



USHBC Blueberries in Retail Report: Q3 2021

The total blueberry category, inclusive of both fresh and frozen blueberries, are **up +2.9% in dollars but down -5.6% in volume** for the third quarter of 2021 as compared to the same timeframe in 2020.

Market Situation: During the third quarter of 2021, consumers settled into more “normal” patterns of behavior, including travel, social gatherings, indoor dining, and large-scale events such as concerts and festivals.

While grocery channel dollar sales continue to grow for fresh blueberries, volume sales for fresh and frozen blueberries and dollar sales for frozen are down relative to last year. These declines are likely due to comparisons against a higher level of grocery spending in 2020, driven by stay-at-home orders, foodservice closures, or limited restaurant service.

In addition, 2020’s grocery “stock-up” behaviors and interest in convenient, easy-to-store and easy-to-snack-on healthy foods boosted interest in blueberries – particularly frozen. As we continue to track against 2020’s months of accelerated grocery sales, we do expect to see some softness in blueberry sales numbers, particularly for frozen, but based on the Nielsen data summarized below, volume and dollar sales are expected to outperform 2019 for both fresh and frozen forms.

2.9%↑
IN DOLLARS



Q3 Fresh & Frozen Blueberry Retail Sales: 2021 vs. 2020 and 2019*

Category	Q3 Dollars (\$)	Q3 Dollar % Chg.		Q3 Volume (lbs.)	Q3 Volume % Chg.	
	2021	Vs. 2020	Vs. 2019	2021	Vs. 2020	Vs. 2019
Total	\$657,016,963	+2.9%	+19.4%	156,351,990	-5.6%	+10.1%
Fresh	\$585,872,861	+4.3%	+18.8%	135,083,740	-5.1%	+ 8.7%
Frozen	\$71,144,102	-7.6%	+24.9%	21,268,251	-8.8%	+19.5%

For more research, explore blueberry-specific [Nielsen Reports](#) and [Consumer & Shopper Insights](#).

*Source: Category Partners Nielsen Report, Excel Dashboard for 13 weeks ending 07.03.21 through 09.25.21.

Coordinated Seasonal Promotions Positively Impact Blueberry Sales

As part of [Grab a Boost of Blue](#), a strategic positioning and call to action backed by new tools and consumer research made available on USHBC's [Retail Hub](#), the Council coordinates industry promotion of blueberries during key seasonal periods to resonate with consumers and drive purchases at point-of-sale.

In the first half of 2021, USHBC celebrated four seasonal pushes: Heart Health Month (February), Frozen Food Month (March), Brain Health Month (June) and to kick off the second half of the year, National Blueberry Month (July). Nielsen sales data shows that **the periods of coordinated promotion in the first half of the year had a significant positive impact on total and fresh blueberry volume and dollar sales growth.** On average, incremental sales of total and fresh conventional blueberries during weeks of focused promotion were two to four times the sales measured in weeks outside these intervals.

- **Heart Health Month:** In February, total blueberry dollar sales were +12.4% higher than 2020, which was a year marked by tremendous growth in sales. Volume for the total blueberry category was down slightly by -1.8% compared to 2020, but up +10.2% compared to 2019. This softness in volume vs. 2020 is likely attributed to significant promotion of organic blueberries that took place in 2020, which was not repeated in 2021.
- **Frozen Food Month:** Weekly frozen blueberry sales were 5% higher in March, relative to sales in other weeks during the first half of 2021 and grew at twice the rate relative to March 2019. Frozen Food Month promotions lifted the total blueberry category by +18.4% in volume and +7.0% in dollars compared to March of 2020.
- **Brain Health Month:** In June, total blueberries were up +7.8% in dollars and +2.9% in volume compared to the same period last year. The fresh category in particular saw considerable growth, with volume up by +5.1%, and dollars up by +10.2% vs. 2020.
- **National Blueberry Month:** As a kickoff to the second half of the year, our promotional celebration of National Blueberry Month was associated with an increase of +3.4% in dollar sales of fresh blueberries relative to July of 2020.

The success of these coordinated promotional efforts is all thanks to industry members and retail professionals like you who take part in Grab a Boost of Blue. Leverage our promotional resources and [turnkey content](#) to create more opportunities to win big with blueberries in your stores and online.

There's Still Time: Grab a Boost of Blue in Q4

Haven't had the chance to participate in USHBC's coordinated marketing efforts in 2021? Don't worry – there's still time! Join in the fun with upcoming seasonal promotions:

- **American Diabetes Awareness Month** – Show your support for those impacted by diabetes this November by sharing health-related resources available in our [American Diabetes Awareness Month Toolkit](#).
- **Fall & Winter Holiday Season** – Drive demand for blueberries from Halloween to New Year's by highlighting ways consumers can integrate blueberries into their holiday plans. Explore our [Holiday Toolkit](#) for inspiration & resources to drive sales online and in-stores.

Our downloadable toolkits provide access to a variety of compelling assets – from social graphics to banner ads, recipe cards to tip sheets– everything your team needs to build integrated and unique seasonal promotions. Start inspiring people to Grab a Boost of Blue today!

For more ideas on how to integrate USHBC's assets into your upcoming promotions, visit the USHBC Retail Hub or contact retail@blueberry.org. To receive the latest on blueberries in retail straight to your inbox, [sign up](#) for our monthly retail newsletter.