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# News Release

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For immediate release

## **NEW MARKETSAFE TRAINING PROGRAM THE FIRST OF ITS KIND FOR CANADIAN FARMERS' MARKETS**

**PENTICTON, British Columbia, March 13, 2010** – A new food safety course, funded by the Government of Canada, will help farmers continue to deliver high quality products at food markets throughout British Columbia. Today the first graduates of the MarketSafe Food Safety Training Program at the B.C. Farmers' Markets Association Conference received their certificates of completion.

“Our Government is working to deliver real results for farmers and for all Canadians,” said Stockwell Day, Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, President of the Treasury Board and Member of Parliament (Okanagan-Coquihalla). “Our investment in this project will help farmers maintain their top food safety standards and continue to deliver safe, high quality food to consumers.”

The MarketSafe program is an outcome of a federal government commitment of \$219,000 towards the implementation of a strategic plan to support the growth and development of B.C.'s farmers markets. Farmers' markets are valuable contributors to local economies, with growing sales in a wide range of farm-fresh, wholesome foods such as fruits and vegetables, specialty cheeses, eggs, meat, seafood, and artisan products.

The project is being led by the B.C. Association of Farmers' Markets (BCAFM), a non-profit organization which represents 81 farmers' markets and 3,000 vendors throughout British Columbia.

“I'm glad to see the Association being pro-active on food safety,” said Steve Thomson, B.C. Minister of Agriculture and Lands. “It's clear that people in B.C. love to shop at farmers' markets. MarketSafe helps them stay confident in the safety and quality of B.C. products, and that can only increase sales.”

“I am so excited because it's the first of its kind in Canada. We thank Investment Agriculture Foundation for their support of the BCAFM strategic plan by supplying the funding,” said Mary Forstbauer, President of the BCAFM. “A little over a year ago the BCAFM partnered with the B.C. FoodSafe Secretariat to develop MarketSafe. My excitement comes from the fact that MarketSafe will be recognized by health authorities across the province as the standard to be set for farmers' markets and other direct marketers.”

This investment was funded through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's adaptation programming, administered in British Columbia by the Investment Agriculture Foundation (IAF).



-2-

In addition to delivering Canada's Economic Action Plan (EAP), which focuses on strengthening the economy and securing Canada's economic future, the Government of Canada has put into place many other programs that help farmers and stimulate the economy, such as the new adaptation program, the Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP).

For more information on CAAP and the IAF, please visit our web sites at [www.agr.gc.ca/caap](http://www.agr.gc.ca/caap) and [www.iafbc.com](http://www.iafbc.com).

- 30 -

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