

THE USHBC BLUESPAPER

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

USHBC REGIONAL MEMBER ELECTIONS TO TAKE PLACE BEGINNING APRIL 20

Members of the cultivated blueberry industry are being asked to select representatives to fill USHBC regional member and alternate positions for the 2010 to 2012 term. Regional ballots are being mailed to producers on April 20, 2009.



Voting begins that date and continues for a five-week period ending on May 25, 2009. All completed ballots must arrive at the USHBC office by close of business on May 25, 2009. Those elected to regional member and alternate positions will serve a three-year term starting January 1, 2010 and are allowed to serve a maximum of two consecutive terms.

Ballots and instructions will also be posted on the USHBC website at www.blueberry.org. Growers who do not receive their ballots by April 20 are asked to contact the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council office at (916) 983-0111.

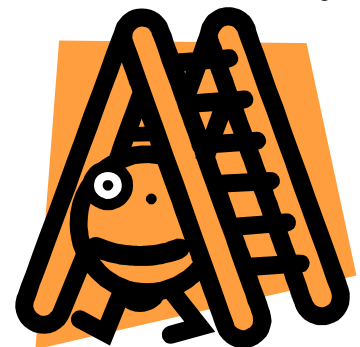
SURVEY SHOWS BLUEBERRY PURCHASE CONTINUES TO CLIMB

According to the *2009 Fresh Trends Report* published by The Packer, blueberry purchase continues to climb recording a +1% increase in 2008 compared to the level of purchase in 2007. The report notes that 45% of consumers had purchased blueberries within the past twelve months. By comparison 31% of those surveyed had purchased raspberries in 2008 (up from 25% the previous year) followed by blackberries at 22% (a +1% increase compared to the previous year). Strawberries once again dominated the berry category and were purchased by 70% of respondents within the past year.

The Packer has sponsored 26 major consumer studies to track trends in the purchase and consumption of fresh produce since 1983. In 2008, consumers were surveyed through an online study conducted in early November. Invitations to take part in the survey were emailed to 30,000 U.S. households who are members of a nationwide consumer panel. Completed surveys were received from 1,169 households.

According to the report, this is the third year that consumers in the highest income bracket comprised the group most likely to buy blueberries, while those in the lowest income bracket were least likely to buy. Also following a three year trend, shoppers in the Northeast were the most likely to purchase blueberries with 58% of the consumers in the region noting that they had made a blueberry purchase in the past year. The Midwest had the next highest percentage at 47% followed by the Western region at 42% and the South at 39%.

The report also mentions that blueberries tied with Asian pears and pomegranates as the number four item that consumers bought exclusively as organic with 9% of shoppers noting that they only purchased organic blueberries. The likelihood of organic blueberry purchase increased by 5% in 2008 compared to the previous year with 26% of shoppers saying that they purchased organic blueberries "at least some of the time".



USDA REPORT TRACKS BLUEBERRY PRICES AT RETAIL

The USDA Fruit and Vegetable Market News Branch is offering a weekly report of interest to blueberry growers and handlers. The *National Fruit and Vegetable Retail Report* provides weekly-advertised prices for various produce items at major retail supermarket outlets. Blueberries are among the produce items covered in the report.

The USDA Fruit and Vegetable Market News surveys over 200 retailers, comprising approximately 17,000 individual stores, with online weekly-advertised features. The report summarizes weekly produce ad placements and the top produce items featured during the week.

The weekly report includes graphs showing the percent of blueberry advertisements compared to ads for other fresh fruit items during the week; a summary table which shows the number of stores featuring a blueberry ad and average advertised price, along with comparisons to the previous week and the previous year; and the advertised price ranges broken out by regions of the United States.

The *National Fruit and Vegetable Report* can be accessed on the USDA AMS website at:

www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/fvwretail.pdf

REMINDER- 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.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.

POST OFFICE BOX AVAILABLE FOR CONSUMER RECIPE REQUESTS



Blueberry industry members are reminded that the USHBC has a post office box available for consumer use when requesting blueberry recipes and information. Members of the blueberry industry are encouraged to use the following text when inviting consumers to contact the USHBC for blueberry recipes and/or information:

For Blueberry Recipes and Information visit the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council website at www.ushbc.org, or send a self-addressed, stamped (standard business size) envelope to:
Blueberry Recipes
C/o U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council
P.O. Box 1036
Folsom, California 95763

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

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).