



2017 Community Excellence Awards

Application Form

Leadership & Innovation, Agriculture

Please complete and return the application form by **Friday, June 23, 2017**. If you have any questions, contact UBCM at awards@ubcm.ca or (250) 356-5193.

SECTION 1: Applicant Information

Local Government: City of Abbotsford

Complete Mailing Address: 32315 South Fraser Way, Abbotsford BC, V2T 1W7

Contact Person: Wendy Dupley

Position: Executive Director

Phone: 604-851-4184

E-mail: wdupley@abbotsford.ca

SECTION 2: Staff Contact

An invitation to attend the UBCM Community Excellence Awards Breakfast Reception will be sent out via e-mail in early September. Winners will not be named before the ceremony.

Please provide the contact information for the person in your office who should receive and reply to the invitation, on behalf of the elected officials/staff that will be in attendance at the UBCM Convention.

Staff Contact Person: Kim O'Sullivan

Position: Economic Development Coordinator

Phone: 604-864-5670 ext 5670

E-mail: kosullivan@abbotsford.ca

SECTION 3: Project/Program Information

1. Name of the Project/Program:

Think Local. Think Abbotsford. Taste of Abby Week.

A program that has increased demand for locally grown, raised and processed agrifood products within the community.

2. Project/Program Summary. Please provide a summary of your project/program in 150 words or less

Abbotsford is recognized as the agriculture capital of Canada, the City of Abbotsford's

Economic Development (CAED) seeks to support growth in the agricultural sector as well as showcase the diversity of production in our community with an annual The Taste of Abby program. This program focuses on increasing demand for locally grown, raised and processed agrifood products within Abbotsford. Participants, local businesses offer special discounts on products made with local ingredients, for instance, a blueberry pie made with Abbotsford blueberries. In exchange, CAED promotes the specials through various communication channels such as newspaper, radio, social media and a mobile friendly website utilizing interactive mapping. The purpose of this program is to encourage our community to buy local, to create awareness about the businesses that support local agriculture and to generate more sales of local produce increasing the economic impacts (statistically generating a minimum of 2.6 times more revenue in the local economy).

SECTION 4: Project Details

Please answer each question in 250 words or less (our judges value directness and brevity). If you experience difficulty answering a particular question, consider the aspects of your program that may relate to the question and show us how they are linked. Remember to include measurable results whenever possible.

- 3. Stewardship.** Please describe how your project/plan strengthens farming and agriculture in your community.

The initiative had a target engagement of over 50 local restaurants, grocers, cafes, and agri-tourism locations. The concept of week was for those outlets to provide special promotional offers (discounts) on locally grown/produced food during the Taste of Abby Week. The program supports growth in the agricultural sector by increasing local sales as well as showcasing the diversity of production in our community. The Taste of Abby week is now in its second year and stemmed from the 'Farm to Table' concept and the farming culture that is so prevalent in our city. We felt that people are generally more and more interested about where their food came from, so why not show them! With so many local restaurants and grocery stores offering a wide variety of food sourced in the area, it only seemed right to also acknowledge their commitment to supporting local produce and show appreciation for the farming culture and support that our community is so proud of. In doing so, this initiative strengthens farming and agriculture in our community by increasing revenue multipliers (economic), and also by raising public awareness of the agriculture diversity.

4. Results

A) Please provide a brief outline of the steps involved in the program/project and the status of each step.

Step 1 - Year 1 (2016) created a brand and online identity that can be built upon and expanded each year. Expanded the program further during 2017's initiative detailed below.

Completed: Think Local. Think Abbotsford. Taste of Abby.
<https://caed.abbotsford.ca/about-abbotsford/think-local-think-abbotsford/>

Step 2: Reach out to promotional partners: DMO - Tourism Abbotsford Society, School District 34, Abby News, Country 107, Save-On Foods

Status: Complete:

School District provided student Sous Chefs to assist our Chefs competing in the competition, they also provide great social media support.

Tourism provided a prize basket of local produce for the Instagram photo competition winner.

We received full support from local newspaper, Abby News did a number of features in their newspaper as well as online newspaper and social media page at no charge to the community.

Country 107 sponsored radio advertisements and also promoted the program of events via social media and community newsletter;

Save-On Foods sponsored the Taste of Abby Chef's competition (kick-off event), providing local ingredients for the competition.

