



Industry Engagement Committee
Thursday, February 29, 2024
10 - 11:30 a.m. MT
El Conquistador Tucson Hotel
10000 North Oracle Road, Tucson, AZ 85704

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88005938977>

Committee Members

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

USHBC Board Chair - Shelly Hartmann (ex-officio)

AGENDA

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Call to Order/ Roll Call | Bo Slack |
| 2. Consent Agenda Approval | Bo Slack |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Agenda● Approval of Minutes | |
| 3. USHBC 2024 Council Election Update | Julie Fogarty |
| 4. Industry Engagement Program Updates | Amanda Griffin |
| 6. Other Business | Bo Slack |
| 7. Question and Answer Period | Bo Slack |
| 8. Items and Scheduling of Next Meeting | Bo Slack |
| 9. Adjourn | Bo Slack |

AGENDA ITEM #2

Consent Agenda Approval

- Minutes



**Industry Engagement Committee
Thursday, September 28, 2023
10-11 a.m. ET**

The Desoto
15 East Liberty Street
Savannah, GA 31401

Bo Slack, Chair, Presiding

MINUTES

Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Bo Slack 10:03 ET on Thursday, September 28, 2023.

Committee Members Present: Bo Slack, Ken Patterson, Mark Adams, Doug Krahmer, Bonnie Lundblad, Andrew Maiman, Felipe Silva, Darren Sinn, Denny Vander Kooi, Luis Miguel Vegas and USHBC Chair Shelly Hartmann

Committee Members Absent: Bryan Sakuma

QUORUM PRESENT

USDA/AMS Representative: Jeanette Palmer and Andrew Charles

Staff Members Present: Amanda Griffin, Ross Peterson, Julie Fogarty and Melinda Kern

Approval of Consent Agenda

ACTION 1: Motion made by Bonnie Lundblad to approve the consent agenda for Thursday, September 28, 2023.

Motion seconded by Andrew Maiman.

Motion carried unanimously.

Industry Engagement Program Updates

Amanda Griffin provided information on how to participate in the Industry Benchmark Survey, including the use of a QR code for easy access. The survey will supply staff with industry feedback that will assist with future development of USHBC programs. Griffin also reported the USHBC volunteer application process is currently open for 2024 positions.

Griffin reviewed the 2023 Grab A Boost Of Blue industry engagement program participation statistics that show support continues to grow, with 80 current licenses. Griffin reported that Grab a Boost of Blue was also highlighted at the 2023 American Heart Association Walk in New York City where blueberries were supplied for participants. Griffin mentioned that recent additions in staff, Kristy Babb and Kevin Hamilton, will further assist with industry engagement programs, particularly in the communications area.

Griffin reported that class No. 1 of the USHBC Leadership Program will be graduating and presenting their capstone projects. The selection of class No. 2 has been completed, and alumni networking opportunities are anticipated. Griffin thanked Fall Creek for sponsoring the program.

Griffin reviewed 2023 industry engagement activities and the 2024 industry engagement opportunities under consideration.

2024 Budget Recommendation

Ross Peterson presented the 2024 proposed Industry Engagement Budget.

ACTION 2: Motion made by Doug Krahmer to approve and recommend the 2024 Industry Engagement budget to the council.

Motion seconded by Denny Vander Kooi.

Motion passed unanimously.

USHBC 2024 Council Election Update

Julie Fogarty provided an update on the 2024 council election process. Nominations will open in November to fill the following positions: Region 1 (West), Region 2 (Midwest), Region 3, (Northeast), Region 4 (South), Importer 1, Exporter 1 (Chile), Exporter 3 (Peru), Exporter 4 (Mexico).

Scheduling of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for spring in Tucson, Arizona.

Adjournment

ACTION 3: Motion made by Andrew Maiman to adjourn the meeting.

Motion seconded by Doug Krahmer.

Motion carried unanimously; meeting adjourned on September 28, 2023, at 10:39 a.m. ET.

