



Why USHBC Matters to the Future of the Blueberry Industry

The future is bright for blueberries. The most recent valuation (2019) of the farmgate value of the blueberry industry is \$1.32 billion, a 33% increase over the previous year. The industry is expected to continue growing at a double-digit pace through the rest of this decade. Since blueberry growers first founded the USHBC in 2000, the organization has played a strategic role in helping to drive this industry growth, and is the only organization that is 100% focused on growing the volume and value of blueberries in the U.S. and around the world.



As a central organizing force and single collection point for domestic grower, importer and marketer funds, USHBC has grown the size of the blueberry category through investments in consumer marketing and promotions; health benefit research and public relations; access to new global export markets; and the cultivation of year-round supply. The rewards of these collective efforts are significant, and would not have been realized without unified grower guidance and shared industry funding.

Here's a closer look at some of the unique contributions the USHBC has made over the years to drive blueberry demand through comprehensive consumer promotional efforts and programming in retail, foodservice, export and food manufacturing.

USHBC: Driving Industry Growth for Over 20 Years

More households eating more blueberries

- In 2019, 49% of U.S. households purchased blueberries — **a 25% increase in annual household penetration over the previous six years¹**, with USHBC's blueberry health benefit marketing and promotions helping to drive this increase in demand.



Driving blueberry consumption

- Cornell University's 2019 analysis of USHBC's impact on the domestic blueberry market shows that without USHBC promotion activities from 2014 to 2018, **total domestic blueberry consumption would have been 13.5% lower.²**

Creating a superfruit health halo that enhances consumer value

- Since 2000, USHBC has invested in and promoted the results of a \$10M nutrition research pipeline. As a result, **87% of all blueberry earned media coverage in 2020 includes positive health messages, and 86% of registered dietitians and nutrition influencers recommend blueberries to their patients or clients.³**

Sources:

¹Nielsen Homescan Database, 2019

²An Economic Analysis of Domestic Market Impacts of the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council, Harry M. Kaiser, Cornell University, February 1, 2020

³USHBC 2019–2020 Impact Report, 2020; Summer 2019 Survey of 201 Readers of *Today's Dietitian*



“Our working together is what will make us all prosperous in the long term. Togetherness needs to be our focus.”

– Tom Avinelis
Owner of HomeGrown Farms and
managing partner of Agriculture Capital

Expanding export market opportunities for U.S. blueberries

- USHBC has secured millions of dollars in federal grant funds to support export market development for blueberry growers. Since 2019 alone, USHBC has opened Vietnam, China and Philippines for U.S. fresh blueberries, expanding export market opportunities for the industry. **From 2019 to 2020, U.S. highbush blueberry exports increased 22% by volume and 19% by value.**⁴

Maintaining premium pricing

- USHBC’s targeted marketing and PR efforts sustain a **passionate group of consumers who routinely pay an average 30% price premium for fresh blueberries**, relative to other fresh berries.⁵

Increasing blueberry ingredient sales in food manufacturing and product innovation

- **76% of food manufacturer respondents reported using blueberries in their company’s manufactured products**⁶ – higher than any other berry.

More blueberries being sold in restaurants and featured on menus

- Blueberries are now on one in four menus, with **93% more restaurants offering blueberries than in 2005.**⁷ USHBC programming is continuing to drive volume at the foodservice level.

Growing blueberry category sales in grocery retail

- With USHBC’s help, **in 2019 fresh and frozen blueberries set a record for \$2.0 billion in sales at retail.** Fresh blueberries grew in dollar sales by +8% – four times the growth rate of the total produce category where dollar sales grew only +2% in 2019.⁸

Reducing risk through more informed business decisions

- USHBC has increased investment in, and improved industry access to, a range of blueberry market data and analytics from USDA, Nielsen, 8451, Mintel and Category Partners. This data and expert insights are made available through websites, podcasts and e-mail updates, **providing the industry with access to information that helps drive growth.**

BLUEBERRIES ON
1 IN 4
MENUS



Sources:

⁴USDA Foreign Agriculture Service GATS data

⁵Category Partners Nielsen Report, Excel Dashboard w/e 01/04/20 to 01/02/21

⁶2019 USHBC Blueberries in Food Manufacturing Study, Rose Research

⁷2019 Datassentials Menu Mentions Report

⁸2019 Total U.S. Retail Blueberry Performance, Category Partners, March 3, 2020