



News Release

For immediate release

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA SUPPORTS B.C. FARMERS' MARKETS

BURNABY, British Columbia, August 23, 2008 – British Columbia farmers who sell their products at B.C. farmers' markets are getting a boost, thanks to an investment by the Government of Canada.

James Moore, Secretary of State (2010 Olympics) (Asia Pacific Gateway) (Official Languages) and Member of Parliament for Port Moody-Westwood-Port Coquitlam, on behalf of the Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture, today announced an investment worth \$219,000.

"Farmers' markets are valuable to local economies and help farmers connect with urban consumers," said Secretary of State Moore. "Our Conservative Government is pleased to invest in this project which will strengthen local markets and enhance the profitability of Canadian farmers."

Funding for this initiative is being provided to the B.C. Association of Farmers' Markets (BCAFM) through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF) program, which is delivered in B.C. through the Investment Agriculture Foundation (IAF) of B.C.

The association will use the funding to implement a strategic plan, with the goal of improving the public image of farmers' markets, and the management skills and capacity of market managers, vendors and boards.

"Farmers' markets are one of the fastest growing opportunities for farmers to build their market share and make their farms sustainable," said Mary Forstbauer, President of the BCAFM. "Thanks to the funding received through the Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C., the BCAFM will continue to build capacity for farmers' markets in the province."

Farmers' markets in B.C. contribute significantly to farm incomes and to the economy of communities in which they operate. A 2006 study by the University of Northern British Columbia found that B.C. farmers' markets contributed \$118.5 million annually to the provincial economy, with \$65.3 million per year spent at the markets and another \$53.2 million at neighbouring businesses.

For more information on ACAAf, please visit www.agr.gc.ca/acaaf.



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada

Canada

-2-

The IAF is a not-for-profit organization that manages and distributes federal and provincial funds in support of innovative projects to benefit the agriculture and agri-food industries in B.C. To learn more about the Investment Agriculture Foundation and the funding programs it administers, please visit www.iafbc.com.

-30-

For more information, media may contact:

Media Relations

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Ottawa, Ontario

613-759-7972

1-866-345-7972

Margaux Stastny

Press Secretary

The Office of the Honourable Gerry Ritz

613-759-1059

Gayle Farrell

Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C.

604-731-9912