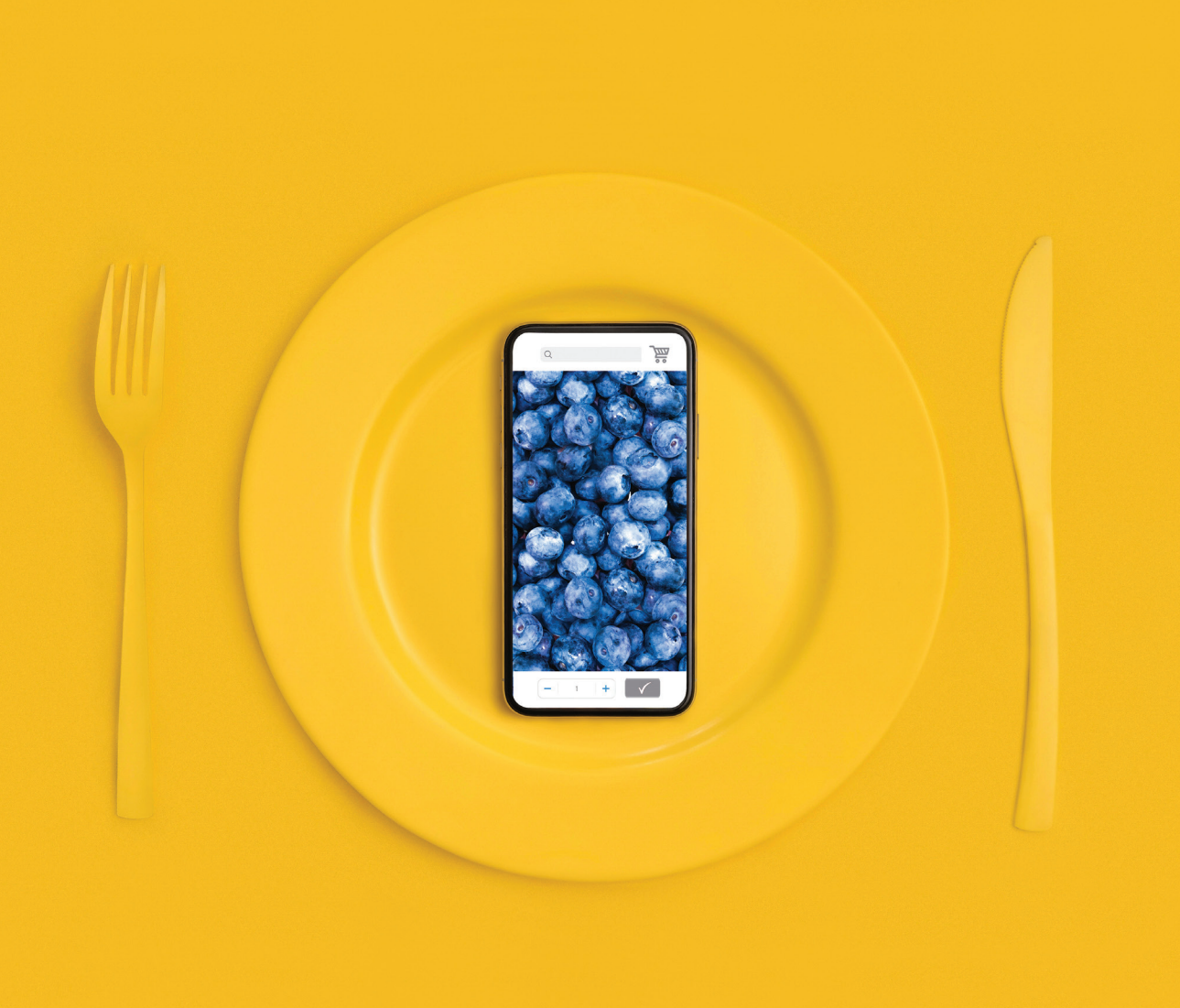


IMPACT REPORT 2024





Vision

USHBC empowers the industry to make blueberries the world's favorite fruit.

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.





Table of Contents

Board and Staff	3
USHBC Committees	4
Programs and Events	5
Consumer Promotions	7
Health Professionals	10
Health Research and Nutrition	11
Retail	12
Foodservice and Food Manufacturing	14
Industry Engagement	15
BerrySmart Initiatives	17
Global Business Development	19

USHBC By the Numbers

FINANCIALS

\$15,638,193

2024 Total Revenue

\$11,604,303

2024 Total Expenses

2024 REVENUE SOURCES

\$4,700,508

Domestic Crop Assessments

\$6,996,682

Foreign Crop Assessments

\$707,628

Grant Revenue

\$3,050,143

Contributions

\$183,232

Other Revenue

MOU Funding

The USHBC also benefited from the work of the NABC's United Blueberry Advisory Committee in 2024, and the continued commitment to the industry's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that guides cross-industry incremental funding to support fresh and processed blueberry demand-driving activities across multiple channels. The MOU raised over \$3.3 million, with over \$3.0 million going to USHBC to increase demand-driving marketing opportunities, advance nutrition affairs and improve the blueberry industry's data and analytics.

Who We Are



From National Blueberry Month to a Major League Pickleball sponsorship to leveraging key activation periods, 2024 provided a host of new inspiring possibilities for blueberries. No matter the audience or channel, USHBC's efforts were laser focused on driving demand for blueberries and encouraging established blueberry fans to enjoy more of the fruit they love!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shelly Hartmann".

