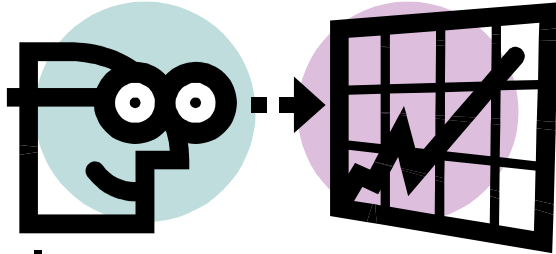


# THE USHBC BLUESPAPER

## News and Marketing Program Updates from the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council August 2010

### **NABC STATISTICAL REVIEW SHOWS CONTINUED INCREASES IN FRESH BLUEBERRY CONSUMPTION**

The most recent North American Blueberry Council (NABC) Statistical Report is showing that the interest in fresh blueberries continues to grow. Blueberry consumption in the United States increased to an estimated 31.4 ounces per person in 2009, a +13% increase over the total of 27.8 ounces consumed the previous year. Fresh consumption came in at 15.4 ounces per person in 2009, up from 12.8 ounces per person the previous year. Frozen blueberry consumption totaled 16.0 ounces per person last year compared to 15.0 ounces in 2008.



Figures show tremendous growth in fresh consumption over the past five years. During this period fresh blueberry consumption has increased by +6.7 ounces from the total of 8.7 ounces consumed per person in 2004. Fresh market sales of blueberries in 2009 had an estimated farm gate value of \$535,653,000 which is +16.2% greater than the level attained in 2008 (\$461,049,000).

million pounds in 2009,

an industry record and +25.8 million pounds greater than the previous record of 424.5 million pounds produced in 2008. The top five highbush production regions in 2009 were Michigan, followed by British Columbia, Oregon, New Jersey and Georgia. British Columbia was the largest supplier of fresh blueberries in 2009 at 54.0 million pounds followed by Michigan at 52.5 million pounds, New Jersey at 40.0 million pounds, North Carolina at 26.7 million pounds and California at 24.2 million pounds. The largest highbush supplier of frozen blueberries last season was Michigan at 48.0 million pounds followed by British Columbia at 35.0 million pounds, Washington at 28.0 million pounds, Oregon at 23.7 million pounds and Georgia at 17.0 million pounds.

### **USHBC RESPONSE TO ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP "DIRTY DOZEN" LISTING**

Recently the Environmental Working Group (EWG) included blueberries in its "Dirty Dozen" list of fruits and vegetables that should be purchased in organic form because it claimed the non-organic varieties contained pesticide residues. The result is that nutritionists and dieticians report that people are reducing their consumption of fruits and vegetables because they cannot always afford an organic alternative.

The following points are offered as a response to this EWG report:

- While we believe that eating organically-grown blueberries is much better than not eating blueberries at all, we take strong issue with the EWG report for several reasons.
- EWG's recommendations are based on fruit and vegetable products tested by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). What EWG doesn't tell you is that 98.2% of the products tested by USDA showed no detectable levels of pesticide residues.
- Only a small fraction of the products tested contained pesticide residues, and those were found in exceedingly small amounts – well

below established tolerances and/or action levels.

- We asked Dr. Carl Winter, who heads the Department of Food Science and Technology at the University of California, Davis for his perspective. He notes, "...the basic principle of food technology is that 'the **dose** makes the poison' – it's the amount of a chemical, not its presence or absence that determines the potential for harm."
- Despite EWG's claims, the US Food and Drug Administration states that "you can reduce and often eliminate residues if they are present on fresh product by washing under cold or warm running tap water."
- Blueberries, organic and conventional, are grown in many locations around the world. Growers are keenly aware of the need to produce berries that are both safe and healthful and you can rest assured that they are as concerned about that as you. (After all, they and their families are the first consumers of what comes out of their fields.)
- Despite the "Dirty Dozen" listing, you are much wiser to include fresh fruits and vegetables – whether grown organically or conventionally – in your diet.

The blueberry industry strives to provide consumers with safe, high-quality products. The industry supports growers in following standards and guidelines that ensure the safe application of pesticides with a careful eye to tolerance levels, worker safety and environmental sensitivity.

Reports and publications such as the "Dirty Dozen" list continue to reinforce our need to be sure that all members of our industry take the time to review and continually update their good management practices and continue to comply with all local, state and federal requirements.



## REMINDER:

### SIGN UP NOW TO TAKE PART IN BLUEBERRY ALERT SYSTEM

To take part in the alert system and receive industry updates blueberry growers, handlers and marketers need to provide their contact information by either sending their e-mail address to JoDee Gowan at the USHBC office ([jgowan@blueberry.org](mailto:jgowan@blueberry.org); (916) 983-0111), or by visiting the alert system website at <http://blueberrycouncil.org/members/amerilert-tools/?type=signup> and following the signup instructions. If at any point you have a question concerning how to signup for the USHBC alert system, please call the USHBC office at (916) 983-0111.

## USHBC MEETING SCHEDULE

### 2010 USHBC Fall Meeting

#### Grand Rapids, Michigan

Wednesday, October 13 to Friday, October 15, 2010

Amway Grand Plaza Hotel- Grand Rapids, Michigan

Phone (616) 774-2000

### 2011 USHBC Spring Meeting

#### Dallas, Texas

Wednesday, March 2 to Friday, March 4, 2011

Hotel: TBD

### 2011 USHBC Fall Meeting

#### Atlantic City, New Jersey

Wednesday, October 5 to Friday, October 7, 2011

Hotel: TBD

### 2012 USHBC Spring Meeting

#### San Francisco, California

Wednesday, February 29 to Friday, March 2, 2012

Hotel: TBD



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