
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Agriculture

Funding promotes buying local in Vancouver

VANCOUVER – The bustling city of Vancouver is bringing new, diverse flavours to the agrifood industry every single day, giving British Columbians the opportunity to ignite their taste buds and experience Vancouver’s buffet that’s making it a leader in agrifood innovation.

The Province is supporting local agrifood businesses as they promote their products throughout B.C. through the Buy Local Program. Ten Vancouver-based companies are receiving funding to launch advertising campaigns and develop promotional materials with a combined total of up to \$270,700 in Buy Local funding.

Vancouver’s Chinatown is home to Hon’s Wun Tun House. In 1972, the late Hon Kwong Ip brought his passion for Cantonese food to Canada, opening up the first-of-its-kind Hong Kong noodle shop. With hard work and dedication, Hon’s wun-tun legend continues on through multiple locations and offering pre-made food items in some of the city’s largest supermarkets. By giving British Columbians an authentic experience with every meal, the company is promoting B.C.-made Asian food products.

With innovation leading the way, Big Mountain Foods is evolving to create new, fresh whole-food products. Founder Kimberly Chamberland and her team are working with plant-based ingredients to give British Columbians a healthy alternative that is free of cholesterol, preservatives and allergens, as well as being low in fat. Big Mountain Foods’ new and improved veggie burger is the perfect dish for the family who wants all the flavour without the guilt.

For over 40 years, Mario’s Gelati has been locally sourcing, producing and packaging gelato, sorbetto, novelties and specialty frozen desserts for both the young and young at heart. Being a local manufacturer and supporter of the local economy, Mario’s Gelati is committed to buying local ingredients whenever possible to keep jobs in the community and create the freshest-tasting products.

The BC Association of Farmers’ Markets, representing 135 farmers’ markets around the province, is connecting British Columbians to local farmers and producers, strengthening community and creating a shared appreciation for the bounty of British Columbia. Each farmers’ market is unique and represents the diversity of B.C.’s communities and regions. Reasons to experience local farmers’ markets include discovering delicious, healthy and locally grown food. Meanwhile, buying directly from local farmers keeps hard earned dollars close to home.

Bittered Sling creators, Jonathan Chovancek and Lauren Mote, launched their retail line of high-quality cocktail bitters and culinary extracts in 2012 and quickly built a reputation in the cocktail and culinary community. Flavours such as “Grapefruit and Hops” and “Plum and

Rootbeer” are produced with locally sourced ingredients, promoting their support for local farmers and creating an exciting fusion of flavours sure to please British Columbians.

Vancouver-based Tartine Tarts produces premium-quality pastry products including savory, sweet tarts and pastry shells. The company is proud to produce “Clean Label” tarts, with no additives or chemical preservatives, keeping their pastries filled with real food with real flavours. Passed down through three generations, the recipes used for Tartine Tarts offer British Columbians in-store home replacement meals, hand-held snacks and irresistible desserts.

Pastiche Food & Concepts is an independent Vancouver food producer that makes natural, organic products using local and quality ingredients. Made from a family recipe, Pastiche's savory and soulful paté and new snacking crisps are gluten free and come in four delectable flavours. Pastiche can be found at various Vancouver farmers' markets and fine retail stores and is a great product to buy locally.

Vancouver Farmers' Markets is a registered B.C. non-profit society founded in 1995, which operates eight weekly farmers' markets throughout the city where urban consumers can connect with the farmers and processors who produce their food. The organization launched the “Local Food – Global Flavour” campaign to highlight and promote B.C.-grown Asian crops available at markets all over British Columbia. Vancouver Farmers' Markets supports 250 small B.C. farms, artisan food and craft producers, and help keep 2,630 hectares (6,500 acres) of local farmland in sustainable food production each year.

