



U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council

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For Immediate Release

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U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council Seeks Nominees for State Member Positions

November 16, 2009 (Folsom, Ca.)- Members of the highbush (cultivated) blueberry industry are now seeking nominees to fill U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council (USHBC) state member and alternate positions for the 2011 to 2013 term. The nomination period will begin on January 11, 2010. Current USHBC state member and alternate terms for the top six production states of Michigan, New Jersey, Oregon, Washington, Georgia and North Carolina will expire on December 31, 2010.

Potential nominees are required to complete a USHBC nomination application and forward their application on to the USHBC office by no later than February 15, 2010. Nominations are to be received directly from growers in Michigan. Nominations for the other five state positions, New Jersey, North Carolina, Georgia, Oregon and Washington will be completed by their respective state blueberry councils and commissions.

Nomination applications will be mailed directly to growers in Michigan. Applications are also available on line at the USHBC website at www.blueberry.org, or can be requested by contacting the USHBC office by phone at (916) 983-0111 or by fax at (916) 983-9022. Eligible producer nominees are those who produced 2,000 pounds or more of highbush (cultivated) blueberries in the United States during the period of January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009.

Once the nomination period is closed, a ballot will be prepared listing all nominees. Ballots will then be mailed to growers in Michigan on April 26, 2010. The voting period will be open for 35 days and close on May 31, 2010.

Those receiving the most votes for each producer seat will be recommended to the Secretary of Agriculture as council members. Those who earn the second most votes for each position will be recommended as the alternate. The names of those who receive the third and fourth most votes will be sent on to the Secretary for consideration as well. Council members and alternates will serve a term of three years beginning January 1, 2011. Members and alternates can serve for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

The USHBC has adopted a diversity outreach plan to attempt to achieve a diverse representation on the Council. USHBC programs are open to all individuals without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, genetic information, parental

status and marital or family status. It is USHBC policy that membership on the Council and its committees reflect the diversity of individuals served by its programs.

To accomplish this objective, the USHBC will strive to attain representation of growers and other industry participants from diverse backgrounds on the Council and USHBC committees. To this end, the USHBC strongly encourages women, minorities and persons with disabilities to seek nominations to the USHBC and to participate in Council and USHBC committee activities.

Producers and importers of highbush blueberries approved the establishment of the USHBC through a referendum conducted by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service in the year 2000. The USHBC program was formally established in August of 2000. Support of the Council was reconfirmed by a majority of producers and importers in a continuance referendum conducted in August of 2006. The program is funded by an assessment of \$12 per ton on domestic highbush (cultivated) blueberries and \$12 per ton on fresh and processed imported cultivated blueberries. Market promotion activities funded through the USHBC program began in January of 2002.