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New Regional Food Hub In Creston Will Scale-up Food Processing

(Creston, BC) – Fields Forward Society is excited to announce a new Regional Food Hub in the Creston Valley. Farmers and food processors from across the Columbia Basin will have access to the food processing facility, beginning August 2021 when Phase One will be complete. A full launch will take place in the winter of 2022.

“Producers and processors in the valley and Columbia Basin are ready for a dedicated facility to accelerate innovation and aggregate our food products to the scale required to reach new markets,” said Danny Turner Fields Forward Chair and owner of Just-A-Mere Organic farms.

As part of StrongerBC: BC’s Economic Recovery Plan, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries is providing a \$500,000 grant to Fields Forward as the lead community group on the food hub.

“Our food and agricultural community has so much potential and this Food Hub will help everyone who wants to grow their business and will contribute to food security in the Creston Valley,” said Tanya Wall Fields Forward Vice-Chair and RDCK Area B Director.

The funding will be used to renovate a facility, purchase equipment and cover staff positions for two years.

The Food Hub will produce juices from fruits and vegetables, package vegetables for institutions, bottle jams, freeze-dry products into powders, and provide other food processing services.

The purpose of the Food Hub is to help Kootenay region food and farm businesses to grow and innovate by giving them access to community-based processing equipment and facilities they might otherwise not afford. It will also offer an aggregation and distribution service, and sales support. Cold, dry and freezer storage is planned. Businesses will rent the equipment or hire Fields Forward’s staff on a fee-for-service basis. Fields Forward will participate in the BC Food Hub Network connecting and learning from food hubs throughout the province.

Fields Forward Society is a food and agriculture initiative in Creston and District working to build a vibrant and productive local agri-food. It has a mandate to support and sustain the community’s environmental, indigenous, social, cultural, economic and aesthetic values. In addition to the new Food Hub it owns a community fruit-juicing machine used by the region’s orchardists.

This project is in partnership with the Regional District of Central Kootenay. Columbia Basin Trust and the Creston Valley-Kootenay Lake Economic Action Partnership provided funding for the planning of this project.

For more information, visit www.fieldsforward.ca.

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