AGENDA ITEM #3

USHBC 2024 Council Election Update

USHBC Members & Alternates

August 2023

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| CALIFORNIA: | Member – Doug LaCroix Alternate – Bill Steed | (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) |
| FLORIDA: | Member – Brittany Lee Alternate – Michael Hill | (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) |
| GEORGIA: | Member – Tammy Brannen Alternate – | (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) |
| MICHIGAN: | Member – Dennis Vander Kooi Alternate – George Fritz, Jr. | (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) |
| NEW JERSEY: | Member – Paul Macrie III Alternate – Chelsea Consalo | (2 nd Term ends 12/31/25) (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) |
| NORTH CAROLINA: | Member – Jimmy Horrell Alternate – Kristen Johnson-Brinkley | (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) |
| OREGON: | Member – Doug Krahmer Alternate – Ellie Norris | (2 nd Term ends 12/31/25) (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) |
| WASHINGTON: | Member – Bryan Sakuma (Vice Chair) Alternate – Leif Olsen | (2 nd Term ends 12/31/25) (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) |
| REGION 1 (West): | Member – Nathan Sakuma Alternate – Anne Krahmer-Steinkamp | (1 st Term ends 12/31/24) (1 st Term ends 12/31/24) |
| REGION 2 (Midwest): | Member – Shelly Hartmann (Chair) Alternate – Katelyn Craig | (2 nd Term ends 12/31/24) (1 st Term ends 12/31/24) |
| REGION 3 (Northeast): | Member – Dave Arena Alternate – Art Galletta (Past Chair) | (2 nd Term ends 12/31/24) (2 nd Term ends 12/31/24) |
| REGION 4 (South): | Member – Jody McPherson Alternate – Michael Thomas | (1 st Term ends 12/31/24) (1 st Term ends 12/31/24) |
| IMPORTER #1: | Member – Bonnie Lundblad Alternate – | (1 st Term ends 12/31/24) |
| IMPORTER #2: | Member – JC Clinard (Treasurer) Alternate – Guy Cotton | (2 nd Term ends 12/31/25) (2 nd Term ends 12/31/25) |
| IMPORTER #3: | Member – Ryan Lockman Alternate – Andrew Maiman | (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) |
| IMPORTER #4: | Member – Joe Barsi (Secretary) Alternate – Bo Slack | (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) |
| EXPORTER 1: (Chile) | Member – Felipe Silva Alternate – Sebastian Carmona | (1 st Term ends 12/31/24) (1 st Term ends 12/31/24) |
| EXPORTER 2: (Canada) | Member – Mark Adams Alternate – Ray Biln | (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) (1 st Term ends 12/31/25) |
| EXPORTER 3: (Peru) | Member – Daniel Bustamante (Mbr @ Large) Alternate – Jose Antonio Castro | (1 st Term ends 12/31/24) (1 st Term ends 12/31/24) |
| EXPORTER 4: (Mexico) | Member – Jose Luis Bustamante Alternate – Jose Guillermo Romo | (1 st Term ends 12/31/24) (1 st Term ends 12/31/24) |
| PUBLIC MEMBER: | Member – Amy Howell Alternate – Bill Cline | (2 nd Term ends 12/31/24) (2 nd Term ends 12/31/24) |



Your Guide to Becoming a USHBC Council Member

The USHBC was created to inspire a healthy highbush blueberry industry through promotion, research and education, all with a goal of increasing awareness and consumption of blueberries.

USHBC council members serve three-year terms and can hold a position for two consecutive terms. Each position has a member and an alternate.

The council is a 21-member board made up of the positions listed below. Next election cycle new members will be elected in 2024 and will be seated in Jan 1, 2025:

Cycle 1:

State:

1. California
2. Florida (**balloted**)
3. Georgia
4. Michigan
5. New Jersey
6. North Carolina
7. Oregon
8. Washington

Importer, and Exporter:

9. Importer #2
10. Importer #3
11. Importer #4
12. Exporter #2 – Canada

Cycle 2:

Regional (balloted):

13. Region 1 - West
14. Region 2 - Midwest
15. Region 3 - Northeast
16. Region 4 – South

Importer, Exporter and Public Member:

17. Importer #1
18. Exporter #1 – Chile
19. Exporter #3 – Peru
20. Exporter #4 – Mexico
21. Public Member

Notes and exceptions: Florida's state election is conducted by ballot. Candidates from all other states are nominated by their state blueberry organization. All exporter positions are nominated by their country's blueberry organization.

The USHBC seeks diverse board members whose skills help the organization pursue its mission of growing demand for blueberries throughout the U.S. and worldwide. Here's what the process, which is under the guidance of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), looks like:

Nomination period

USHBC prepares nomination materials, press releases and letters seeking nominations. Letters seeking members and encouraging participation are sent out by USHBC and USDA, followed by nomination application forms. Nominations are due following a 2-week period.

