

U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council
Meeting Minutes
February 28, 2009

USHBC Chairman Art Galletta called the meeting of the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council to order at 8:10am on Saturday, February 28, 2009. The following USHBC members, as well as USDA representative Marlene Betts and USHBC staff members Mark Villata and Mary Nezbeth, attended the meeting, held at Courtyard Gulfport Beachfront in Gulfport, Mississippi:

Verne Gingerich (Region 1)	Neil Moore (North Carolina)
Ron Bodtke (Region 2 Alternate)	Adair Chambers-Peterson (Georgia)
Art Galletta (Region 3)	Doug Krahmer (Oregon)
Ken Patterson (Region 4)	Rod Cook (Washington)
Bob Carini (Michigan)	Kirk McCreary (Public Member)
Denny Doyle (New Jersey)	John Shelford (Importer Member)

The first order of business was the approval of the minutes from the last Council meeting held on October 4, 2008. Minutes had been mailed to members and alternates following the October meeting. Neil Moore moved, with a second from Denny Doyle, to approve the minutes as written. The motion carried.

The second agenda item was an update from the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) by Marlene Betts. Betts reported that her office is still in the process of expanding staff and that a USDA specialist should be assigned to the USHBC by April. She noted that there was no date yet on finalization of the computer system that will allow U.S. Customs to report assessment collections by product and country of origin. The change in administration was discussed and those now acting in various positions until appointments are made were noted, along with the fact that "transparency" and diversity will be very important in this new administration. Betts final comments concerned USHBC assessments and she reiterated that a rate change would not require a vote of the growers but would have to be posted in the Federal Register and go through the rulemaking process which at this point could take at least a year to complete.

Chairman Galletta then suggested a change in the order of the agenda and moved the USHBC Promotion Committee report and discussion of an expanded market promotion program to this point in the meeting. Promotion Committee Chairman Kirk McCreary began his report noting that his committee had reviewed progress on final market promotion activities for 2008 and actions taken to date on the 2009 consumer/foodservice publicity, food manufacturer publicity and export market promotion program. He also mentioned that his committee had been provided with results of recent consumer research that will now be used to generate food manufacturer awareness of the value of blueberries as an ingredient and the appeal of the *Made With Real Blueberries* seal. He completed his committee update with a budget recap. He noted that the committee had discussed how to assign the additional \$100,000 it had been allocated at this meeting and recommends that an additional \$80,000 be added to the expanded market positioning program and \$20,000 added to consumer/foodservice publicity to conduct an internet based recipe contest this