Wize Monkey is based in Vancouver and develops the unique Coffee Leaf Tea. By using typically discarded coffee leaves and transforming them into an award-winning, deliciously smooth, antioxidants-rich and lightly caffeinated tea, Wize Monkey is able to create year-round jobs and revenue for coffee farming communities. It sources its unique tea farm-direct from the Matagalpa region in Nicaragua, where it is produced by local farmers, before being shipped and packaged in Vancouver. Coffee Leaf Tea has won several awards, including Product of the Year from the BC Food Processors Association, and aims to make British Columbians “Think Outside the Bean.”

Creating a healthy smoothie full of nutritious veggies can be a rather difficult task sometimes, as the founders of The Good Stuff once experienced. Co-founders Tonner Jackson, Michael Steele and Graeme Taylor have created frozen, ready-to-blend superfood smoothies that are delivered right to the customer's door. The ingredients are sourced from B.C. growers, helping support local farms and strengthening the local food system.

The Buy Local program has received \$8 million in B.C. government funding since 2012 to increase sales of locally grown and processed agrifood and seafood products within the province.

The B.C. government's Agrifood and Seafood Strategic Growth Plan supports the building of domestic markets and maintaining a secure food supply. The plan is a component of the BC Jobs Plan, and the roadmap to leading the agrifoods sector to becoming a \$15-billion-a-year industry by 2020.

The provincial government's Buy Local program is administered by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of British Columbia. Applications are available at:

<http://iafbc.ca/funding-opportunities/buy-local/>

Quotes:

Moira Stilwell, MLA for Vancouver-Langara –

“Here in B.C., we are fortunate to enjoy some of the best food around the world. Many of the local businesses receiving support from this grant have a long history of feeding local families and have been an integral part of our community’s fabric. By investing in these organizations through the BC Buy Local program, our legacy of good food and community will continue for years to come.”

Sam Sullivan, MLA for Vancouver-False Creek –

“With so many great places to eat in B.C. the Buy Local program really helps home grown businesses stand out. The \$270,000 in funding will improve the reach of these businesses within the province and provide an avenue for tourists to discover them.”

Ray Leung, CEO and president, Hon’s Wun Tun House –

“The Buy Local Program has been instrumental to Hon’s ability to reach more consumers in B.C. The range of marketing activities included in our project led to a significant increase in our B.C. awareness and sales for our brand of fresh premium Asian Comfort Foods.”

Jasmine Chamberland, vice-president, Big Mountain Foods –

“We are proud to be a mother-daughter team that is providing consumers with trend-setting meat-free alternatives that align with a plant-based diet. The Buy Local funding has helped us promote our veggie patties locally and become a recognizable brand in British Columbia.”

Elizabeth Chambers, operations manager, Mario’s Gelati Ltd. –

“With four generations of gelato production under our belt, our success comes from family pride, tradition and a constant desire for innovation. Mario's Gelati is committed to buying local to support the local B.C. economy, and with the help from the Buy Local program we have been able to create a B.C. brand and market it in a competitive market.”

Heather O'Hara, executive director, BC Association of Farmers’ Markets –

“The BC Association of Farmers’ Markets sincerely appreciates continued investment by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Investment Agriculture Foundation in Buy Local initiatives. This impact investment is a real and direct boost to the thousands of local farmers who are at the heart of farmers' markets across our diverse province.”

Jonathan Chovancek, owner, Bittered Sling –

“Bittered Sling is thrilled to partner with the Investment Agriculture Foundation of British Columbia and the Buy Local Program. With their generous support and financial assistance, Bittered Sling has been able to evolve the labels and aesthetics of the physical look to the product line, build and launch a new website, provide in-store demos and tastings, and promote B.C. beverage and culinary culture with participation in local festivals.”

Geraldine Pelletier, owner, Tartine Tarts Inc. –

“The support we received from IAFBC and the provincial government to get the word out to our community about our products has helped our company grow, which is great for all of us here at Tartine Tarts.”

Chashma Heinze, owner, Pastiche Food & Concepts Inc. –

“Pastiche Food & Concepts is creating food for British Columbians that is nourishing for the body and soul, while using local ingredients to support the agrifoods industry in B.C. The Buy Local funding is helping Pastiche promote brand and product awareness in local markets and bring an element of ‘joie de vivre’ to those enjoying our hand crafted products.”