Voting

Ballots are sent to growers in each region or state (if applicable) and are due back following a 2-week voting period. Importer and public member positions are selected by vote of the USHBC Industry Relations Committee from nominations received, and are then recommended to the USHBC Council. Exporter positions are nominated by each country's blueberry organization. Election results are tabulated by USHBC staff and nominees are submitted to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture for final appointment in October.

Seating

Based on election results and final appointments by the Secretary of Agriculture, newly approved members and alternates assume their positions and begin their three-year terms on January 1.

AGENDA ITEM #4

Industry Engagement Program Updates



Industry Engagement Committee

Industry Engagement Updates

- Leadership Program
- Destination Trips
- Regional and Engagement Opportunities
- Our Events – Convention and Summit
- 2023 Industry Benchmark Survey Results
- Industry Communications Update



Class 1
Now Alumni!



blueberries

INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM



Class 2

- Leadership training (Summit)
- Present this week
- Capstone Project
- Gearing up for Peru Trip
- Class 3 Apps Launch Spring

USHBC/NABC: Destination Peru



- 16 attendees
- Trujillo/Ica regions



USHBC/NABC: Destination Chile



- Early December
- RSVP to receive more information!



SCAN ME

Regional and Engagement Recap

- SE Fruit and Vegetable Conference
- New Jersey Blueberry Growers Meeting
- Georgia Industry Gathering
- Washington Field Day with BerrySmart Field Program
- Washington Small Fruit Conference
- Asia Fruit Logistica
- Global Produce and Floral Show (IFPA)
- World's Favorite Fruit Reception (at IFPA)



Regional and Engagement Opportunities

- *SE Fruit and Vegetable Conference - January*
- 3 town halls (Georgia, California, and Oregon)
- Field trip to BerrySmart Field
- Regional Meetings
- Virtual sessions (throughout year)
- Women in Blueberries
 - Summit Session
- Asia Fruit Logistica
- World's Favorite Fruit Reception (at IFPA - no booth)

Women in Blueberries

The Power of Supportive Women's Networks

The Blueberry Convention



The Blueberry Summit



The Blueberry Convention & Summit



■ Attendees Onsite

- Blueberry Convention 2024 (Tucson): 270 ppl (*as of 2.21.24*)
- Blueberry Summit 2023 (Savannah): 356 ppl
- Blueberry Convention 2023 (San Diego): 355 ppl
- Blueberry Summit 2022 (Nashville): 318 ppl
- Spring Forward 2022 (Tampa): 220 ppl

■ Blueberry Lane Exhibitors

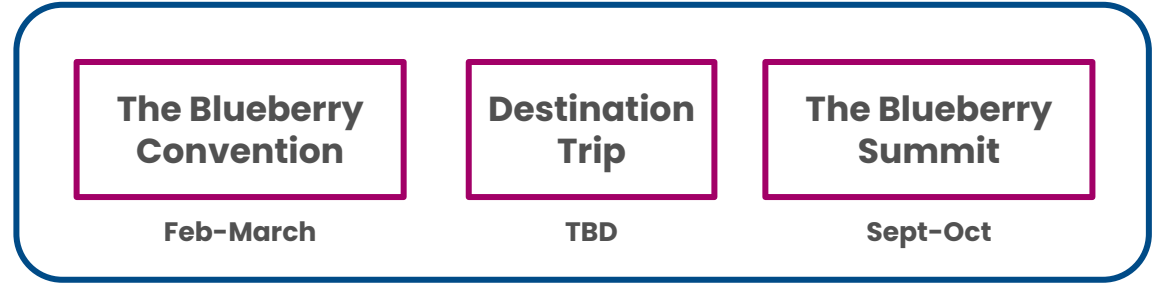
- Blueberry Convention 2024 (Tucson): 31 booths (*as of 2.21.24*)
- Blueberry Summit 2023 (Savannah): 27 booths
- Blueberry Convention 2023 (San Diego): 28 booths
- Blueberry Summit 2022 (Nashville): 20 booths
- Spring Forward 2022 (Tampa): 13 booths

