

**Buy Local.
Eat Natural.**

FIRST ANNUAL WE ♥ LOCAL AWARDS CELEBRATES LOCAL FOOD & AGRICULTURE ACROSS BC

Announcing the first-ever community driven Awards program to celebrate and elevate key players in the food and agricultural industry across BC.

VANCOUVER: June 17, 2013- Buy Local. Eat Natural is excited to announce the launch of the BC-wide We ♥ Local Awards launching July 1, 2013 and running through to August 5th. This first-of-its-kind popular choice awards program invites all of BC to recognize and elevate your favourite key players across the food and agriculture industry throughout our province.

Rhonda Driediger, Chair of the BC Agriculture Council, and founding partner of the We ♥ Local Awards explains: “No doubt, there’s a movement underway to support and celebrate eating and buying local. The We ♥ Local Awards will leverage this momentum in British Columbia and get people even more invested in lifting up their local favourites and sharing information with one another in meaningful ways with meaningful outcomes.”

Says Elizabeth Quinn, Executive Director at the BC Association of Farmers Markets: “We’re excited to call ourselves partners in this awesome initiative. Now is the right time for a community- driven Awards that provides valuable recognition to the farmers, wineries, cheese makers, and all of the key players and supporters of local food in BC. We expect this to be a hugely popular Awards program across BC!”

The We ♥ Local Awards is a partnership between the BC Agriculture Council, the BC Ministry of Agriculture, the BC Association of Farmers Markets, the Vancouver Farmers Markets, LOCO BC, and The Georgia Straight.

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HOW THE WE ♥ LOCAL AWARDS WORKS:

- Nominations are open July 1- July 15th, 2013. Anyone living in BC can nominate one or more favourites in the categories listed below.
- Voting is open July 16-August 5th, 2013. Anyone living in BC can vote for their favourite nominees in the categories listed below by visiting <http://www.facebook.com/eatlocalnatural>
- Incentives for voting? All voters and nominators are automatically included into a prize draw, for a chance to win 1 of 20 \$100 gift cards to their local Farmers Market, as well as the deluxe prize: a weekend wine getaway in Oliver, BC.

The We ♥ Local Awards categories include the following:

- **Favourite Local Farmers Market**
- **Favourite Store to Buy Local**
- **Favourite Local Meat or Poultry Supplier**
- **Favourite Local Seafood Supplier**
- **Favourite Local Cheese Maker**
- **Favourite Local Sweet Treat**
- **Favourite Local Advocate**
- **Favourite Local Winery**
- **Favourite Local Brewery**
- **Favourite Local Food Truck**
- **Favourite Local U-Pick Farm**
- **Favourite Local Orchard/Fruit Supplier**
- **Favourite Local Restaurant or Café**
- **Favourite Local Chef**
- **Favourite Local Florist or Greenhouse**

The logo consists of a rectangular box with a scalloped bottom edge, containing the text "Buy Local. Eat Natural." in a bold, serif font.

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About Buy Local. Eat Natural.

Buy Local. Eat Natural. is a not-for-profit community forum that aims to promote and bring together BC's local food products, growers and producers. An initiative of BC Agriculture, Buy Local. Eat Natural is supported by the BC Agriculture Council and the BC Ministry of Agriculture and sustained by thousands of passionate local food enthusiasts, like yourself! Join us here:

www.buylocaleatnatural.com

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