Ensuring a truly collaborative, community wide-reaching program.

Step 3- Design and produce invitation material (briefing materials) and send invites to local businesses to participate in the Taste of Abby week.

Status: Complete - Over 50 businesses signed up to participate in the Taste of Abby week. All participating businesses completed a partnership agreement form and submitted it by May 1st

Step 3 - Approach renown local chefs, who support local agriculture and invite them to participate in a community chef's competition

Status: Complete - 4 local chefs competed in the Taste of Abby Top Chef competition on May 28th to kick off the Taste of Abby week. The chefs were tasked to produce an appetizer and main course with locally produced produce. One of the judges was celebrity chef Vikram Vij. A promotional farm to table video was produced to promote the event and the four chef's dedication to supporting local producers. <https://youtu.be/Ycywch8TpEg>.

Step 4: Promote businesses using a variety of tactics and mediums; creating mobile friendly website with an interactive google map; Taste of Abby Guidebook; event details

Status: Complete: Guidebook and interactive map; numerous full page ads in Abby News, social media. Participating businesses talk about their specials in short video campaign

Step 5: Post program survey

Status: Active - in process. All participating businesses are to complete survey, to measure event success. Although at time of writing we are still waiting for surveys to be return. Year 1 results were extremely positive, indicating increased demand of local produce during the program, supporting the extended program we undertook in 2017.

B) Describe the results achieved and provide measurable results where possible.

This overall impact of this Business Retention and Expansion initiative is measured through a direct survey to all partner businesses, producing tangible, measurable outcomes. Partners tracked the success of the campaign through counting store sales of the promotional items. The increase of sales increases of demand for local produce and increased economic impact.

CAED created an online buzz within the community utilizing social media to raise awareness of each participating business. Short videos, educational tweets and promotional tweets were all attached with the #LocalAbby. This hashtag has been embraced by the community, during the program it was also tied to an Instagram photo competition. The hashtag continues on, being used year-long in connection with all things locally grown, raised and processed within the community.

During the week-long program our online statistics increased by 200% on some channels and engagements increased by 108%. Our page views increased by 93%.

In addition, for increased profile the Twitter # feeds directly to the web page landing page for Think Local. Think Abbotsford. <https://caed.abbotsford.ca/about-abbotsford/think-local-think-abbotsford/>.

5. Challenges. What challenges did you face in implementing this program/project and how did you overcome them?

It was important for CAED to offer benefits to the local agriculture economy and support our businesses. In the Taste of Abby Guide, the businesses saw their company information, logo and a feature on their business was available in an aesthetically pleasing guide that was also re-purposed in the local newspaper. It was challenging to get the critical logos and information within the timeframe required for graphic design and publication. Next year, much of this critical information already on file with the exception of new participants.

The primary challenge in the lead-up to Taste of Abby Week was education; creating a general understanding of the project, its rationale, its aims, and what partners would be obligated to do. Through conversations, sharing information electronically, making the Taste of Abby Guide available through the local newspaper and via an extensive social media campaign it helped immensely with this challenge.

6. Leadership. Describe how acting on this initiative demonstrates leadership in the advancement of farming in your community. Please include examples that are indicative of the shift in your overall approach from what may have been done in the past.

Leadership for this initiative stems from the top; our Mayor and Council's strategic plan 2015-18 prioritises a vibrant economy as one of its key cornerstones, under which one of its principals specifically identifies "We recognize the value of innovation in our local economy, especially agriculture". With the Taste of Abby Week, the Economic Development have taken that vision and led the design and implementation of an innovative, tactical, results-driven program that has directly increased the demand for locally grown, raised and processed agrifood products within the community.

Prior to the launch of Think Local. Think Abbotsford; Taste of Abby Week there was no formal centralized program that provided focused municipal leadership supporting our local producers in such highly visible and impactful manner. The community has demonstrated its support of the program with their active participation.

During the Taste of Abby Week program, Mayor and Council again demonstrate their support and leadership as they were seen actively visiting participating restaurants and businesses. A timely visit by FCM and a group of Ukrainian Mayors, provided opportunity to educate and share the program as they were taken to a number of Taste of Abby participating businesses.