The Blueberry Convention & Summit

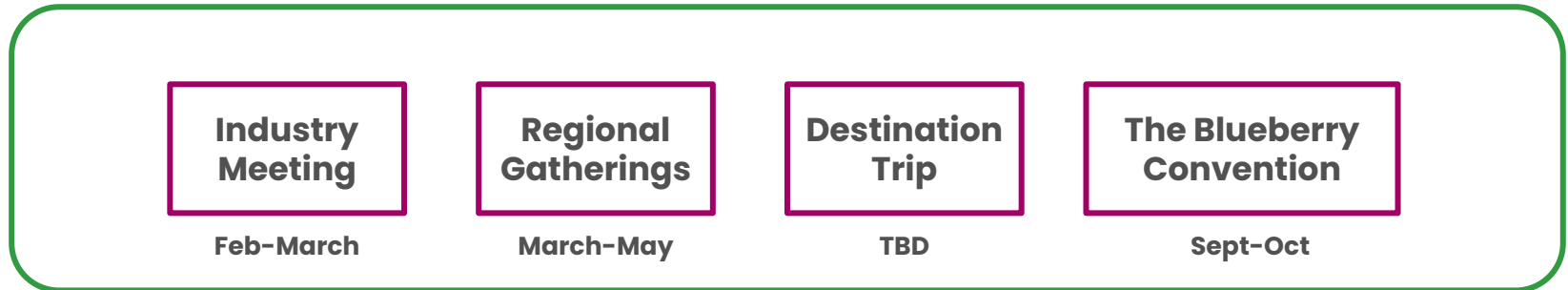
Convention vs Summit

- Did we have the timing correct?
- Shift our focus.

CURRENT LINE UP



NEW CONSIDERATIONS





Industry Benchmark Survey

Purpose: USHBC conducted a survey of blueberry industry members (i.e. growers, importers, marketers, and handlers) for the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council (USHBC) to understand their degree of awareness, support, and satisfaction, as well as to explore how to continuously improve on each of these metrics.

Methodology:

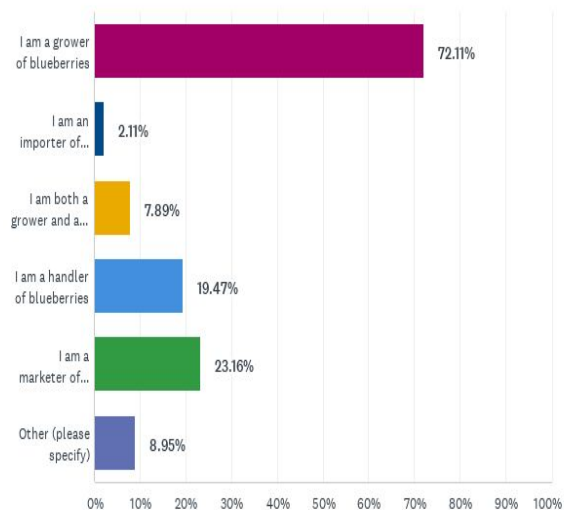
- Issued October – November 2023
- Sent to 1,985 of USHBC’s newsletter subscribers.
- 191 responses/ 2021 204 responses



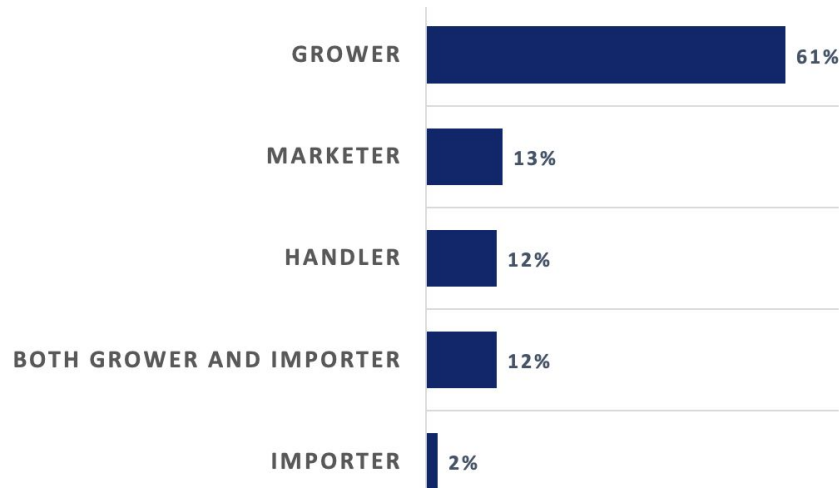
Industry Benchmark Survey

Who participated?

Q1 Which of the following describes you?



