

Small Scale Food Processors Experience Big Success Specialty Foods Magazine launched

January 25, 2010: While economic shuffles continue to take place at the corporate level, Canada's small scale food processors are quietly enjoying increasing success. And trends in the industry indicate that growers and producers will be working to fill bigger demand over the next several years. To help small scale food processors make the most of what the future holds, the Small Scale Food Processor Association has launched *Specialty Foods Magazine*, a full-colour publication dedicated to raising awareness of the unique challenges, and increasing opportunities, faced by small scale food processors.

The magazine comes at a time when businesses are increasingly choosing local products – and they are developing business models to maximize the value of working with small scale producers. Demand for local specialty food items is growing as part of the “think local” trend - popularized through the proliferation of farm and pocket markets and the 100 mile diet - with the specialty food industry in Canada posting year over year growth of 25%.

“The success stories in our premiere issue demonstrate the viability of small scale food processing,” says Candice Appleby, Executive Director, Small Scale Food Processor Association. “Because of the local nature of the business model, small scale food processors are becoming increasingly fundamental to strong regional economies. They create local jobs, pay local taxes and contribute to local economies on many levels.”

The economic downturn has resulted in more people eating at home more often. Trend research predicts the eat-at-home preference will continue and that, increasingly, consumers will turn to specialty foods as a replacement for restaurant meals. Demand for unique British Columbia food items is growing in international markets as well as consumers look to bring exotic, authentic tastes into the home.

“One of the goals of *Specialty Foods Magazine* is to help Canadian small scale producers realize the opportunities that are available and prepare to take advantage of them,” says Appleby. “With indications that demand is increasing for specialty food products at home and abroad, we want to help producers be prepared.”

The premiere issue of *Specialty Foods Magazine* has been distributed to SSFPA's membership, numerous food based associations, economic development associations as well as Canadian Embassies and consulates. The issue emphasizes stories of growth, expansion and award-winning companies. It also contains business and industry information specifically for small scale processors.

SSFPA was incorporated in 2002 to represent the interests of small scale food and beverage producers, help create regional food sustainability and advocate for the small scale food processor. SSFPA maintains the BC Specialty Food Directory, a list of 174 companies and 868 products available in BC. Many of the companies listed fall into the micro category with less than five full time staff. The directory is designed to be a resource for chefs, restaurants and specialty food retailers looking to source BC specialty products. For more information see www.ssfpa.net.

Businesses wishing to receive a copy of *Specialty Foods Magazine* are invited to contact Candice Appleby at info@ssfpa.net or 866-547-7372. The magazine is also available for download at www.ssfpa.net in the What's New section.

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