

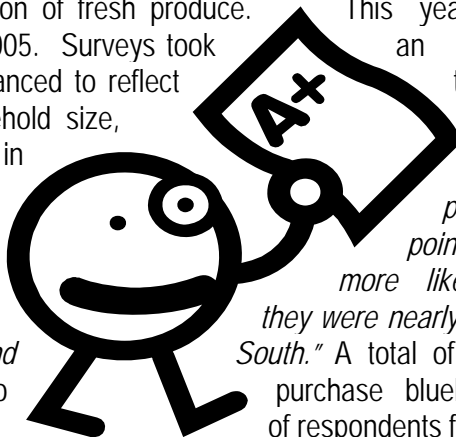
THE USHBC BLUESPAPER

News and Marketing Program Updates from the
U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council
May 2006

"FRESH TRENDS 2006" SURVEY SHOWS POSITIVE BLUEBERRY RESULTS

Blueberries continue to make gains at retail as evidenced by recent figures reported in the "Fresh Trends 2006" survey conducted by The Packer. Over the past 23 years The Packer has conducted consumer studies to track trends in the purchase and consumption of fresh produce. This year consumers were surveyed online between July 21 and July 25, 2005. Surveys took an average of 11 minutes to complete. Participant sample was balanced to reflect the U.S. population in terms of age, household income, region, household size, population density and race. A total of 1,000 households took part in the survey.

According to the report, "Blueberry figures this year, up 14 percentage Consumers in the Northeast were shoppers in any other region, in fact, berries than those in the West and West and South were noted as likely to respondents from the Midwest and 61%



purchases grew by double-digit points from Fresh Trends 2005. more likely to buy blueberries than they were nearly one-third more likely to buy the South." A total of 42% of respondents from the purchase blueberries, compared to 46% of respondents from the Northeast.

As reflected in previous consumer research conducted by the USHBC, shoppers least likely to purchase blueberries were consumers earning less than \$20,000 annually, those in rural areas and those with a high school education or less.

COUNCIL INCREASES 2006 MARKET PROMOTION BUDGET TO \$1.3 MILLION

Based upon final 2005 crop collections, an increased USDA Market Access Program (MAP) allocation, and carryover funds from 2005, the USHBC elected to allocate an additional \$403,988 to Market Promotion and Publicity this year, increasing the budget from the previously approved level of \$924,864 to a total of \$1,328,852.

This expanded budget will allow for additional consumer and foodservice activities in 2006 including the expansion of the Spanish language press release coverage; increased attendance at the blueberry media breakfast planned for this June; additional TV placements; increased distribution of the children's activity sheet to be offered through grade schools nationwide; additional foodservice promotional activity and an increased distribution of promotional materials through the health professional mailing previously approved by the USHBC this past October. Additional

activities include the development of retail promotional materials and the delivery of a USB memory key to retailers featuring the USHBC retail promotional materials as well as a cash prize offer for supermarket executives to encourage feedback on the USHBC retail program; and sponsorship and participation in the *Johnson & Wales* culinary student education program. Added food manufacturer publicity program activity includes an increase in trade advertising, in part to counter recent promotion of manufactured or artificial blueberry products. The consumer magazine advertising budget was also expanded to allow for placement of additional ads in The Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, Journal of the American Association of Diabetes Educators, School Foodservice and Nutrition, Medical Economics, American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, Osteopathic Family Physician News and The Chiropractic Journal. With these additions, the USHBC will have a total of 20 advertisements placed in 11 publications from April to November of 2006.

The USHBC has also submitted an application for Market Access Program (MAP) funding for the 2006/2007 marketing year (September 1 to August 31) to continue activities in China, Japan, Taiwan, Korea and Hungary and to support new activities to be conducted in the United Kingdom (based on recent reports of the growing interest in blueberries throughout the English market) and Brazil. An announcement of final funding allocations should be received from the USDA by this June.

REGIONAL MEMBER NOMINATIONS DUE JUNE 5th --- CONTINUATION REFERENDUM SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST

The USHBC will be conducting an election of regional members this year as well as conducting a continuation referendum on the USHBC program. Regional Member nomination packets were sent by the USHBC to growers in each of the four regions (West, Midwest, Northeast and South) this month. The nomination packet includes a *USHBC Nomination Application Form* and



instructions, a *USHBC Information Sheet* and mailing envelope. Nomination packet information is also posted on the USHBC website at www.blueberry.org. The USHBC regional member nominations will take place over a five-week period from May 1 to June 5, 2006. Nominations received after June 5 will not appear on the final printed USHBC ballot. Individual USHBC regional ballots will be sent to growers in each of the four regions on August 7. Ballots will list nominees from the region along with their candidate statement. Space will be available on the ballot to indicate any write-in candidate as well. The USHBC will make recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture for the USHBC Importer, Exporter and Public Member following the Council meeting in October of 2006. Regional Members as well as Importer, Exporter and Public Members should assume their USHBC positions starting January 1, 2007 for a three-year term. Blueberry growers and importers will also have the opportunity to provide their individual evaluation of the effectiveness of the USHBC program during the *USHBC Continuation Referendum* scheduled to take

place over a three week period from August 1 to August 22, 2006.

Referendum ballots will be printed and mailed directly to blueberry growers and importers in July. Outcome will be based on a simple majority of the number of voters voting and a majority of the volume voted. Those who do not receive their ballot by July are encouraged to contact the USDA or the USHBC office.

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 USHBC website at www.blueberry.org or www.ushbc.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.

USHBC MEETING SCHEDULE

2006 USHBC Fall Meeting

Friday, October 6 and Saturday, October 7, 2006

Bar Harbor Regency- 123 Eden Street

Bar Harbor, Maine Phone (207) 288-9723

2007 USHBC Spring Meeting

Friday, March 2 and Saturday, March 3, 2007

Hilton Disney World Orlando- 1751 Hotel Plaza Blvd.

Lake Buena Vista, Florida Phone (407) 827-4000

Blueberries

The *USHBC Bluespaper* is published by the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council; 2390 East Bidwell Street, Suite #300; Folsom, California 95630. Phone (916) 983-0111; Fax (916) 983-9022; Web Site: www.blueberry.org, or www.ushbc.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).