Shelly Hartmann
USHBC CHAIR



Our efforts to boost global passion for blueberries were at peak levels in 2024. From direct consumer marketing to retail campaigns to social media to e-commerce, the USHBC was both creative and steadfast in its efforts to sustain consumer enthusiasm and encourage more people to Grab a Boost of Blue!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kasey Cronquist".

Kasey Cronquist
USHBC PRESIDENT

Board and Staff

STATES

CALIFORNIA

Member, Doug LaCoix
Alternate, Bill Steed

FLORIDA

Member, Brittany Lee
Alternate, Michael Hill

GEORGIA

Member, Tammy Brannen
Alternate, Vacant

MICHIGAN

Member, Dennis Vander Kooi
Alternate, George Fritz Jr.

NEW JERSEY

Member, Paul Macrie III
Alternate, Chelsea Consalo

NORTH CAROLINA

Member, Jimmy Horrell
Alternate, Kristen Brinkley

OREGON

Member, Doug Krahmer
Alternate, Ellie Norris

WASHINGTON

Member, Bryan Sakuma
Alternate, Leif Olsen

REGIONS

REGION 1 (WEST)

Member, Nathan Sakuma
Alternate, Anne Steinkamp

REGION 2 (MIDWEST)

Member, Shelly Hartmann
Alternate, Katelyn Craig

REGION 3 (NORTHEAST)

Member, Dave Arena
Alternate, Art Galletta

REGION 4 (SOUTH)

Member, Jody McPherson
Alternate, Michael Thomas

IMPORTERS, EXPORTERS AND PUBLIC MEMBERS

IMPORTER #1

Member, Bonnie Lundblad
Alternate, Vacant

IMPORTER #2

Member, JC Clinard Jr.
Alternate, Guy Cotton

IMPORTER #3

Member, Ryan Lockman
Alternate, Andrew Maiman

IMPORTER #4

Member, Joe Barsi
Alternate, Bo Slack

EXPORTER 1 (CHILE)

Member, Felipe Silva
Alternate, Sebastian Carmona

EXPORTER 2 (CANADA)

Member, Mark Adams
Alternate, Ray Biln

EXPORTER 3 (PERU)

Member, Daniel Bustamante
Alternate, Jose Antonio Castro

EXPORTER 4 (MEXICO)

Member, Jose Luis Bustamante
Alternate, Jose Guillermo Romo

PUBLIC MEMBER

Member, Amy Howell
Alternate, Bill Cline

USHBC STAFF

President, Kasey Cronquist

Vice President of Marketing and Communications, Kevin Hamilton

Vice President of Engagement and Education, Amanda Griffin

Senior Director of Nutrition and Health Research, Leslie Wada, Ph.D.

Director of Government Affairs, Alyssa Houtby

Director of Global Business Development, Haiying Zhang

Director of Marketing, Inez Be

Director of Communications, Kristy Babb

Director of Meetings and Events, Stacy Schlags

Director of Business Intelligence, Joe Vargas

Director of Organizational Development, People and Culture, Andrea Walters

Director of Operations, Julie Fogarty

Director of Finance, Jared Ruggles, CPA

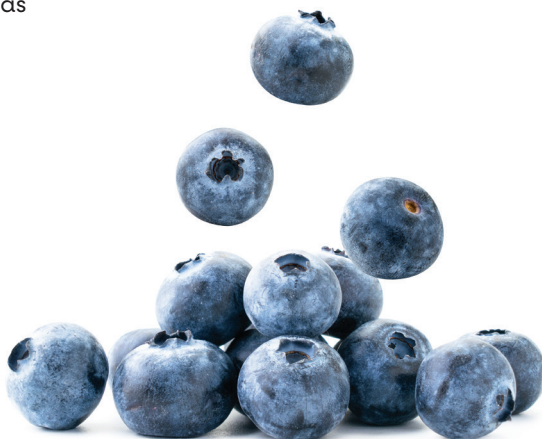
Industry and Community Engagement Manager, Mandy Boarman

Communications and Digital Content Coordinator, Gabriella Gebhardt

Finance and Administrative Specialist, Holly Leslie

Compliance Coordinator, Crystal Wills

Administrative Assistant, Lisa Buckmaster



USHBC Committees

EXECUTIVE

Shelly Hartmann, **Chair**
Bryan Sakuma, **Vice Chair**
JC Clinard, **Treasurer**
Joe Barsi, **Secretary**
Daniel Bustamante, **Member at Large**
Art Galletta, **Past Chair**

FINANCE

JC Clinard, **Chair**
Tom Bodtke
George Fritz Jr.
Art Galletta
Bill Steed
Tracy Umbenhour

PROMOTION

Brian Bocock, **Chair**
Nathan Sakuma, **Vice Chair**
Doug LaCroix
Katelyn Craig
Chad Don
Alec Arena
Darren Sin
Bonnie Lundblad
Kyla Oberman
Gonzalo de Elizalde
Jeff Malensky
Steve Philips
Amy Nguyen
Doug Rombach
Ray Biln
Juan Flores
Felipe Silva
Daniel Bustamante
Joe Barsi, HR Advisory Board Liaison
Mario Flores, Global Business
Advisory Board Liaison

FOODSERVICE SUBCOMMITTEE (PROMOTION)

Kyla Oberman, **Chair**
Ray Biln
Stephanie Kleiner
Josh Scheel
Bruce Turner
Brian Bocock

RETAIL SUBCOMMITTEE (PROMOTION)

Natha Sakuma, **Chair**
Gonzalo de Elizalde, **Vice Chair**
Karen Brux
Jody McPherson
Joseph Klock
Bonnie Lundblad

FOOD MANUFACTURING SUBCOMMITTEE (PROMOTION)

