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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Agriculture

### **Buy local funding urges flower shoppers to pick local**

VICTORIA – British Columbians are being encouraged to pick local when shopping for plants and flowers for Valentine’s Day gifts and throughout the year, and to enjoy the high-quality buds and blooms while supporting B.C.’s economy.

The United Flower Grower Cooperative Association is using \$62,500 in B.C. government funding to promote its “Flowerful BC Pick Local” brand in a variety of ways including signage for delivery vehicles. The vehicles are used to transport B.C. flowers from growers and buyers and will proudly display the logo with its “pick local” message.

The funding is also supporting a pilot in-store promotion project in eight Thrifty Foods stores in the Lower Mainland, Victoria and Nanaimo. The stores are using colourful signs, labels and stickers to help shoppers easily identify locally grown flowers and plants.

The campaign is encouraging British Columbians to support the B.C. growers who produced more than 92 million cut flowers and 120 million plants in 2012. B.C. grows more than 250 types of flowers and plants, with local products available throughout the year. The United Flower Growers operate the oldest and largest live flower auction in North America. The auction takes place three days a week, year round.

The Buy Local program offers successful applicants matching funds up to \$100,000 to launch or expand local food marketing campaigns as part of a \$2-million B.C. government effort to promote B.C. foods and agriculture products.

Building the local market for B.C. foods is a key commitment of government’s Agrifoods Strategy, a component of the B.C. Jobs Plan, to lead the agrifoods sector growth into a \$14-billion-a-year industry by 2017.

The provincial government’s Buy Local program is administered by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C.

## Quotes:

### **Minister of State for Tourism and Small Business Naomi Yamamoto on behalf of Agriculture Minister Pat Pimm –**

“Whether people are looking for seasonal specialities, plants for the yard or indoors, or fresh flowers for a friend or loved one, they can choose B.C. grown products. That decision adds something special to their purchase, it supports B.C. jobs and communities.”

### **United Flower Growers CEO Bob Pringle –**

“We want B.C. consumers to know a great proportion of flowers they buy in local stores are grown right here in our province, and this campaign will help consumers pick fresh and local plants and flowers.”

“BC growers are known by wholesalers and retailers throughout Canada and the U.S. for producing the finest quality cut flowers and potted plants. This program will help consumers know that too.”

## Learn More:

B.C. Buy Local program: <http://www.gov.bc.ca/agri/buylocal.html>

United Flower Grower Cooperative Association: <http://www.ufgca.com/>

Keep up to date on the latest in B.C. foods and beverages: <https://www.facebook.com/FoodsBC>

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