created the opportunities for families and children to connect with the people growing and raising their food. The coupon dollars supported local farmers and farmers' markets, often creating new opportunities and growth. The FMNCP also supported cooking and skill building programs for low-income families and low-income pregnant women. This support allowed many programs to expand their programming and to reach more vulnerable community members.

The success of the FMNCP is evident in the 2009 season redemption rate of 94%, and the of growth the project. Starting with five communities in 2007, the FMNCP grew to 10 communities in 2008 and 16 communities in 2009. View a video of the Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Project at www.bcfarmersmarket.org/fmnncp/video.htm.

"Thankful for the program! In really tight financial situations I have been able to feed my family! This program has saved us this summer!" 2009 FMNCP participant

"What a fantastic program!! It works for health, for income and for the farmers!" 2009 FMNCP participant

"The vendors are very pleased with what they are seeing happen at the Market. One long-time vendor pulled me aside at the end of this market day and said she was seeing people she knew buying vegetables for the first time. She was thrilled to see young people buying vegetables..." 2009 Market Manager

The BCAFM celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2010 and will continue to work on the core projects Market Safe, Market Manager Training and Board Governance Training. The BCAFM will re-evaluate the FMNCP as the economic climate shifts and more funds become available.

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