

The Council Letter

A Confidential Report to Directors, Members and Chairperson of Council
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WEEKLY HIGHBUSH BLUEBERRY CROP REPORT May 22, 2019

MISSISSIPPI/LOUISIANA – *Eric Stafne*: Very low volumes being harvested now. Southern Highbush harvest is pretty much done. Rabbiteye starts this week with Alapaha but light. Harvest volumes will begin to pick up next week and into first week of June. Hot, humid, and dry weather is ahead with today being the last day in the 80s for the foreseeable future. Several days of 95F are in the forecast for next week. Looks like summer is here for good. No adjustments to overall harvest forecast at this time.

GEORGIA – **No report available this week.** The USDA is reporting 23,030,000 pounds of conventional and 1,720,000 pounds of organic for a total of 24750,000 pounds shipped so far this season.

FLORIDA – *Ken Patterson*: Florida's harvest is officially over. The final numbers from the USDA are 22,027,413 pounds of conventional and 729,410 pounds of organic for a total of 22,756,823 pounds shipped out of Florida this year.

NORTH CAROLINA – *Neil Moore*: Harvest is getting into full swing here, Rebel is third pick on some farms already and Star and Oneal are second pick. New Hanover is first pick this week and Duke will start this weekend. Demand for fruit is good in all packaging sizes and quality is excellent. Machine harvest for fresh has started mainly due to labor shortages. H2A workers supplied by Crew leaders have been held up at border the past couple weeks. H2A workers brought in by Farms have had no problems getting their Visa's approved. Weather has been hotter than normal and dry this season, Hot Temperatures are forecasted for 10 days out reaching the upper 90's to 100. This is unusually hot for late May or early June. Irrigation is being applied regularly. There is pollination and fruit sizing issues being reported on some farms. We don't know yet if this will have effect on crop size this year.

NEW JERSEY – *Denny Doyle*: In New Jersey bees are being removed at this time. Post pollination sprays will start soon. Crop set at this time is good.

INDIANA – *Pat Goin*: In Indiana the rain continues to be a problem. Fields are extremely wet and or flooded. Rain is forecasted for the next 10 days. Temperatures have been cool the last couple of days with daytime temps reaching 52 degrees. Today it is forecasted to be in the low 80's. Berries are developing on early varieties, late season varieties are in full bloom.

MICHIGAN – **No report available this week**

Blueberries

BRITISH COLUMBIA – *Anju Gill*: We are well past full bloom in some regions, approaching full bloom in others. In early variety (slight regional differences), berries are sizing quickly. With cooler temps and some rainfall, as well as nitrogen applications this week, growth and crop development should accelerate. Weather conditions have been good, no serious wet hot humid days to promote fungal infections. Diseases and pests are under control. There are a few reports of mummy berry and leafroller. Growers continue with preventative measures. Crop is looking good so far, harvesting could begin as early as first week of July.

WASHINGTON – *Alan Schreiber*: Washington fruit stages range from late varieties being in stages of pollination to middle to early varieties being in fruit set to fruit sizing. Pollination conditions have been close to ideal. Growers are very positive on how their crops looks across the state. Growing conditions are excellent. There have been reports of significant insect problems particularly in leafrollers in Norwest Washington.

OREGON – *Doug Kraemer*: Oregon has been getting cool damp weather but frequent enough warm and sun to finish up the late blooming varieties. Overall pollination has been excellent, and fruit is sizing well. Some mummy berry concerns on a few farms but overall disease and insect problems are minimal. Irrigation is running on most farms with our harvest labor being our biggest concern at this point.

CALIFORNIA – *Todd Sanders*: California is still lagging behind its normal harvest schedule. Additionally, recent rain and wind has been pounding the state for the last week and is expected to continue. Some loss of the crop is to be expected but the amount is unknown at this point. The CBC will have a crop call this week to discuss. Initial discussions indicate slight loss but not much. The USDA reported California shipped 4,200,000 pounds of conventional fresh and 9,640,000 pounds of organic fresh blueberries this season so far.

MEXICO – The USDA reported that the U.S. imported a total this season through May 22, 2019 of 66,310,000 pounds of conventional fresh from Mexico.

CHILE - The USDA reported that the U.S. imported a total this season through May 22, 2019 of 100,650,000 pounds of conventional fresh from Chile.

ARGENTINA - The USDA reported that the U.S. imported a total this season through May 22, 2019 of 19,140,000 pounds of conventional fresh from Argentina.

PERU - The USDA reported that the U.S. imported a total this season through May 22, 2019 of 67,660,000 pounds of conventional fresh from Peru.

URUGUAY - The USDA reported that the U.S. imported a total this season through May 22, 2019 of 1,500,000 pounds of conventional fresh from Uruguay.

GUATEMALA - The USDA reported that the U.S. imported a total this season through May 22, 2019 of 40,000 pounds of conventional fresh from Guatemala