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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Agriculture

### **\$2 million Buy Local expansion keeps B.C. foods on grocery lists**

KELOWNA – The B.C. government is expanding the Buy Local program with an additional \$2 million to help B.C. farmers and food processors promote their products, and support food security in B.C., Agriculture Minister Norm Letnick announced today.

With the additional \$2 million investment, the program aims to increase consumer demand and sales of B.C. agrifoods. Businesses and organizations can apply for matching funding from the B.C. government for projects that promote local foods. Projects can include in-store promotions, social media or web campaigns, traditional advertising, or other ideas.

The Buy Local program has supported about 40 campaigns to support B.C. food, seafood, and floral products in communities around the province so far, with companies and organizations, large and small reporting increased sales, including:

- B.C. Food Processors Association reporting sales of B.C. products increased by \$5 million during the first four months of their project.
- 17,000 additional cartons of cherries were sold over three weeks in 2013 compared to the same period in 2012 despite a smaller crop.
- The entire crop of the new Salish™ and Aurora Golden Gala™ apples sold, with successful introduction in four of B.C.'s largest food retail chains.
- Coastal Black Estate Winery reported sales increased 12%, and expanded sales in liquor stores and restaurants.

Applications and more information about the program are available at [www.iafbc.ca/buylocal.htm](http://www.iafbc.ca/buylocal.htm).

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.

### **Quotes**

#### **Minister of Agriculture Norm Letnick –**

“The Buy Local Program will continue to be a huge success in encouraging British Columbians to choose the high-quality foods grown and produced right here at home. Every purchase of a B.C. product contributes to jobs in our communities, and the food security of our province.”

#### **British Columbia Agriculture Council chair Stan Vander Waal –**

Buying local food creates jobs, builds our local communities, and is good for the environment. If

this investment results in new sales relationships across the value chain and more purchases of locally grown, caught, and processed foods, the benefits will be far reaching. BCAC welcomes and appreciates the B.C. government's commitment to grow agriculture and looks forward to working collaboratively in the weeks and months ahead to realise this commitment".

**Investment Agriculture Foundation chair Ken Bates –**

"We're pleased to be delivering Buy Local funding after the tremendous success of the first program. Supporting initiatives like Buy Local helps keep industry profitable while strengthening local communities and driving the provincial economy."

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