

Social & Community Impact



As a non-profit organization with deep roots in the community, Vancouver Farmers Markets (VFM) strives to create and sustain local, sustainable, and vibrant marketplaces for our community, environment, and economy.

Vancouver Farmers Markets was founded in 1995 as a grassroots effort to bring more local, fresh food to the east Vancouver neighbourhoods of Cedar Cottage and Grandview Woodlands, while at the same time supporting small regional farms and producers and offering a weekly space where neighbours could connect as a community.

In its 24 years of operations, VFM has grown to function as a social enterprise that for many is the bridge from farm to table. Its expanding network of neighbourhood markets successfully brings fresh, BC-grown food direct from 280 producers to over 470, 000 Vancouverites each year. Our vibrant, weekly markets also benefit the community by:

- **Building local food access for low income community members through VFM's Fresh to Families Project, which provides fresh food from our markets to households in need through the Province of BC's Farmers Market Nutrition Coupon Program. In 2019, Fresh to Families added \$60,000 in matching funds raised through public and corporate donations to the coupon program, increasing food access for 150 families in Vancouver and Burnaby.**
- **Collecting 3,000+ pounds of fruits and vegetables annually through our Fresh Food Donation Stations, which is donated to food programs at local schools, hospices, seniors centres, and neighbourhood houses.**
- **Supporting social enterprise initiatives such as Fresh Roots and Urban Farming Poh-Pohs, as well as artisans from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside Street Vendors Collective by providing \$5,000 in free vending space for them at the markets each season.**
- **Providing our roster of 280 vendors with ongoing business development support and opportunities for new business mentorship with our experienced, knowledgeable staff team.**
- **Moving towards zero waste events through our Single Use Plastic Elimination and Reduction strategy (SUPER), which will take effect at all of our markets in summer 2020**
- **Donating 50+ stall spaces annually at our markets to non-profits, neighbourhood groups, and elected officials for the purpose of education and community outreach with our shoppers.**
- **Hosting free educational demos, food tastings, and seasonal food festivals at our markets that create robust opportunities for food learning and community connection. This programming is made possible by our dedicated team of 60+ volunteers, who donate over 1,000 hours of service to our markets each year.**

