

Media Relations



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**MEDIA ADVISORY**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

## **Taste of the Valley 2020 Cancelled Due to COVID-19, Will Return in 2021**

**Pembroke, ON:** The difficult decision to cancel the 2020 Taste of the Valley events in Renfrew County has been taken, very reluctantly, by the County of Renfrew. Taste of the Valley events have become important fixtures in Renfrew County, since the first one was hosted in Cobden in 2007. Celebrations of local food and crafts have become key social events for residents and tourists, and important selling and marketing venues for local food producers, farmers, artists and crafters, attracting up to 1,500 visitors.

*“The challenges and issues of safely managing such large events as Taste of the Valley during this COVID-19 pandemic pose too many risks for us to move forward in 2020 with Taste of the Valley”,* states Alastair Baird, Manager of Economic Development Services at Renfrew County, and co-founder of Taste of the Valley. *“We created Taste of the Valley to promote local food producers and to encourage the growth of Farmers Markets across the County, and that has been very effective and successful,”* he adds.

Unfortunately, there are serious concerns about safely managing the large numbers of pedestrians arriving at venues, controlling access to safely manage the number of people on site, ensuring proper social distancing on site and in the lines, and managing vehicle traffic and parking at and around many of the venues. The County cannot in good conscience, move forward with Taste of the Valley 2020. As event organizers across the County and around the world have found, COVID-19 has made it impossible to host special events as usual.

*“One of the projects we are developing is a Virtual Taste of the Valley, featuring local food producers on-line. Buyers will be able to virtually meet the farmers and producers, shop all their favorite vendors, and many others, and make local food purchases year ‘round,”* according to David Wybou, Taste of the Valley Coordinator and Renfrew County Business Development Officer.

We encourage residents to continue to support local farmers and food producers to buy local foods by visiting one of our many Summer and Farmers Markets which are operating this year.

Eganville- Bonnechere Valley	Friday:	3 pm- 5 pm	Legion Memorial Field
Barry's Bay- Madawaska Valley	Friday:	11 am – 4 pm	Hwy.62 at Stafford Street
Cobden- Whitewater Region	Saturday:	8 am – 12 pm	Cobden Fairgrounds
Deep River	Saturday:	10 am – 1 pm	Town Hall Parking Lot
Killaloe- Killaloe, Hagarty & Richards	Saturday:	9 am – 1 pm	Lion's Field
Burnstown- McNab/Braeside	Friday:	2 pm – 6 pm	1716 Calabogie Road
Pembroke	Wed. & Sat.	9 am – 12 pm	Pembroke Farmers Market

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