

The Council Letter

A Confidential Report to Directors, Members and Chairperson of Council
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WEEKLY Highbush BLUEBERRY CROP REPORT

June 19, 2019

MISSISSIPPI/LOUISIANA – *No report available*

GEORGIA – *Alex Cornelius:* Georgia's weather is still wet, with more scattered thunderstorms expected. Majority of fresh harvest is over and should be complete in one to two weeks. Growers are working to stay ahead of the heat and rain. The USDA reported Georgia shipped 36,660,000 pounds of conventional fresh and 2,650,000 pounds of organic fresh blueberries this season so far.

FLORIDA – *Florida's harvest is officially over.*

NORTH CAROLINA – *Neil Moore:* North Carolina has settled into a more normal summer weather pattern, high temps around 90 degrees and scattered showers and thunderstorms. Some farms are still irrigating to supplement inadequate rainfall. The last highbush variety Legacy will finish this week and growers with Rabbiteyes are continuing to harvest for fresh, and processing is limited. Our crop is about ten days ahead of a normal schedule on the backside of our season. The hot weather in May is thought to be the reason we are ahead of normal. The USDA reported North Carolina has shipped 20,030,000 pounds of conventional fresh and 80,000 pounds of organic fresh blueberries this season so far.

NEW JERSEY – *Denny Doyle:* New Jersey is at peak harvest on the Duke variety, most growers are reporting they will be over the first round by the weekend and will move into the Bluecrop variety next week. Labor is being reported short in most areas. Demand and quality are good. The weather has been bumpy the last two days, hoping the showers will clear out by Friday. The USDA reported New Jersey has shipped 2,610,000 pounds of conventional fresh and 60,000 pounds of organic fresh blueberries this season so far

INDIANA – *No report available*

MICHIGAN – *Dave Trinka:* The crop continues to move along very slowly under our cooler than normal weather pattern. Field operations remain challenging in many areas due to the wet soil conditions. Bushes in poorly drained areas are showing signs of stress. More wet weather is in the forecast for the remainder of the week. Growers are applying controls for fruitworm and anthracnose. Still some bloom left in the northern production areas. This will be the latest start to the harvest season in a long while. Duke harvest will get started week 28 in southern Michigan. Fruit is sizing well on most early and midseason varieties. Beginning to see more evidence of poor pollination in late varieties.

BRITISH COLUMBIA – *Anju Gill:* Warmer than normal weather last week has advanced the crop significantly. In eastern regions, first hand harvesting of Duke is likely to start June 24 (mostly small scale for direct sales). Overall, plant health looks good as the disease pressure remains low. Warmer temperatures are causing some concern for berry sizing due to inconsistent soil moisture. Growers are irrigating to keep up with moisture loss. Protective sprays continue. The jury is still out on crop estimation. There are reports of uneven pollination and heat stress in some fields.



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WASHINGTON – *Alan Schreiber*: Eastern Washington has turned cool. Fresh harvest has started and is expected to pick up in volume significantly by the end of the week. Western Washington has turned cool and cloudy and very dry. The extended period of dry weather means growers have to irrigate significantly. Anyone not irrigating fully and properly will have negative impacts on their fruit. There is some mention of fruit not sizing to its full potential. Fresh harvest will start in about a week with processed harvesting to start in two to three weeks. Overall the plants look excellent and fruit crop looks good.

OREGON – *Doug Kraemer*: The hot weather from last week is gone replaced with our typical northwest weather of cool cloudy mornings and nice afternoons. Berries are continuing to ripen, and some growers are planning to begin harvest on Monday. With the cool weather I would anticipate a gradual start lasting all week. Fruit quality is good with only a small percentage of sunburn from last weeks hot days. With the cooler weather it will be important for SWD control. Still looking like an average or better crop.

CALIFORNIA – *Todd Sanders*: The California blueberry season is past its peak and is beginning to slow down in volume. Quality and size have been very good this year, but weather issues diminished the overall size of the crop by about 25%. California expects to be finished harvesting towards the beginning of July but as the temperatures in California increase that could accelerate. The USDA reported California shipped 18,580,000 pounds of conventional fresh and 15,330,000 pounds of organic fresh blueberries this season so far.

MEXICO – The USDA reported that the U.S. imported a total this season through June 15, 2019 of 68,750,000 pounds of conventional fresh from Mexico.

CHILE - The USDA reported that the U.S. imported a total this season through June 15, 2019 of 100,840,000 pounds of conventional fresh from Chile.

ARGENTINA - The USDA reported that the U.S. imported a total this season through June 15, 2019 of 19,190,000 pounds of conventional fresh from Argentina.

PERU - The USDA reported that the U.S. imported a total this season through June 15, 2019 of 67,730,000 pounds of conventional fresh from Peru.

URUGUAY - The USDA reported that the U.S. imported a total this season through June 15, 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 June 15, 2019 of 40,000 pounds of conventional fresh from Guatemala