

## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

October 29, 2020

### **SHOP FRESH ALL WINTER AT THE VANCOUVER FARMERS MARKETS**

**VANCOUVER, BC** - Vancouver Farmers Markets (VFM) will launch its 14th winter season with the [Riley Park Winter Farmers Market](#) this **Saturday, October 31st**, and the [Hastings Park Winter Farmers Market](#) on **Sunday, November 1st**.

Following a successful summer running six modified markets, VFM remains focused on keeping BC farmers afloat during the winter months, providing a much needed place to sell in the midst of craft fair, restaurant and fellow farmers' market closures. "It's been heart wrenching to see the forced closure of so many well-loved, locally owned businesses these past months," VFM's Interim Executive Director Laura Smit says. "Thankfully, our weekly markets have been able to provide consistent income for some 250+ small businesses who have managed to maintain status-quo. Throughout it all, our community of loyal shoppers has given us all hope".

With the arrival of winter and the impending cold and flu season, a regular supply of fresh, healthy, immune-boosting food has never been more important. The winter markets have the additional advantage of taking place outside in the fresh air, where Dr. Bonnie Henry says there is a much lower risk of COVID transmission.

Operations Manager Randy Elliott and his team have gone to extra lengths to ensure the safety of the community this winter season: "The Riley Park Winter Market will be split into 4 zones with vendors equally distributed between them. You'll find a bit of everything in each zone; winter fruits and veggies, meat, eggs, and dairy, prepared food, craft beverages, and handmade craft items. As always, we're urging people to plan their shop ahead of time to minimize wait times."

The Riley Park Winter Farmers Market will open just a day before its sister market at **Hastings Park**. Hosted once again at the PNE fairgrounds, the Hastings Park Market layout will look similar to previous years, with the addition of a controlled entrance and exit.

Alongside a solid roster of returning favorites, Hastings Park has expanded its footprint this season to offer opportunities to a number of new and diverse vendors. Shoppers can expect to find new local farms, craft beverage producers, artisanal food makers, and food trucks.

Along with the weekly winter markets, shoppers can access food from VFM vendors through its online platform, [VFM Online Orders](#). The platform features over 90 vendors that offer direct pick-up from their stalls at the market or at each market exit tent.

Both the **Riley Park** and **Hastings Park Winter Farmers Markets** will operate as essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic. VFM organizers are asking the community to help them keep the markets a safe place to shop this season by following their COVID-19 protocols. A full list of VFM's COVID-19 safety measures and FAQs can be found at [eatlocal.org/covid-19-info](http://eatlocal.org/covid-19-info).

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**About Vancouver Farmers Markets:** Founded in 1995, Vancouver Farmers Markets (VFM) has grown to become one of Canada's leading farmers market organizations, with eight weekly markets that see over 470,000 shoppers per year. Our markets support 280 small BC farms and producers, and help keep 3,400 acres of local farmland in sustainable food production annually.

#### VANCOUVER WINTER FARMERS MARKETS 2020-21 SCHEDULE

Riley Park	Saturdays	Oct 31-Apr 24 (closed Dec 26)	10am-2pm	30th Ave. & Ontario St.
Hastings Park	Sundays	Nov 1-Apr 25 (closed Dec 27)	10am-2pm	PNE - 2901 E. Hastings

VFM 2020-21 Winter Season photos and graphics can be found [here](#).

More info on the Winter Farmers Markets at [eatlocal.org](http://eatlocal.org).

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