

The Council Letter

A Confidential Report to Directors, Members and Chairperson of Council
Committees Not for Publication • Not for Quotation

WEEKLY Highbush BLUEBERRY CROP REPORT

June 26, 2019

MISSISSIPPI/LOUISIANA – *Eric Stafne*: Mississippi harvest is coming to an end. Should be complete in the next week or so. It looks like our total harvest will exceed the initial estimate of 1M pounds but not by too much. Most of the fruit has gone fresh. I am still waiting on yield total reports to get a final tally.

GEORGIA – *Alex Cornelius*: Georgia is winding down for the 2019 season. A small amount of fresh Powder Blue is being harvested. Brightwell is being harvested for process market. Weather has been hot and mostly dry. The USDA reported Georgia shipped 39,300,000 pounds of conventional fresh and 2,920,000 pounds of organic fresh blueberries this season so far.

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

NORTH CAROLINA – *Neil Moore*: Most North Carolina growers have finished all Highbush and are currently harvesting Rabbiteye varieties, Premier, Brightwell, Columbus and Powder Blue. Growers are still packing fresh as much as possible. Most labor for hand harvest has moved north and mechanical harvest is now predominant. Volume of fruit is limited because Rabbiteye acreage is decreasing here. Weather is normal summer pattern, although rainfall is still needed on some farms. Irrigation and fertilization is ongoing and other cultural practices as well on Highbush. The USDA reported North Carolina has shipped 20,950,000 pounds of conventional fresh and 80,000 pounds of organic fresh blueberries this season so far.

NEW JERSEY – *Denny Doyle*: New Jersey is finishing second Duke, moving into Blue Crop and Draper. Bumpy weather last week is gone, hotter weather is moving in. The growers are reporting a good market at this time. New Jersey volume will be under control for the next week. The USDA reported New Jersey has shipped 9,900,000 pounds of conventional fresh and 250,000 pounds of organic fresh blueberries this season so far.

WASHINGTON – *Alan Schreiber*: Overall growing conditions in Washington are close to ideal with the exception of lack of precipitation in western Washington necessitating a full irrigation program in order to maintain adequate soil moisture. Weather continues to be cooler than normal but not so cool as to be disruptive. Harvest of fresh blueberries is in full swing in eastern Washington with crop loads being similar to above that of last year. Quality is excellent and most importantly labor supply seems to be adequate. In western Washington, in some limited situations growers have started fresh hand harvest which is remarkably early. The Duke crop seems to be sizing up well. Overall crop ranges from good to excellent. Not aware of any machine harvest for the process market. As our state approaches harvest, weather conditions continue to be favorable and a number of things are lining up to have a high-quality crop in Washington. A shout out from WA and OR that are teaming up for a joint export promotion to Vietnam. The first shipments are on their way, with more growers joining the effort over the next two weeks. Cross your fingers that the U.S. has a significant new market for our fruit.

Blueberries

NORTH AMERICAN BLUEBERRY COUNCIL

1847 Iron Point Rd., Suite 100, Folsom, California 95630-8837 • (916) 983-2279
Fax (916) 983-9370 • E-mail: info@nabcblues.org • Web Site: www.nabcblues.org

OREGON – *Doug Krahmer*: The weather here is on the cooler side, but perfect for sizing the berries as they ripen. Growers started picking as early as Sunday of this week and more growers are joining in on the fun as days go by. There has been reports of soft fruit, probably caused by the two days of high temperatures. Hopefully we will work our way through that and get into good quality fruit going forward. Still looking like an average or little better crop with some fields doing great and a few others not so great. Can't judge the availability of labor yet but should have a good feel by this time next week. The USDA reported Oregon has shipped 410,000 pounds of conventional fresh this season so far.

CALIFORNIA – *Todd Sanders*: California is beginning to trail off our peak. As the weather continues to get warmer the season will start to come to an end. California expects to finalize in the coming weeks. The USDA reported California shipped 20,780,000 pounds of conventional fresh and 15,930,000 pounds of organic fresh blueberries this season so far.

INDIANA – *no report available this week*

MICHIGAN – *no report available this week*

BRITISH COLUMBIA – *no report available this week*

MEXICO – The USDA reported that the U.S. imported a total this season through June 25, 2019 of 69,080,000 pounds of conventional fresh from Mexico.

CHILE - The USDA reported that the U.S. imported a total this season through June 25, 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 25, 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 25, 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 25, 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 25, 2019 of 40,000 pounds of conventional fresh from Guatemala