Steve Philips, **Chair**
Jeff Malensky, **Vice Chair**
Chad Don
Karan Kohli
John Shelford
Felipe Silva

GLOBAL BUSINESS ADVISORY BOARD

Mario Flores, **Chair**
Cort Brazelton, **Vice Chair**
Andres Armstrong
Doug Rombach
Terry Fasel
Cristian Vivanco

HEALTH RESEARCH ADVISORY BOARD

Mark Sweeney, **Chair**
Joe Barsi, **Vice Chair**
Lindsay Bodtke
Amy Howell
Tammy Brannen
Dave Brazelton

INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Bo Slack, **Chair**
Tom Bodtke, **Vice Chair**
Mark Adams
Doug Krahmer
Jody McPherson
Andrew Maiman
Bryan Sakuma
Felipe Silva
Anna Jesse
Denny Vander Kooi
Luis Miguel Vegas
Ken Patterson

BERRYSMART TECHNOLOGY TASK FORCE

Noel Sakuma, **Chair**
Paul Macrie, **Vice Chair**
Markus Duran
Chad Hansen
Mike Mainland
Anne Steinkamp

BERRYSMART FOOD SAFETY TASK FORCE

Chelsea Consalo, **Chair**
Risa Bakker
Kristen Brinkley
Lisa Winther
Mikala Hughes
Jennifer Pulcifer

BERRYSMART SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE

Pat Goin, **Chair**
Christy Butler
Cecilia Allende
Brian Knight
Rajendra Gangavarapu
Creela Hamlin



Programs and Events



The Blueberry Convention

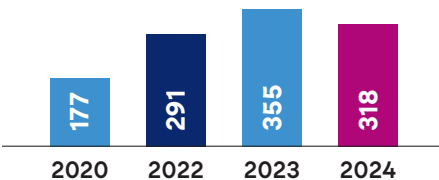
FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 1, 2024
TUCSON, ARIZONA

The blueberry industry gathered at The 2024 Blueberry Convention in Tucson to connect, participate in critical professional learning and network during social events, including the Grab a Boost of Blue Golf Tournament. Dozens of educational sessions covered the hottest industry topics, including blueberry growth in retail, growing profitable demand and advancements in blueberry harvesting.

By the Numbers

★ 318 attendees ★ 27 exhibitors

Attendees 2020-2024



The Blueberry Summit

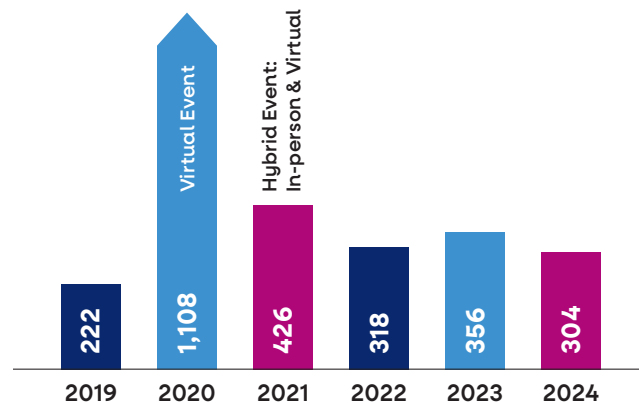
SEPTEMBER 25-27, 2024
DENVER, COLORADO

The 2024 Blueberry Summit brought the blueberry industry to Denver for knowledge building and networking. The event included deep dives into how blueberries can drive the retail basket, harnessing data to drive decision-making, blueberry health research and retailers' requests of the blueberry industry. The attendees had the opportunity to stroll down Blueberry Lane and visit with exhibitors offering solutions to better their businesses. Plus, industry luminaries were honored during our NABC Awards ceremony and reception.

By the Numbers

★ 304 attendees ★ 28 exhibitors

Attendees 2019-2024



Programs and Events



Blueberry Leadership Program

In 2024, USHBC's Blueberry Industry Leadership Program graduated its second class of fellows at The Blueberry Summit in Denver. The group spent its year of fellowship learning about opportunities for innovation and technology, discovering new pathways for blueberries in the value-added category and gaining critical leadership skills. Fellows also met with industry veterans and thought leaders to further expand their industry knowledge and experience. The class also completed its Capstone Project, an online resource page that provides growers with a one-stop shop for information on federal and state programs on topics like farm loans, disaster assistance, risk management, sustainable agriculture, food safety and more. This resource library will help growers reduce the time they would otherwise have to spend searching for this information on their own. It also helps highlight and emphasize the importance of these efforts as an industry by providing a consistent set of resources everyone can refer to.

CLASS 2 GRADUATES

- Cecilia Allende, Sunny Valley International
- Chad Don, Oasis Farms Inc.
- Joseph Klick, Naturipe Farms
- Ben Lahr, Driscoll's
- Kolby Lewis, Blue Raeven Farms
- Katuska Morales, Camposol S.A.
- Sarah Quackenbush, North Bay Produce Inc.
- Ranjeet Randhawa, Ph.D., Fall Creek
- Kyle Straughn, Straughn Farms
- Joel Whitehead, Wish Farms



In addition to graduating the second class, the program welcomed a third class of fellows. The class was presented to the industry at The Blueberry Summit, and their fellowship kicked off with leadership skills training. In 2025, class 3 will continue its journey with expanded learning content and trips to USHBC and NABC meetings, The Blueberry Convention and an international trade-related trip.

