

THE BLUESPAPER

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

October 2011

USHBC RECEIVES STRONG SUPPORT IN CONTINUATION REFERENDUM

The USDA has announced that blueberry producers and importers have registered their support for the continuation of the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council. Results from the continuation referendum, which took place from July 5 to July 26, 2011, show that 88% of those who voted, representing 98% of the volume of blueberries produced or imported by those voting, support the continuation of the program.

As required by the USDA, a continuation referendum is conducted every five years for all research and promotion programs. Eligible voters were highbush blueberry producers and importers who imported or produced 2,000 pounds or more of highbush blueberries during calendar year 2010. A total of 1,876 ballots were mailed by the USDA to eligible voters in July prior to the three week voting period.

This was the third vote by the industry and shows a continued increase in support of the USHBC. The initial referendum to establish the USHBC was conducted in the year 2000 with 68% of those voting favoring the establishment of the USHBC. Those in favor represented 73% of the volume voted. In the 2006 continuation referendum 87% of those voting were in favor of the USHBC and those in favor represented 94% of the volume that was voted.

With the favorable results from the 2011 continuation referendum, the USHBC will continue to work to build worldwide interest and demand for highbush blueberries. The next continuation referendum will take place in 2016.



USHBC SCHOOL FOODSERVICE PROMOTION WINS AWARD

The USHBC has been selected by Produce Business as one of its Marketing Excellence Award winners for 2011. The publication selected the USHBC "Blueberries Go To School" campaign as one of twenty winners this year. This is the 23rd year that Produce Business has been recognizing companies and organizations for innovative and creative marketing efforts. Winners were recognized in the August 2011 edition of Produce Business.

Of the 20 winners a total of 14 entries were focused on consumers and consumer media. Children and their mothers were the target audience of several consumer promotions, with sports elements incorporated in a number of winning efforts. Reflecting the continuing evolution of market promotion efforts, microsites and new websites were an integral part of many

promotions as were "e-blasts" to consumers and outreach to "bloggers".

According to Produce Business, "What's become most clear from these winning campaigns is that it's no longer enough to extend a simple outreach with print ads or a singular Facebook page. Multiple print and social media aspects are a prerequisite to get the job done, and when used properly, can double or even triple consumer impressions."

The objective of the "Blueberries Go To School" campaign was to alert school foodservice decision makers that blueberries are available and offer them ways to incorporate more blueberries on school breakfast and lunch menus. The program included advertising, print material, outreach to schools and blueberry promotions in K to 12 school cafeterias.

Advertising in foodservice magazines and websites repeated the USHBC message that



blueberries are available to schools through the USDA and helped keep this message top of mind in school foodservice director's plans. The program also included USHBC as one of three sponsors for the 22nd Annual National School Breakfast Week, bringing attention to the addition



of blueberries to school menus and their versatility in breakfast and lunch dishes.

A USHBC booth at the Annual Nutrition Conference targeted to school foodservice employees was also included in the effort

as was work with school foodservice departments to create blueberry promotions in their cafeterias.

Reader print impressions from the USHBC advertisements totaled 3.25 million and school staff at approximately 84,000 schools nationwide was made aware of the versatility of blueberries through the USHBC presence at conferences and conventions.

BLUEBERRIES CONTINUE AS KEY INGREDIENT IN NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Major companies in the U.S. continue to launch new products with blueberries as a key ingredient with tracking studies indicating that the total of new products introduced this year could match the record level of new blueberry product introductions in 2007. There also appears to be a growing use in non-price sensitive food and non-food categories.

The ultra-premium area of the pet food sector continues to expand and pet foods with blueberries have been introduced at a record pace this year. Interest is extremely high from not only the small boutique companies but the large pet food suppliers as well.

Numerous companies are using blueberries as an ingredient in their natural cosmetics, health care, and in a new category known as "beauty from within", consumable products that are touted to provide health and beauty benefits for skin, hair and nails.

Blueberry use in military feeding is also on the rise with a total of 18 blueberry-containing Meals Ready to Eat (MRE) ration components now in the Combat Feeding System, up from four blueberry containing products in 2010. Dried blueberries in particular, which can meet military feeding requirements of a three year shelf life at 80 degrees Fahrenheit, are gaining considerable interest in this market segment.

ATTENTION BLUEBERRY INDUSTRY MEMBERS- SIGN UP NOW FOR THE BLUEBERRY ALERT SYSTEM

To take part in the blueberry alert system send your e-mail address to JoDee Gowan at the USHBC office: (jgowan@blueberry.org); or sign up directly on the alert system website at the following address: <http://blueberrycouncil.org/members/amerilert-tools/?type=signup>.

Please call the USHBC office at (916) 983-0111 with any questions on the blueberry alert system or signup steps.

USHBC MEETING SCHEDULE
2012 USHBC Spring Meeting
San Francisco, California
 Wednesday, February 29 to Friday, March 2, 2012
 Sheraton Fisherman's Wharf
 Phone (888) 627-7024
2012 USHBC Fall Meeting
St. Louis, Missouri
 Wednesday, October 3 to Friday, October 5, 2012
 Hotel: TBD



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 or www.littlebluedynamos.com. 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).