7. Economic Development. How does the project encourage economic sustainability? (e.g. life cycle analysis, internalizing costs and alternative financing, economic instruments)

Local businesses strengthen communities, build resilience and foster innovation. Statically across Canada 75% of all economic growth comes from existing businesses within your community. Abbotsford is an Agriculture stronghold, the sector is the backbone of the community it makes economic sense to support and maximise the impacts of this locally diversified asset. The economic impact of implementing a program that increases demand for locally grown, raised and processed agrifood products within the community is significant. The impact of such a program is conservatively estimated to increase by a minimum of 2.6 times.

Think Local. Think Abbotsford; Taste of Abby program encourages the recirculation of dollars within our community. Participating businesses increase sales, create jobs, support local charities, contribute significantly to our tax base and re-circulate the dollars they make many times locally by using other local businesses as their supply chain.

8. Education. Please describe the educational aspects of your program/project, details of your target audience and results of this outreach. (e.g. public participation, knowledge sharing, capacity building, community identity and marketing)

City of Abbotsford Economic Development leads this program for the following educational reasons:

- 1) Showcase and educate the community on the diversity of produce produced in Abbotsford
- 2) Educate the public on the economic impacts of purchasing locally grown, raised and processed agrifood products within the community.
- 3) Encourage customer traffic into local businesses that supply and sell local products and/or restaurant serving dishes created with local ingredients. Thereby increasing sales during the initiative.

The Taste of Abby awareness marketing campaign targeted all Abbotsford residents; with a specific aim to educate those who may not have known about the diversity of local production but would be interested in learning more about the food that is produced right here in there city. By leveraging the diversified partnerships for marketing, (for example with Tourism Abbotsford and the School District) enabled us to maximize our reach and get our messaging out to a wider demographic.

This project builds on Abbotsford's identity as the "agricultural hub" of Canada.

9. Innovation. What makes this program/project innovative and creative?

Our specific brand creation "Think Local. Think Abbotsford" visually portrays an innovative, modern and creative image, while also resonating with our key stakeholders namely, the agriculture, agri-food sectors.

A prelude to this year's Taste of Abbotsford program we supported and strengthened our local agriculture sector with an Ag-tech digital, online only, month-long, advertising campaign which kicked off in January 2017 a unique municipal approach to building awareness of the Abbotsford Agriculture advantages. Targeting markets outside of British Columbia we embarked on putting Abbotsford on the map as the agricultural-technology hub. A Farm-Crawl and a quarterly ag-tech newsletter continues the momentum year-

round with of course the focused Taste of Abby week rounding out the multi-faceted innovative, creative municipal approaches being undertaken to increasing demand for locally grown, raised and processed agrifood products within the community.

The Taste of Abby 2017 added a new innovative web tool. Our interactive online map, leverages google technology to create a mobile, accessible way to display the key information for all the participating businesses that are offering their specials that are using local ingredients.

10. Transferability. How is this program/project transferable to other local governments?

The overall concepts of this program are not unique and can be seen in engaged municipalities across Canada. However, the brand, the marketing and communications framework and the collaborative tactics employed take an well recognized initiative to the next level with regards to its reach, impacts and measurement.

The Taste of Abbotsford program can be replicated amongst other local governments of all sizes and locations. The initiative is extremely scaleable depending on partnerships, resources and budgets. The measurements of success from our post-event participant survey can be used by other municipalities as a model for their own program's impacts.

11. Knowledge Sharing. What helpful advice would you share with other communities looking to embark on a similar project?

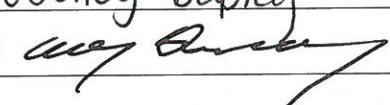
Regularly engage, connect and align with your local businesses and have them tell their own stories of how they are supporting local agriculture. Develop a program that closely aligns to your local economic need and one that will resonate within your own community.

In the 2017 program, we had number businesses participate in a series of short, informal videos, in which they describe their support of the Taste of Abby program, the featured dish and how they support the use of local ingredients. This was an effective way to increase exposure and was well received through the various social media channels.

12. Additional Information. Please share any other information you think may help support your submission.

SECTION 5: Signature

Applications are required to be signed by an authorized representative of the applicant.

Name: Wendy Dupley	Title: Director, Economic Development
Signature: 	Date: July 5, 2017

Applications should be submitted as Word or PDF files. If you choose to submit your application by e-mail, hard copies do not need to follow.

Submit applications to Local Government Program Services, Union of BC Municipalities

E-mail: awards@ubcm.ca or mail: 525 Government Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 0A8