CLASS 3 FELLOWS

- Yvan Berrospi, Family Tree Farms
- Gabriel Bocock, Bumbleberry Acres
- Joshua Carlton, JLC Farms
- Sergio Carrasco, The Fruitist Company
- Jake Johnson, Fall Creek
- Stephanie Kleiner, Driscoll's
- Peter Machala, Wakefern Food Corp.
- Brody Schropp, MBG Marketing
- Zach Semerikov, Scenic Fruit
- Jessica Silver, United Exports Sales and Marketing



Consumer Promotions

Grab a Boost of Blue

To remind consumers of the healthy boost they get from a handful of blueberries, USHBC's strategic positioning and call to action, "Grab a Boost of Blue," was featured in advertising, at point of sale, in social media channels and on packaging.

MAJOR LEAGUE PICKLEBALL PARTNERSHIP

USHBC partnered with Major League Pickleball (MLP) for its 2024 season, promoting blueberries as "The Official Fruit of Major League Pickleball" among a growing base of pickleball fans. As the first-ever produce commodity to partner with the premier organization for professional co-ed team pickleball, USHBC deployed a multichannel marketing campaign to boost awareness of blueberries for healthy and active lifestyles among pickleball enthusiasts.

- ★ 41 ads on linear sports channels, including Fox Sports 1 and ESPN 2.
- ★ Logo and messaging at 11 MLP events across the country, including major markets like New York, Las Vegas and Atlanta.
- ★ Earned media of blueberries as the official fruit of pickleball in popular consumer food and lifestyle media outlets, like Martha Stewart Online, Tasting Table and VegNews.

NATIONAL BLUEBERRY MONTH

In one of the most exciting celebrations of National Blueberry Month yet, USHBC partnered with Major League Eating to host the first-ever blueberry eating competition in Grand Rapids, Michigan, at the MLP Mid-Season Tournament. Pickleball fans and locals attended the event to watch competitive eaters devour as many blueberries as possible in a short amount of time. The winner, Patrick Bertoletti, took the top prize after eating a staggering 18.475 lbs of blueberries.

To extend the excitement beyond the event, we also hosted the Great American Blueberry Challenge Social Media Contest, asking fans to share creative ways they enjoy blueberries for a chance to win \$10K. We then promoted the contest through influencer partnerships, paid social, digital ads and earned media, including Forbes.

- ★ 1.8 billion earned media impressions across wide-reaching outlets like Forbes, MSN and Yahoo! News.
- ★ Social contest garnered 8.8 million impressions and 1.9 million engagements among 7.2 million people.

**8 competitors
ate 80 lbs of
blueberries in
8 minutes!**



Consumer Promotions

Digital Advertising/Paid Media: Display, SEM, Paid Social

Paid media results well exceeded 2023 metrics, with a more efficient cost per mille (CPM) across tactics overall. Paid display and search engine marketing (SEM) campaigns used seasonality, recipes and how-to/DIY curiosity to promote blueberry interest and usage.

- ★ In display advertising, National Blueberry Month and blueberry drinks/cocktails content enjoyed the highest click through rates (CTR), while football/game-day snacks content saw the highest rate of engagements.
- ★ Football and game-day keywords also significantly outperformed in SEM with a CTR of 17.27% (nearly three times the CTR overall average).
- ★ Keyword ad groups for blueberry muffins, frozen blueberries and pie recipes also performed well in SEM.

Display Advertising and SEM Metrics:

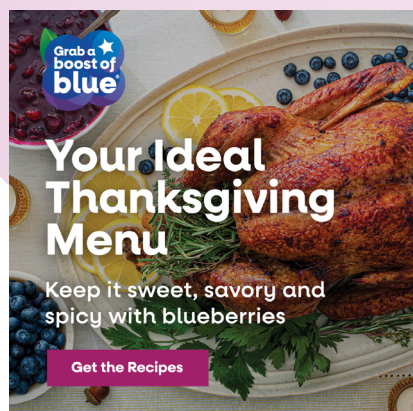
- ★ 14,562,502 impressions
- ★ 224,861 clicks to website
- ★ 2,352 engagements (shares, prints and subscribes)

Paid social advertising promoted seasonal blueberry recipe and snack inspiration throughout the year, and amplified content for pickleball and National Blueberry Month to drive participation in activations. Despite Meta's rising ad costs and targeting limitations, paid social performed exceptionally well, exceeding benchmarks by more than three times.

- ★ Not only did this channel greatly surpass metrics from the previous year, it did so more efficiently – CPM dropped from \$1.36 to \$1.27 for awareness ads, and from \$6.44 to \$3.44 for engagement ads.
- ★ Top performing ads of the year were timely blueberry recipe and usage inspiration ads that aligned with seasonal moments throughout the year, such as grilling in the summer and pumpkin recipes in the fall.
- ★ Paid social resulted in 80,788 link clicks to Blueberry.org.

Paid Social Metrics:

- ★ 46,554,077 impressions
- ★ 18,375,799 reach
- ★ 3,671,697 engagements



Consumer Promotions

Social Media and Influencers

USHBC's strategic content strategy across core social media channels continued driving connection with an online community of blueberry fans by inspiring usage occasions, sharing health benefits and showcasing blueberries as a part of everyday and active lifestyles, including among pickleball enthusiasts. This was amplified through influencer partnerships that extended our overall reach and boosted brand awareness to our target audiences. Influencers also helped create new assets for USHBC to use as owned content on our website and other digital platforms, sharing key messages about blueberries delivered in a creative and authentic way.

Social media and influencer metrics well exceeded benchmarks, with virtually the same CPM compared to the previous year. Easy, creative recipes and simple blueberry snack ideas continued to outperform.

A recipe for a blueberry Greek yogurt bark made using a pop-it tray went viral on Facebook, garnering over 11.8 million organic impressions and 13 million views.

