

**U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council
Blueberry Promotion Research and Information Order**

Council Member Ballot – Florida State Representative

The nominees listed on this ballot are seeking the Florida State Member seat on the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council (USHBC). As a cultivated blueberry grower in the state of Florida you are asked to cast your vote for one Florida state council member or write in the name of your choice for Florida state representative in Section #1 of this ballot.

Please complete this ballot, sign and mail it back to the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council (USHBC) in the enclosed, self-addressed envelope. Ballots must be received by the USHBC no later than close of business on July 25, 2022. Ballots received after that date will not be counted.

USHBC Member Ballot – Florida

Section #1: Florida Producers

Florida State Representatives

Producers from the state of Florida who are producing cultivated blueberries in the state are asked to indicate their choice for state representative here:

Choose one candidate only or provide name of write-in candidate.

FLORIDA REPRESENTATIVE CANDIDATES

- Michael Hill – Mount Dora, Florida
- Brittany H. Lee – Gainesville, Florida
- Patrick Carrol – Bartow, Florida
- Write-in Candidate:

Print Name _____

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**USHBC COUNCIL MEMBER
CANDIDATE STATEMENTS – FLORIDA**

**Michael Hill – Bartow, Florida
Candidate for: USHBC Florida State Member**

I am heavily invested in the blueberry industry, not only with my own farms, but with other farmers who rely on my expertise and knowledge for their livelihood as well. As a large producer of blueberries in Florida, I feel it is my responsibility to actively engage in the council to learn and understand how and where our money as growers should and is being spent.

I am a fourth-generation farmer. I was born and raised in Florida and grew up around the vegetable industry. When I got out of college, I started growing blueberries, and it is all I have ever done in my professional career. We grow, manage and pack about 50% of the state's crop.

**Brittany H. Lee – Gainesville, Florida
Candidate for: USHBC Florida State Member**

Brittany Lee is the Vice President and Farm Manager for Florida Blue Farms, Inc., a 100-acre southern highbush blueberry farm in north central Florida.

As a first-generation farmer, she and her family started their commercial blueberry farm just about a decade ago.

Since then, she has gotten increasingly more involved in the Florida and US Highbush Blueberry Industry and have been a passionate advocate for growers.

Brittany H. Lee currently serves as the Florida Alternate for the USHBC. Prior to this term she served as the Florida delegate for the 2017-2019 term.

She has served on the Executive Board as Treasurer and on the Finance and Good Practices Committees.

Brittany's other involvement in the industry includes serving on USDA's Agriculture Technical Advisory Committee for Trade for Fruits & Vegetables, she is the Executive Director for the Florida Blueberry Growers Association and serves on the Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association Board.

Brittany is committed to supporting the blueberry industry thru USHBC's Mission: To grow consumer demand for blueberries by uniting industry stakeholders through research, promotions and resources that strengthen their ability to compete in the global marketplace.

She is also active in the following organizations: Alachua County Farm Bureau Board of Directors, Florida Farm Bureau, Leadership Florida, Florida Blueberry Growers Association, USHBC, MBG, Farm Credit of Florida, Wedgeworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Junior League, University of Florida Alumni Association, and Connect Florida.

These organizations have offered her a unique platform to advocate for blueberry growers and Brittany respectfully requests your consideration to be re-elected to the USHBC to continue to build on advocacy efforts for you, the grower, at the highest level.

Patrick Carroll – Vice President, Clear Springs Farming, LLC – Bartow, Florida
Candidate for: USHBC Florida State Member

Clear Springs owns a farming, packing, and marketing operation in Bartow, FL. The operations include one of the largest blueberry farms in the state. I have served as Vice President of Clear Springs Farming, LLC since 2017. My goal of serving the USHBC as a council member is to represent Florida's blueberry grower's interest in growing the demand for blueberries.

Section #2 TO BE COMPLETED BY ALL PRODUCERS CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I **certify** that I have produced a minimum of 2,000 pounds of cultivated blueberries at the location listed below during the twelve-month period of January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021:

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Submission of Ballot to USHBC

Once you have completed and signed this ballot, please place this ballot in the enclosed, self-addressed envelope and mail it to the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council. **Incomplete ballots, unsigned ballots, or ballots received after July 25, 2022, will not be counted.**

USHBC Diversity Outreach Policy

The USHBC has adopted a diversity outreach plan to attempt to achieve a diverse representation on the Council. USHBC programs are open to all individuals without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, genetic information, parental status, and marital or family status. It is USHBC policy that membership on the Council and its committees reflect the diversity of individuals served by its programs.

