

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Free marketing boost for Cowichan businesses selling local products

DUNCAN, BC – Cowichan restaurants, retailers and producers selling local products can get a free marketing boost in 2021 from the VIEA Island Good Program.

Economic Development Cowichan has once again partnered with the Vancouver Island Economic Alliance (VIEA) to offer Cowichan businesses a free one-year Island Good licence. VIEA developed the Island Good brand program as a way for customers to easily identify local products on retailer shelves and restaurant menus.

“The need and desire to support local continues to grow,” said Barry O’Riordan, Manager of Economic Development Cowichan. “Economic Development Cowichan is delighted to continue to support our local businesses in making use of the Island Good branding to bring attention to locally-made products. This year, we are looking to maximize the visibility of Cowichan producers by challenging as many local restaurants and retail stores to sign up as possible. If you include locally grown/made items on your menu or sell them in your store, then this program is made for you.”

This free licensing opportunity is available on a first-come-first-served basis until the funding is spent. Once accepted, businesses may use the Island Good branding to identify the local items on their shelves, menus, and packaging, as well as take advantage of VIEA’s Island Good marketing campaigns.

“We have always identified local products in our stores and believed that working together across all levels was the natural next step,” said Don Florence, Vice President of Store Operations for 49th Parallel Grocery. “We have been a member of Island Good since its inception, and their logo makes it easier for our customers to identify and purchase Island products. It’s good for the customer, good for local producers, good for all of us.”

When the pilot program was launched in 2018, the Island Good branding led to increased sales of local food and beverage products by an average of 16% in 45 grocery stores over a six-month period. The success of the brand has translated into an expansion from food to now include all Vancouver Island made products. Island Good now has over 135 member-businesses featuring products that range from eggs, tortillas, and pickles to cosmetics, furniture and soaps.

“We are so pleased with the response from Island Good business owners stating the importance of the brand, creating community and fostering connection,” said Suzanne Hedges, Relationship and Business Manager for Island Good. “The pandemic has been a catalyst for consumer awareness of local, and Island Good has played a meaningful role in strengthening the support for local good producers and the retailers that sell their products.”

Consumers can feel good purchasing Island Good products and knowing they are contributing to the health of our local economy. According to BC Buy Local, for every \$100 spent at a local

business, \$63 is re-circulated back into the provincial economy. VIEA notes that every 1% increase in sales of local products equals 50 jobs.

Visit www.IslandGood.ca to confirm eligibility and apply for the program.

- 30 -

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