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NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Agriculture

B.C. cranberries promoted as holiday and everyday food

VICTORIA – British Columbians will be learning more about the benefits of including locally grown cranberries on their holiday and daily menus, as a result of the B.C. government's Buy Local program.

The BC Cranberry Marketing Commission is receiving \$15,700 to help promote the berries to both consumers and to value-added manufacturers.

The Buy Local program offers successful applicants matching funds up to \$100,000 to launch or expand local food marketing campaigns. The BC Cranberry Marketing Commission is the first organization to receive Buy Local funding.

Building the local market for British Columbia's foods is a key commitment of government's Agrifoods Strategy, a component of the BC Jobs Plan, to lead the agrifoods sector growth into a \$14-billion-a-year industry by 2017.

Quotes:

Minister of Agriculture Norm Letnick –

"I want to congratulate the BC Cranberry Marketing Commission on their successful application and receipt of \$15,700 in Buy Local program funding. I wish them all the best as they continue to spread the word about our hard-working cranberry industry and the high-quality product they produce."

"Cranberries are just one example of a locally produced food that British Columbians can serve and enjoy to celebrate the holidays and support B.C.'s farmers and their community. When you buy local food products, you and your family will not only enjoy the flavours of B.C.'s high-quality foods but you ensure that your dollars stay in our communities."

BC Cranberry Marketing Commission chair Jack Brown –

“The BC Cranberry Marketing Commission is grateful for the recognition of the cranberry industry in B.C. and for the opportunity to increase awareness of this important crop to B.C. consumers.”

“This is a proud industry with 73 family farms, some of whom are fourth-generation cranberry farmers. To communicate what our farmers do on a daily basis to maintain their farms and produce this special berry, will assist us in ensuring cranberry farming will remain in this province for many more generations.”

For audio clips of Letnick on this subject, visit:

http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/minister_letnick_cranberry_buy_local.MP3

http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/minister_letnick_buy_local_program.MP3

To view and download pictures of Letnick visiting a cranberry farm and a cranberry processing facility, visit:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/bcgovphotos/8168031202/in/set-72157626295553182/>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/bcgovphotos/8168031386/in/set-72157626295553182/>

Quick Facts:

- British Columbia is a world leader in growing cranberries with the 2012 harvest producing a record crop of more than 40 million kilograms (90 million pounds).
- The B.C. cranberry harvest season runs through September and October.
- The growers flood their bogs causing cranberries, which have small air pockets in the center, to rise. Growers then use water-reel harvesting machines to loosen cranberries from their vines causing them to float on top of the water.
- The cranberries are then corralled onto conveyers to waiting trucks that take them to receiving stations and eventually processing plants where they are used for juice, sauce, and other processed foods.
- Cranberries are one of the few commercially grown fruits that are native to North America. B.C.'s cranberries are enjoyed locally and internationally for their high quality and health benefits.
- The provincial government's Buy Local program is administered by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C.

Learn More:

- Buy Local Program: <http://www.gov.bc.ca/agri/buylocal.html>
- BC Cranberry Marketing Commission (includes nutritional information and recipes): <http://www.bccranberries.com/>

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