Roberta LaQuaglia, operations manager, Vancouver Farmers' Markets –

“The Buy Local program offered us the opportunity to explore a theme that we had been touching on for a while but didn't have the funds to dive into. We were able to create materials and do research that we can build on going into future seasons.”

Arnaud Petitvallet, co-founder, Wize Monkey –

“BC Buy Local has been keen to help us in our early development stage, and thanks to their support, we were able to grow our local presence and educate our retail partners and consumers in B.C.”

Michael Steele, co-founder, The Good Stuff –

"The BC Buy Local program allowed us to tell our story with all its crucial details. We used the funding to create a high-quality video production, which highlights not only our product's value but the value of supporting a local food system. It has created tremendous value for us in getting more people to #BlendLocal!"

Learn More:

Hon’s Wun Tun House: http://www.hons.ca/hons_english.htm

Big Mountain Foods: <http://bigmountainfoods.com/>

Mario’s Gelati: <http://www.mariosgelati.com/home/>

BC Association of Farmers' Markets: <http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org/>

Bittered Sling: <http://www.bitteredsling.com/>

Tartine Tarts: <http://www.tartinetarts.ca/>

Pastiche Food & Concepts: <https://pastiche.co/>

Vancouver Farmers’ Markets: <http://eatlocal.org/>

Wize Monkey: <http://wizemonkey.com/>

The Good Stuff: <https://thegoodstuffco.com/>

B.C. Buy Local program: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs/market-development-and-trade/bc-buy-local-program>

Media Contacts:

Jill Milne
Government Communications and Public
Engagement
Ministry of Agriculture
778 676-4460

Hon's Wun Tun House
Ray Leung
604 688-0871

Big Mountain Foods
Jasmine Chamberland
604 325-7853

Mario's Gelati
Elizabeth Chambers
604 879-9411

BC Association of Farmers' Markets
Heather O'Hara
604 734-9797

Bittered Sling
Jonathan Chovancek
chef@bitteredsling.com

Tartine Tarts
Geraldine Pelletier
604 327-8278

Pastiche Food and Concepts
Chashma Heinze
778 318-6406

Vancouver Farmers' Markets
Roberta LaQuaglia
604 879-3276

Wize Monkey
Arnaud Petitvallet
604 396-2213

The Good Stuff
Michael Steele
604 725-3950

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BACKGROUND

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Buy Local funding details

The following projects have received funding from the B.C. government's Buy Local program:

Hon's Wun Tun House:

\$75,000 to increase year-end revenue with in-store sampling, recipe cards and updating the company website.

Big Mountain Foods:

\$61,960 to increase sales by updating the company website, launching a social media campaign and participating in expos and tradeshow.

Mario's Gelati Ltd.:

\$57,475 to increase local sales with a marketing campaign, creating Buy B.C. branded flyers, new signs for the storefront, digital advertising and social media promotion.

BC Association of Farmers' Markets:

\$23,273 to increase sales at farmers' markets and grow social media audience with TV and radio advertising, launching a social-media campaign and developing news releases for media.

Bittered Sling:

\$12,637 to increase sales with retail tastings, e-newsletters and media releases and offering tips on how to use products in cocktails and culinary recipes.

Tartine Tarts Inc.:

\$11,536 to increase sales and awareness of product in the market through product launch demos, flyer and in-store advertising and merchandising materials.

Pastiche Food & Concepts Inc.:

\$9,515 to increase sales in grocery stores and farmers' markets with advertising, in-store promotions, updating the company's website and sampling.

Vancouver Farmers' Markets:

\$9,300 to increase sales of Asian crops at three target market locations by launching "Local Food – Global Flavour" campaign to engage both conventional and social media in new ways to highlight B.C.-grown Asian crops.

Wize Monkey:

\$5,000 to increase sales and pre-orders by attending trade shows, developing promotional materials and advertising on social and digital media.

The Good Stuff:

\$5,000 to increase sales and consumer understanding of how choosing local ingredients benefits health through video and digital advertising.

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