Total social media and influencer performance across channels:

- ★ 64,835,065 impressions
- ★ 53,974,582 reach
- ★ 6,364,793 engagements

Earned Media

Beyond MLP and National Blueberry Month earned media efforts, USHBC conducted outreach to national consumer lifestyle outlets to place stories with a healthy lifestyle focus, helping keep blueberries top of mind among target consumers throughout the year. Working with registered dietitians with media relationships enabled us to leverage third-party credibility to sustain the blueberry health halo and promote blueberries' health benefits.

Top placements appeared on Today.com (26M reach), Yahoo! (424M reach) and Parade (22M reach).

Earned media successes included:

- ★ 1,463,065,804 impressions
- ★ 877,839,482 reach
- ★ 100% positive sentiment

'I'm a Registered Dietitian, and This Is the Type of Fruit Everyone Over 60 Should Eat Multiple Times a Week'

Added bonus? It tastes great.
MACKENZIE BURGESS, RD • AUG 28, 2024




TODAY

yahoo!

Parade

Health Professionals

USHBC developed a new Food as Medicine Toolkit to serve as a resource for health professionals and retailers, promoting blueberries for healthy lifestyles at a time when half of American adults have one or more preventable chronic diseases. Broadly defined as the integration of food and nutrition interventions into the health care system, the Food as Medicine movement is a transformative approach to health, wellness and disease prevention.

Given the growing body of scientific evidence demonstrating that blueberries may play a role in supporting positive health outcomes, USHBC is well positioned to help socialize the concept of Food as Medicine and lead the charge for produce in this initiative. The Food as Medicine Toolkit included a new tip sheet, display ad and social graphics with accompanying caption copy and recipe cards.



A Daily Dose of Blueberries

Fruits and vegetables have essential nutrients to support health and well-being

"Let food be thy medicine" is a proverb often attributed to Hippocrates from 400 BC. This concept is experiencing a resurgence and is now central to the federal strategy to end hunger, reduce diet-related diseases and reduce healthcare costs. Today, Food as Medicine, broadly defined as the integration of food and nutrition interventions into the healthcare system, is poised to be a transformative approach to health, wellness and disease prevention.

Why is Food as Medicine suddenly rising to the forefront? Poor nutrition is associated with an epidemic of food-related diseases. In fact, about half of all American adults — or 117 million individuals — have one or more preventable chronic disease, many of which are related to poor-quality eating patterns and physical inactivity. These include cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, some cancers, and poor bone health.¹

117MM

people have one or more preventable chronic disease¹

GrabABoostOfBlue.com



These startling statistics are what led the government to convene The White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health in 2022, which brought renewed attention to the Food as Medicine movement. The conference catalyzed nearly \$10 billion in private and public sector commitments to support improved nutrition and health, including many initiatives to scale Food as Medicine programs. Most recently, Instacart and the U.S. Dept of Health & Human Services announced a new public-private partnership to support and scale food as medicine interventions, including by increasing access to nutritious food and offering the tools needed to support better health and wellbeing for individuals and families across the country.²

Produce Prescriptions

While there is no specific "Food as Medicine" diet, fruits and vegetables are a cornerstone of published recommendations to date. That's why produce prescription programs have allowed providers to prescribe fruits and vegetables to patients with diet-related diseases or those facing food insecurity. Produce prescriptions are typically provided as vouchers or debit cards for free or discounted produce, distributed by healthcare providers, and can be redeemed at various locations.

Prescription Pick-Up in the Produce Aisle

A daily dose of blueberries can help support better health.



A Daily Dose of Blueberries

Fruits and vegetables have essential nutrients to support health and well-being.



The Protective Power of Blueberries

Essential nutrients for overall health.



Health Research and Nutrition

With over \$1.2 million in the pipeline of ongoing research, the USHBC continues to invest in ensuring that the blueberry health halo shines brightly with consumers.

BLUEBERRIES AND LOWERED RISK OF EYE DISEASE IN WOMEN

In a study of more than 39,000 women, a research team at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School found that moderate blueberry intake was linked to a lower risk of age-related macular degeneration (AMD) in a group of middle-aged and older women. Women who ate one or more servings of blueberries weekly saw a 28% decrease in total AMD. The primary flavonoid in most berries, anthocyanins, has potent antioxidant effects. This is relevant to eye health and vision preservation because oxidative stress can contribute to the development of age-related eye disorders.

FLAVONOID-RICH FRUITS LINKED TO REDUCED DEMENTIA RISK: INSIGHTS FROM THE FRAMINGHAM HEART STUDY

Flavonoids, compounds found in various fruits, are associated with positive health effects. This study looked at consumption of fruits rich in flavonoids, such as blueberries, over a 23-year period, and studied the relationship between consumption and brain health. The 2,790 participants were part of the Framingham Heart Study, a long-running study tracking generations of participants for cardiovascular and brain health outcomes. The study found that high intakes of specific fruits such as **blueberries**, apples, pears, grapefruit, peaches, apricots or plums during late life (60-80 years) were associated with a decreased risk of all-cause dementia and Alzheimer's disease dementia.

Nutrition Experts Provide 'State Of The Science' on Blueberry Health Benefits

The USHBC held its first Research Roundtable in Washington, D.C., to discuss the science behind the effect of blueberries in five research domains: cardiovascular health, prediabetes and diabetes, brain health and cognitive function, gut health and exercise recovery. A research paper presented at the event shared the views of experts on research gaps related to blueberries, and provided recommendations for future research direction.

