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### Buy Local Award Winner Creates More Value for B.C. Veggies

**June 9, 2017, Victoria, B.C.** – The Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C. (IAF) announced last night that Kirk Homenick, President of Naturally Homegrown Foods, is the recipient of the inaugural BC Buy Local Award of Excellence for his campaign, ‘A Chip Close to Home.’

“Every year we are thrilled to see how the Buy Local program is helping to boost producer and processor market success, and I’m proud to say that our award recipient tonight exemplifies this achievement,” said IAF director Alistair Johnston. “This project continues to have a profound impact, not only on the local agrifood market but on B.C.’s economy.”

Naturally Homegrown Foods is home to the Hardbite line of potato and root vegetable products, the only potato chip to be produced and processed in B.C. Seeking to differentiate Hardbite in the highly competitive snack food category, Homenick launched a unique and bold Buy Local rebranding campaign that marketed distinctly west coast lifestyle attributes and offered transparency to locally-sourced ingredients.

“It’s wonderful to be recognized for our efforts to promote local foods and create jobs in B.C.,” says Homenick. “Since 2014, Naturally Homegrown Foods has tripled sales, which means triple the procurement of raw vegetables from the local marketplace.”

The BC Buy Local Award of Excellence recognizes one outstanding producer or processor based on the achievements of the best Buy Local marketing project—the campaign that was the most creative, strategic and effective in increasing sales and consumer engagement. This year’s winner was announced on June 8<sup>th</sup> at the BC Food Processors Association’s FoodProWest Gala in Vancouver.

In addition to the winner, the Selection Committee recognized two Honourable Mentions – Merissa Myles, Co-Founder of Tree Island Gourmet Yogurt, for using Buy Local funding to connect with grocery buyers, celebrity chefs and consumers about the benefits of buying 100% BC milk dairy; and Robert Pringle, CEO of the United Flower Growers Cooperative Association, who spearheaded the ‘Flowerful BC’ initiative to encourage consumers to ‘pick local’ when buying plants and flowers.

“We are proud to recognize the achievements of our nominees and the opportunities they are driving, not just for the agrifood industry but for local consumers and the B.C. economy,” said Johnston. “We are continually inspired by the ingenuity of our project partners and their success in motivating British Columbians to buy local.”

The Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C. is an industry-led not-for-profit organization that works with the agrifood industry to strategically invest federal and provincial funds toward projects that have the potential to transform ideas into solutions. [www.iafbc.ca](http://www.iafbc.ca)

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