

THE USHBC BLUESPAPER

News and Marketing Program Updates from the
U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council
August 2009

DETAILS ON USHBC PROPOSED ASSESSMENT INCREASE POSTED IN FEDERAL REGISTER AND OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Reprinted from USDA AMS Press Release:

WASHINGTON, July 24, 2009 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced that it is seeking comments on a proposed rule to amend the Blueberry Promotion, Research, and Information Order. The proposed rule would increase the assessment rate -- from \$12 per ton to \$24 -- on producers and importers who produce or import more than 2,000 pounds of highbush blueberries. Assessments are used to fund promotional activities and health-related research conducted by the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council.

The proposal will be published in the July 27, 2009, Federal Register. Public comments must be received by September 25, 2009. Comments may be submitted on the Internet at www.regulations.gov; mailed to USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Research and Promotion Branch, Stop 0244, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 0632, Washington, DC 20250-0244; or faxed to (202) 205-2800.

Copies of the proposed rule may be requested from the same address or by calling (888) 720-9917 during regular business hours. The proposal is also available on www.regulations.gov or AMS's website: www.ams.usda.gov/FVPromotion.

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service monitors the operations of the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council in accordance with the Commodity Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 1996. The council administers an industry-funded national research and promotion program to maintain and expand markets for highbush blueberries. More information about the research and promotion programs can be found at www.ams.usda.gov/FVPromotion.

PRINT, INTERNET AND TELEVISION PUBLICITY EFFORTS GENERATE YEAR- ROUND CONSUMER AWARENESS

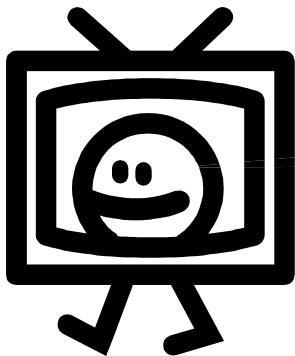
A spring and summer blueberry heritage themed press kit, mailed to 750 daily newspapers and 150 Hispanic newspapers the second week of May, has received favorable review from editors and is being used in numerous food stories this summer. To date, the USHBC has also seen considerable use of previously distributed press releases including excellent pickup of the *Blueberry French Toast for Cozy Mornings* release which featured wintertime fresh blueberries. The release, which was distributed in January, generated an estimated 8.9 million reader impressions to date. The springtime ready to print

release, *Pink-and-Blueberry Lemonade*, distributed in April has recorded 289 online placements with a total site audience of 6.3 million. An additional summertime release is currently being finalized featuring a *Frosted Blueberry-Banana Soup*, a dessert recipe which should gain consumer awareness and which will continue to showcase the versatility of blueberries.

The release features a quick, low fat and low calorie fresh blueberry dessert for the entire family.



Blueberries also continue to be featured on television including a recent 6-minute segment on the *NBC Today Show* featuring Martha Stewart. Stewart gave a very strong endorsement of highbush blueberries noting how they are grown in both North and South



America and therefore available fresh nearly the entire year. She discussed how highbush blueberries are known as the "fresh" blueberry and demonstrated five different blueberry recipes. Her television appearance carried the same theme as

the blueberry article she wrote for her June edition of *Martha Stewart Living* which was another strong endorsement of highbush blueberries.

Blueberries were also featured by the Love Chef on a recent edition of *Live! With Regis & Kelly*. During the interview the Love Chef talked about the fresh blueberry season and demonstrated the USHBC *Pink-and-Blueberry Lemonade* recipe as well as mixed berry shortcake.

U.S. SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE ANNOUNCES \$14.7 MILLION BLUEBERRY PURCHASE

On July 16, 2009 the Secretary of Agriculture announced the USDA's intent to purchase up to \$14.7 million worth of cultivated blueberry products for federal nutrition assistance programs. At this point it looks like the bid announcement will ask for blueberry deliveries in the final quarter of this year, September to December 2009. The announcement stems from a purchase request submitted by the North American Blueberry Council to the USDA late last year.

Though final amounts are yet to be determined, both frozen and dried cultivated blueberries may be included in the purchase offer. Frozen packs may be requested in 2 ½ pound and 30 pound pack sizes and dried could be requested in 2 pound and 10 pound packs.

The formal announcement with final details, delivery dates and requested amounts is expected to be published sometime this month on the USDA AMS website at www.ams.usda.gov.

This purchase will have a significant and positive impact on the blueberry market and current inventory positions. In order to take part in this purchase

blueberry vendors must follow USDA requirements, which include USDA plant inspections. Vendors (handlers) must be pre-certified by the USDA prior to submitting a bid. Certifications are conducted by the USDA on a yearly basis and are scheduled during processing and handling periods. Potential vendors should act immediately to secure the necessary inspections in order to participate in this buy.

POTENTIAL BLUEBERRY CUSTOMERS LISTED ON USHBC WEBSITE

The USHBC office is contacted by potential blueberry customers from both here at home and abroad asking for sources of fresh and frozen blueberries and blueberry products such as juice, puree and powder. These inquiries are being posted on the trade leads section of the USHBC website at www.blueberry.org. Customer name and contact information is posted on the site along with their product inquiry. Industry members are encouraged to view this section of the site on a regular basis for continued updates and market opportunities.

NOTE- NEW USHBC ADDRESS
80 Iron Point Circle, Suite 114
Folsom, California 95630-8593

USHBC MEETING SCHEDULE

2009 USHBC Fall Meeting- Portland, Oregon
 Thursday, October 15 to Saturday, October 17, 2009
 The Benson Hotel- Portland, Oregon
 Phone (503) 228-2000

2010 USHBC Spring Meeting- Phoenix, Arizona
 Wednesday, February 24 to Friday, February 26, 2010

2010 USHBC Fall Meeting- Grand Rapids, Michigan
 Thursday, October 14 to Saturday, October 16, 2010

2011 USHBC Spring Meeting- Dallas, Texas
 Wednesday, March 2 to Friday, March 4, 2011



The USHBC Bluespaper is published by the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council; 80 Iron Point Circle, Suite 114; Folsom, California 95630. Phone (916) 983-0111; Fax (916) 983-9022; Web Site: www.blueberry.org.

The USHBC has adopted a diversity outreach plan to attempt to achieve a diverse representation on the Council. USHBC programs and meetings are open to all individuals. The USHBC prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, genetic information, parental status and marital or family status. The USHBC fully complies with any and all applicable Federal, State, and local equal employment opportunity statutes, ordinances and regulations, including, but not limited to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; and the Equal Pay Act of 1963. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USHBC office at (916) 983-0111. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington D.C. 20250-9410 or call 800-795-3272 (voice) or 202-720-6382 (TDD).