Developing a Health Research Strategic Plan

In April, members of the Health Research Advisory Board met with two members of the Scientific Advisory Board, USHBC Chair Shelly Hartmann and members of the Executive Committee, Promotion Committee Chair Brian Bocock and staff members to discuss developing a strategic plan for the future of the USHBC health research program. There was consensus that research areas funded by the USHBC should be aligned with market-rich opportunities, and that prior to funding new proposals, the USHBC would work with a consulting firm to determine future research areas that would most likely lead to increased blueberry consumption.



Retail

In 2024, USHBC strengthened blueberry sales through e-commerce marketing, strategic partnerships and retailer collaborations that amplified the Grab A Boost of Blue message. Retailers were equipped with turnkey marketing resources, customized point-of-sale (POS) materials, and toolkits to support seasonal campaigns and power-period promotions, driving consumer engagement across regions and nationally. These efforts contributed to record-breaking sales performance, significant weekly sales increases during promotional periods, and a notable lift in category sales and new customer acquisition.

Program Highlights

USHBC's retail efforts were strategically aligned with key activation periods to maximize reach and impact:

- ★ Q1: Health Forward
- ★ Q2: Summer Kickoff and Mother's Day
- ★ Q3: National Blueberry Month
- ★ Q4: Football Healthy Snacking

Campaigns incorporated both regional and national scopes, and retailer participation expanded in 2024:

NATIONAL

- ★ Albertsons/Safeway
(Corporate and select divisions: Northern California, Portland, Jewel Osco)
- ★ AHOLD (Corporate and select banners: Food Lion, Giant Landover, Giant Carlisle, Giant Martin's)
- ★ COSTCO
- ★ Kroger (Corporate and all divisions)
- ★ IGA
- ★ Sam's Club
- ★ Target
- ★ Walmart

SUPER REGIONAL

- ★ Demoulas/Market Basket
- ★ Giant Eagle
- ★ H-E-B
- ★ Lunds & Byerly's
- ★ Meijer
- ★ Publix
- ★ Raley's
- ★ Schnucks
- ★ Smart & Final
- ★ Spartan Nash
- ★ Sprouts
- ★ Stater Bros
- ★ Tops/Price Chopper
- ★ United Texas
- ★ Wakefern/ShopRite

HYPER LOCAL

- ★ Coburn's
- ★ Dierbergs
- ★ Gelson's
- ★ Harps
- ★ K-VAT/Food City
- ★ Lunds & Byerly's
- ★ Nugget/Food 4 Less
- ★ Redner's
- ★ Rouses
- ★ Weis



Shopper Marketing Tactics

USHBC's campaigns leveraged a diverse range of tactics to engage consumers, including:

- **In-store promotions:** Contests, secondary displays, POS materials and audio advertising.
- **Digital campaigns:** Banner ads, sponsored search, e-blasts and social media outreach (live events, influencer campaigns, boosted posts).
- **Sampling:** Both in-store and through eCommerce platforms, integrated with shoppable recipes and multi-departmental POS materials.
- **Cross-promotions:** Partnerships with the California Milk Advisory Board and California Walnut Commission.

This integrated omni approach, combining regional and national activations, effectively increased trial, repeat purchases and loyalty, securing blueberries as a staple in seasonal and everyday shopping baskets.



Retail

E-Commerce/Instacart

In order to verify the actual impact of Instacart as an effective e-commerce platform, USHBC conducted a proof-of-concept test to determine if, and by how much, Instacart sponsored product ads drive incremental sales for blueberries.

With a total investment of \$48.6K in a six-week period, the test demonstrated:

- ★ 8.5 incremental sales lift.
- ★ Incremental return on ad spend (ROAS) of \$2.13 for every dollar invested.
- ★ \$103.3K in incremental revenue generated that would not have been actualized without Instacart sponsored product ads.

Powered by



As with all marketing efforts, USHBC will continue to measure and report on the true impact of e-commerce campaigns moving forward.

Foodservice and Food Manufacturing

A reassessment of budgets required us to critically evaluate our strategy in the foodservice and food manufacturing channels in 2024. While there was progress made with operators in using blueberries in Limited Time Offer (LTO) opportunities, they were not expected to be volume-driving partnerships.

Moving forward, USHBC's strategy will be laser focused on securing sales-driven partnerships in foodservice to move as much volume as possible, in order to expand market reach and achieve sustainable growth. USHBC will also leverage the food manufacturing channel to create demand-driving excitement and interest for blueberries as an ingredient.

LTO opportunity at Culver's to celebrate their 40th anniversary during National Blueberry Month.