To accomplish this objective, the USHBC will strive to attain representation of growers and other industry participants from diverse backgrounds on the Council and USHBC committees. To this end, the USHBC strongly encourages women, minorities and persons with disabilities to seek nominations to the USHBC and to participate in Council and USHBC committee activities.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0581-0093. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: 1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; 2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or 3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

**U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council
Blueberry Promotion, Research and Information Order
Council Member Ballot Instructions**

The nominees listed on the enclosed ballot are seeking council member positions with the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council (USHBC). Cultivated (highbush) blueberry growers in Florida are asked to cast their vote for the one candidate they wish to represent their state. For your reference and assistance in selecting your representative, background statements from the candidates were requested and are included with this packet.

Voting Period

The voting period for state producer member positions on the USHBC will run from June 20, 2022, to July 25, 2022. In order to be counted, ballots must be received by the USHBC **no later than close of business on July 25, 2022.**

Voter Eligibility

Each person (as defined below) who produced 2,000 pounds or more of cultivated blueberries during the period of January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021 is eligible to vote in the USHBC Member election.

- A. A person means any individual, group of individuals, partnership, corporation, association, cooperative, or any other legal entity.
 - 1. Partnership includes, but is not limited to: (a) a husband and wife who have title to, or leasehold interest in, a blueberry farm as tenants in common, joint tenants, tenants by the entirety, or, under community property laws, as community property, and (b) joint ventures wherein one or more parties to the agreement, informal or otherwise, contributed land and others contributed capital, labor, management, or other services, or any variation of such contributions by two or more parties.

- B. Eligible producer means any person who produced 2,000 pounds or more of blueberries (cultivated) in the United States during the representative period who: (a) Owns, or shares the ownership and risk of loss of, the crop; (b) Rents blueberry production facilities and equipment resulting in the ownership of all or a portion of the blueberries produced; (c) Owns blueberry production facilities and equipment but does not manage them and, as compensation, obtains the ownership of a portion of the blueberries produced; or (d) is a party in a landlord-tenant relationship or a divided ownership arrangement involving totally independent entities cooperating only to produce blueberries who share the risk of loss and receive a share of the blueberries produced. No other acquisition of legal title to blueberries shall be deemed to result in persons becoming eligible producers.

- C. Blueberries means only cultivated blueberries grown in the United States of genus Vaccinium Corymbosum and Ashei, including the northern highbush, southern highbush, and rabbit eye varieties and excluding the lowbush (native) blueberry Vaccinium Angustifolium.

USHBC Member Term of Office

USHBC members and alternates will serve for a term of three years starting January 2023 and will be able to serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. A USHBC member may serve as an alternate during the years the member is ineligible for a member position.

VOTING INSTRUCTIONS:

Voting for State USHBC Members

Producers from the state of Florida are asked to cast a vote for **one** nominee as the state representative on the USHBC. Space is also made available on the ballot for write-in candidates for these Florida state seats as well. As provided for in the Order, which has established the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council, voting for nominees for the remaining seven state positions, will be handled by their state blueberry commissions and councils. Those receiving the most votes for each state producer seat will be designated as the council member. Those receiving the second most votes for each position will be designated as the alternate for that position. The third and fourth top vote getters will also be reported to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture as additional nominees for these positions.

Completing and Submitting the USHBC Election Ballot

Producers are asked to mark their selection of one state representative, or indicate their write-in candidate, on the official USHBC election ballot enclosed with this packet. Voter signature is also required. **Once complete, the ballot is to be sent on to the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council office in the self-addressed envelope provided with this ballot. In order to be counted, your ballot must arrive at the USHBC office no later than the close of business on July 25, 2022. Faxed ballots will NOT be accepted.**

Incomplete ballots, ballots marked with more than one candidate for each position, ballots cast for candidates outside of your state, unsigned ballots, or any ballot received after 5 pm Pacific Time on July 25, 2022, will **not** be accepted.

If you have any questions concerning this USHBC balloting process, please contact the USHBC office at (916) 983-0111 or via email at elections@blueberry.org.