

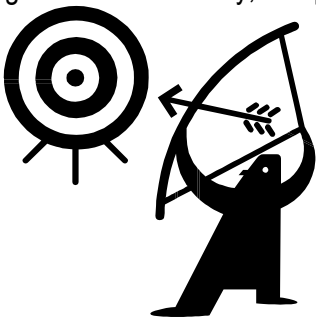
THE USHBC BLUESPAPER

News and Marketing Program Updates from the
U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council
October 2003

USHBC DEVELOPS STRATEGIC PLAN TO DIRECT FUTURE ACTIVITY

The U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council met October 3 and 4, 2003 at the Westin Hotel in Cincinnati, Ohio to establish budgets and develop market development plans for the 2004 season. The Council also finalized the USHBC Strategic Plan that had been initiated at the prior USHBC meeting in Jekyll Island, Georgia this past March.

The USHBC Strategic Plan is designed to provide focus and direction to USHBC actions by developing an overall mission statement and strategic priorities for the Council. With an overall goal of building market demand to support grower profitability, the plan defines the core business of the USHBC as working to keep demand ahead of supply through promotion, research and industry relations and doing so through knowing our product; knowing our consumers today and in the future; knowing our marketing channels and niches; knowing our growers and industry; and promoting the health, quality and safety attributes of blueberries.



From this objective, the USHBC has developed five strategic priorities. The USHBC Research, Promotion and Industry Relations committees have each been assigned strategic priorities and will develop plans and conduct their activities in keeping with these overall goals. Strategic priorities assigned to the USHBC Research Committee are to enhance the consumer perception of the health benefits of blueberries and support sound health related research. The committee is also assigned the responsibility of building the blueberry knowledge base and supporting crop research related to market needs such as timing, flavor, size and nutritional content. The priorities of the USHBC Promotion Committee are to build the

knowledge base on blueberries through consumer, industrial, retail and foodservice market research; retain current and pursue new markets both here at home and abroad; and enhance the consumer perception of the health benefits of blueberries.

It is the responsibility of the USHBC Industry Relations Committee to initiate two-way grower communication with both domestic and foreign blueberry producers; build the knowledge base on blueberries through production and acreage data studies; and to minimize food safety vulnerability within our industry. As the USHBC program progresses, the strategic plan will be consulted and modified as necessary to maintain Council focus on its primary objectives.

MARKET PROMOTION PLANS FOR 2004 PRESENTED AT USHBC FALL MEETING

Market promotion results for 2003 and proposed plans for 2004 were reviewed at the USHBC Fall Meeting this month with a number of new activities discussed and funded for the coming season. Plans include the continuation of the USHBC magazine advertising campaign in 2004 with advertisements placed in the

February 2004 edition of Fitness Magazine (supporting winter sales and fresh imports), the May 2004 edition of Self (supporting early domestic fresh season), and the July edition of Cooking Light (in support of peak domestic fresh sales). In a continued effort to develop the Hispanic market for blueberries, an ad in the July edition of Latina Magazine has been included in the schedule this year. An ad during the peak holiday baking season is also under consideration in the

December issue of Women's Day (supporting frozen and canned blueberries).

Basic elements of the 2003 consumer and foodservice public relations activities will be featured once again in 2004 with the addition of a more aggressive effort directed to foodservice. Plans include blueberry promotions with two our more restaurant and/or hotel chains in 2004.

New program activities also include the development of a health editor press release distributed to 800 newspaper and magazine health editors and writers. This release will provide updates on recent blueberry health research findings. The USHBC will also be developing a Spanish language consumer recipe leaflet with a collection of easy-to-prepare, healthful blueberry recipes made with ingredients familiar to the Hispanic market.

The food manufacturer publicity base program of 2003 continues in 2004 with the addition of heavier trade show activities. The USHBC plans to participate in the *International Baking Industry Exposition (Bakery Expo)* in Las Vegas, Nevada in August of 2004, attended by bakers and food manufacturers from throughout the world. USHBC efforts will focus on the potential for frozen, dried and shelf stable blueberries for product development.

Plans are also underway to take part in the *Institute of Food Technologists (IFT)* national show as well as three regional IFT shows in the West, Midwest and East. Trade show activities will also be expanded to address the Caribbean and Central American markets as the USHBC participates in the *Show of the Americas*, to be held in Miami, Florida. Members of hotel and restaurant foodservice as well as food manufacturers attend this trade show. Attendees also include representatives from Caribbean cruise ship foodservice operations.

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.

ASSESSMENTS DUE NOVEMBER 30

Members of the blueberry industry are reminded that USHBC assessments on 2003 crop blueberries are due on November 30, 2003. Assessment reporting forms were sent to blueberry growers and handlers in September.

Blueberry growers are to complete the *USHBC Grower Report for 2003* noting the amount of blueberries delivered to handlers and the amount of blueberries marketed on their own as a "grower handler". Handlers complete the *USHBC First Handler Report for 2003* noting the amount of blueberries received from growers and the amount of assessments collected and due USHBC.

Grower and handler reports and assessment payments are due to the USHBC by November 30, 2003. Please contact the USHBC at (916) 983-0111 if you have any questions concerning assessments or reporting requirements.

USHBC MEETING SCHEDULE

2004 USHBC Spring Meeting

Friday, February 27 and Saturday, February 28, 2004
Embassy Suites- 100 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, California Phone (916) 326-5000

2004 USHBC Fall Meeting

Friday, October 1 and Saturday, October 2, 2004
Crowne Plaza Philadelphia Center City- 1800 Market Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Phone (215) 561-7500

2005 USHBC Spring Meeting

Friday, February 25 and Saturday, February 26, 2005
Wilmington, North Carolina- Hotel To Be Determined

2005 USHBC Fall Meeting

Friday, October 14 and Saturday, October 15, 2005
Amway Grand Plaza Hotel- 187 Monroe NW
Grand Rapids, Michigan Phone (616) 774-2000

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