Industry Engagement

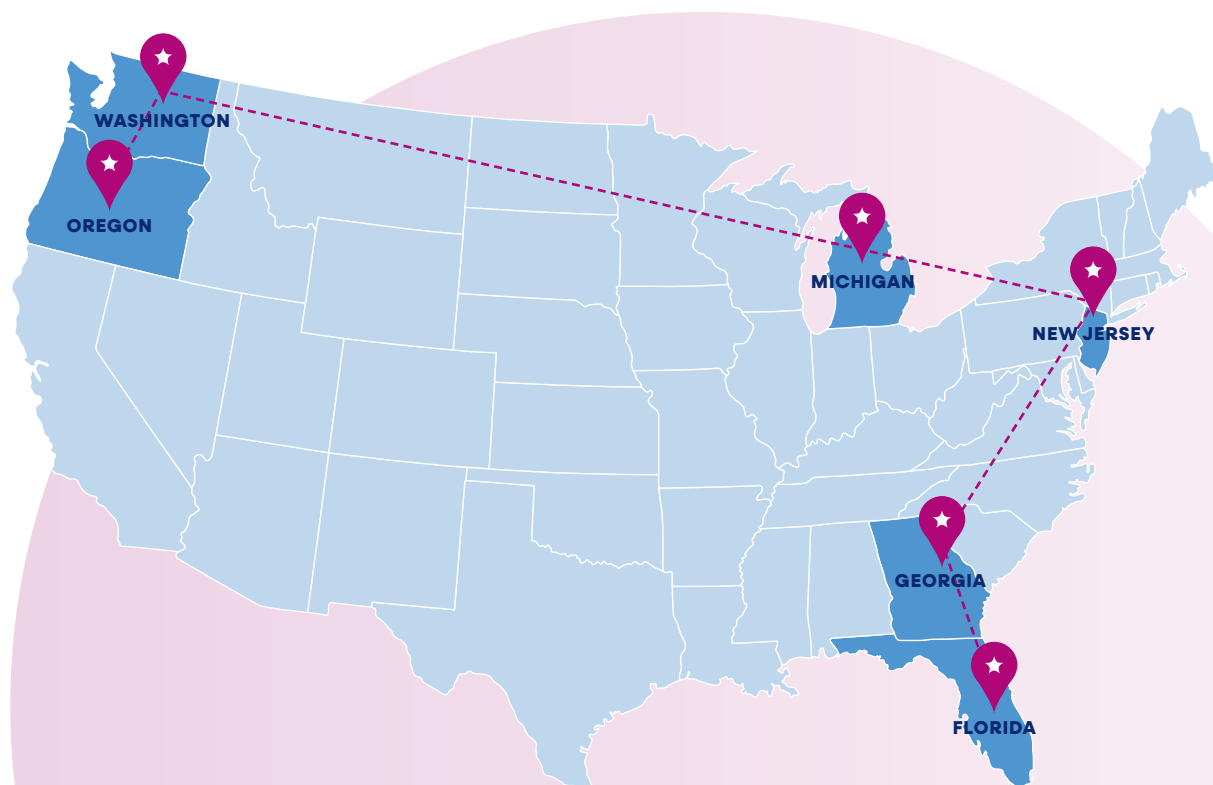
USHBC's Industry Relations program engaged blueberry growers and industry stakeholders, and provided valuable content across a variety of communications channels. In 2024, the industry relations program leveraged the following tactics:

- ★ Delivered nine issues of the **Behind The Blue** newsletter. The open rate remained strong, growing 10 points to 46.3% compared to 2023. The top performing issues highlighted coverage of National Blueberry Month and The Blueberry Summit.
- ★ Led media relations efforts that garnered articles in key trade publications, including The Packer, Fresh Fruit Portal, Produce Blue Book, The Produce News, Fruit Growers News and FreshPlaza.
- ★ Hosted a series of regional engagement meetings to discuss the success of USHBC's efforts and lead an exploratory discussion around a potential assessment increase.

The USHBC website continued to see strong traffic in 2024, with over 14,000 visitors and nearly 51,000 page views. Top pages were the homepage, the Data and Insights Center, and events pages. Downloads were also strong, with a total of 3,692.



2024 REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS



Industry Engagement

Podcast Reaches Listeners Worldwide

“The Business of Blueberries” podcast reached a milestone of 100,000+ all-time downloads, with just under 17,000 downloads in 2024 alone. Thirty-three episodes were produced in 2024.

The most popular episodes in 2024 were:

- ★ “The Changing Blueberry Landscape With Cort Brazelton”
- ★ “The Pursuit of More Flavorful Fruit With David Jackson”
- ★ “Why Frutura Is Betting Big on Berries With David Krause”

COUNTRIES THAT TUNED IN



“ You just have to have a pulse to understand what the potential consumption and how much the growth in this particular area has been. When you’re in fresh produce and you think about, you know, the growing categories, you have to be in blueberries, right? It’s just so much runway, and at the same time, it’s such an interesting space. – David Krause, CEO Frutura

“ Our mission statement is to consistently produce, package and market the most flavorful fruit in the world. We say that because we know who we sell to, but we always keep in mind that our end customer is that consumer, that person, who puts that fruit in their mouth and says, ‘Wow, that’s the most flavorful thing. That’s the best thing I’ve ever eaten.’ We have chosen to differentiate ourselves with flavor, and that comes down to just genetics. – David Jackson, Family Tree Farms



BerrySmart Initiatives

BerrySmart Initiatives

In 2024, the USHBC continued its focus on providing accurate and insightful data to guide blueberry industry decision-makers in making critical business calls. This work showcases the council's emphasis on the use of data to track the effectiveness of efforts to increase the production, sales and value of the blueberry crop produced for U.S. consumption and export markets, and the sales and value of blueberries imported to the U.S.

BERRYSMART INSIGHTS

This year marked the launch of the BerrySmart Insights Fresh Forecast portion of the BerrySmart Insights platform. This new feature will help guide the industry and provide a necessary forward look at anticipated sales volumes from imports and domestic supply. The platform is supported by blueberry industry growers and marketers who provide access to their production, sales and pricing data. This data is aggregated and anonymized in real time to provide an up-to-date benchmark of the fresh blueberry market in the U.S. Contributing growers and marketers use BerrySmart Insights to compare their performance and inform marketing and pricing efforts.

Participating companies include: Driscoll's, North Bay Produce, Wish Farms, H&A Farms, California Giant, NuBerry, Walker Bros, Family Tree Farms, Berry Fresh, Camposol, United Exports, Good Farms, Fruitist and Hortifruit..

This advancement in technology and innovation, available to the blueberry industry as a whole, was made possible with support from our MOU signatories.



