



eat local, nutritious food

The crisp bite of the fall air nips at me as I watch in the season change before my eyes. The landscape is ablaze with colours, my cold storage overflows with rich earthy delights of potatoes, squash, apples, onions, beets, garlic and beyond. The shelves shimmer with preserves – sweet & savoury delights of a season's hard work. This is my familiar fall scene, having grown up with a backyard garden, a community garden plot, a family farm, a valley full of local farmers and a family of preservers. It is in my blood.

This familiar fall scene is both new and familiar to the Farmers' Market Nutrition & Coupon families. Participating families share their knowledge, recipes, stories, questions and excitement with each other, farmers, market managers and program leaders. They are growing community one bite at a time. Some families experienced a farmers' market for the very first time through their participation in the FMNCP. The colours, tastes, sounds and sense of community is something that keeps everyone coming back. With \$15 of coupons each week for 17 weeks, participating families are able to purchase market fresh fruits, vegetables, meat, eggs, dairy, nuts and fresh cut herbs. Families are able to try new foods, new recipes, and know that as they feed their families nourishing meals, they know where their food came from and are supporting local farmers.

Each of the participating families has actively participated in a cooking & skill building program, where they received information and support in cooking and nutrition. Hands on cooking activities have included everything from canning, baby food making, cool foods for hot days to a dolmades making workshops. Each coupon dollar spent at their designated local farmers market went directly into a local farmer's pocket.

The 2009 season has been a great success. 16 communities across BC participated in the FMNCP this season, with families and farmers alike having benefited from the project. While we are wrapping the 2009 season, we are also looking ahead to the 2010 season. If your cooking & skill building program delivers hands on cooking & nutrition programming for low-income families with children and/or low-income pregnant women and you have a local farmers' market in your community, now is a great time to lay the foundation for the 2010 season. Speak with your local farmers market, encourage them to apply for the 2010 season. Check www.bcfarmersmarket.org/findamarket.asp to see if the market is a member of the BC Association of Farmers' Markets.

Happy eating!

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