Joe Vagas, USHBC Director of Business Intelligence

BerrySmart Initiatives

BERRYSMART FIELD

The USHBC also continued its work with BerrySmart Field, a collaborative experience among growers, researchers and tech providers to optimize blueberry farming operations by focusing on soil, soil nutrients, disease, yield distribution, weather, chemicals and labor throughout the growing season.

Through this initiative, USHBC works in partnership with innov8.ag to validate a smart farm network that enables blueberry growers, packers and stakeholders in sales, tech and research to collaborate on farm operation optimization, with better and more predictable yield outcomes.



BERRYSMART FOOD SAFETY

In partnership with the BerrySmart Food Safety Task Force, the USHBC launched a Food Safety Resource page for growers to access and stay updated on all food safety-related issues. The USHBC also hosted an informational webinar on the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) final rule on preharvest agricultural water.



Global Business Development

The USHBC Global Business Development program made significant strides on behalf of the industry through a range of strategies aimed at increasing consumer demand for blueberries overseas. In 2024, the council's efforts in international markets netted the following notable impacts:

MARKET SEGMENTATION

Strategically categorized international markets for USA blueberries into four groups:

- ★ **Established Markets:** Canada, Mexico, South Korea and Japan.
- ★ **Emerging Growth Markets:** Vietnam, the Philippines.
- ★ **Exploratory Markets:** India, Malaysia.
- ★ **Watch Market:** China.

This segmentation was based on insights from the “Global Business Opportunity Assessment Report” by Euromonitor International and feedback from industry stakeholders, including the USHBC’s Global Export Advisory Board.

SECURING USDA GRANTS

Actively competed for USDA grants, resulting in awards totaling \$561,476 for the Market Access Program (MAP), \$2.8 million for the Regional Agricultural Promotion Programs (RAPP I&II) and \$150,000 for the Quality Sample Program.

MARKETING EFFORTS

Executed comprehensive marketing campaigns in South Korea, Japan, Vietnam, the Philippines and Malaysia, focusing on four pillars:

- ★ **Consumer Outreach:** Leveraged digital platforms and social media.
- ★ **Retail Promotions:** Partnered with key retailers.
- ★ **Trade Communications:** Participated in trade missions and trade shows.
- ★ **Foodservice/Manufacturing Partnerships:** Collaborated with foodservice operators and manufacturers.



Global Business Development

TRADE SHOW REPRESENTATION

Represented the USA blueberry industry at six international trade shows, connecting with local importers and industry professionals:

- ★ **South Korea:** Samsung Food Festa, Feed Festa-Busan.
- ★ **Japan:** FABEX Kansai in Osaka.
- ★ **The Philippines:** Philippine Association of Food Technologists Annual Convention.
- ★ **Vietnam:** U.S. Food and Beverage Showcase, Great American BBQ Festival in Hanoi, Vietnam International Bakery Show.
- ★ **China:** Food Ingredients China.
- ★ **Asia Fruit Logistica (Hong Kong):** Showcased the USA blueberry industry in Hong Kong, hosting 67 trade meetings between U.S. blueberry exporters and importers from Southeast Asia, South Korea, Japan, China and India.
- ★ **Trade Mission to South Korea:** Participated in a trade mission led by USDA Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs Alexis M. Taylor. Nine participants from eight organizations represented the blueberry industry. Over 110 business meetings were conducted, connecting with potential partners in South Korea.
- ★ **Retail Partnerships:** Partnered with retailers to conduct sampling, road show activations, and display contests both in-store and online:
 - **South Korea:** Collaborated with nine retailers in 242 stores, resulting in 586 promotions and \$514.6K in sales (in-store activations) and 168% sales increase YOY on Coupang, #1 e-commerce platform.
 - **Vietnam:** Worked with 10 retailers in 141 stores for 881 promotions, achieving sales increases of 13%-74% compared to the same period in the prior year.
 - **Japan:** Partnered with Costco Japan for 139 promotions, achieving a 74.5% sales increase compared to the previous week.
 - **The Philippines:** Partnered with five retailers in 33 stores, achieving sales increases of 73%-81% compared to previous weeks.
 - **Malaysia:** Partnered with 33 stores and conducted 379 promotions achieving sales increases of 107% compared to previous weeks (frozen: 214%, dried: 97% and fresh: 12%).



Global Business Development

DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Engaged consumers in key export markets through informative postings, interactive engagements, contests and influencer marketing. Gained more than 10,000 new followers on USHBC Facebook and Instagram pages across South Korea, Japan, Vietnam and the Philippines.

FOODSERVICE AND MANUFACTURING IMPACT

Facilitated new product development and introductions:

- ★ **South Korea:** Five new menu items created, one new product launched.
- ★ **Japan:** Two new products developed.
- ★ **The Philippines:** Five new items launched.
- ★ **Vietnam:** Four new products created.
- ★ **Malaysia:** Three new products developed in 2024, and one to be completed in Q1 2025.

TECHNICAL TRAINING SEMINARS

Conducted five educational technical training seminars for foodservice and manufacturing professionals in Vietnam, the Philippines and Malaysia. These seminars attracted 182 participants, resulting in the announcement of five new food items inspired by the sessions.

PRODUCT SAMPLING AND DEVELOPMENT

Supported by the USDA Quality Sample Program (QSP) by providing samples of dried blueberries and individually quick frozen (IQF) blueberries for new product development in India and Malaysia. Delivered 22,700 kgs of IQF and 6,804 kgs of dried blueberries to over 100 companies. Conducted more than 30 on-site training sessions for product testing and development.



Published by



81 Blue Ravine Road, Suite 110
Folsom, California 95630

916.983.0111

ushbc.org (Industry)

blueberry.org (Consumer)