2023

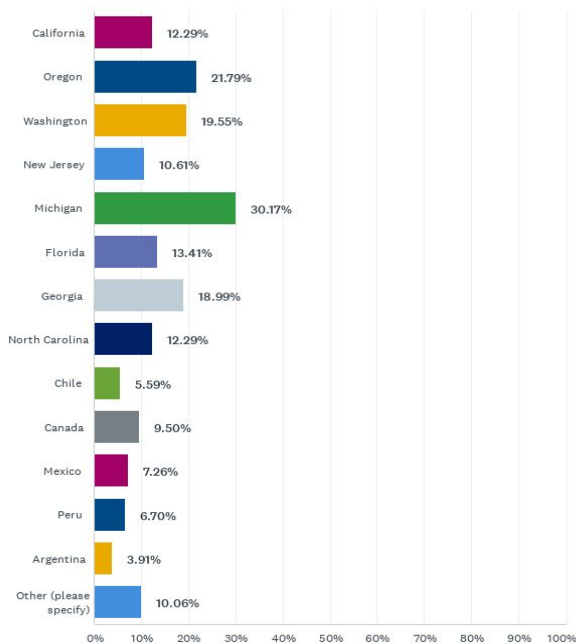


2021

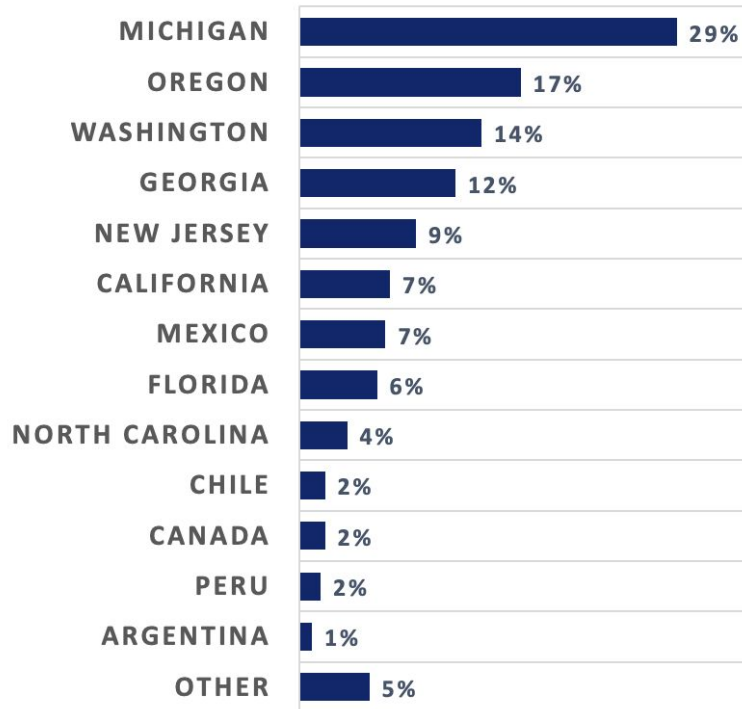
Industry Benchmark Survey

Who participated from where?

Q2 Where do you grow blueberries?



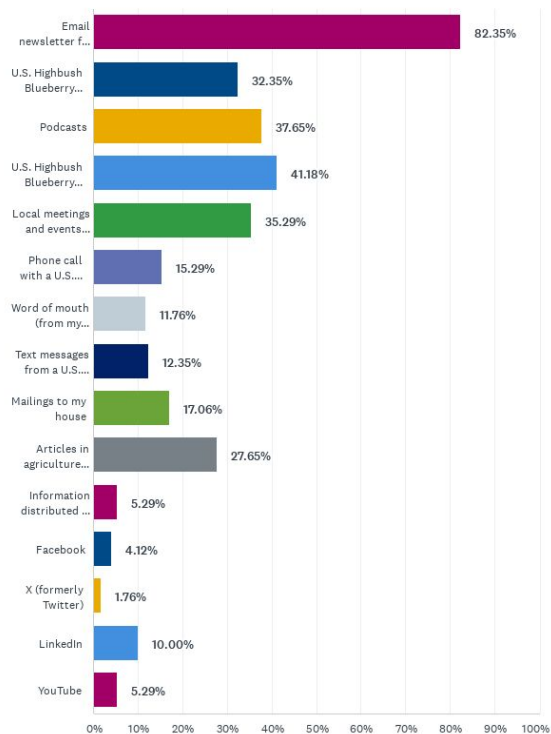
2023



2021

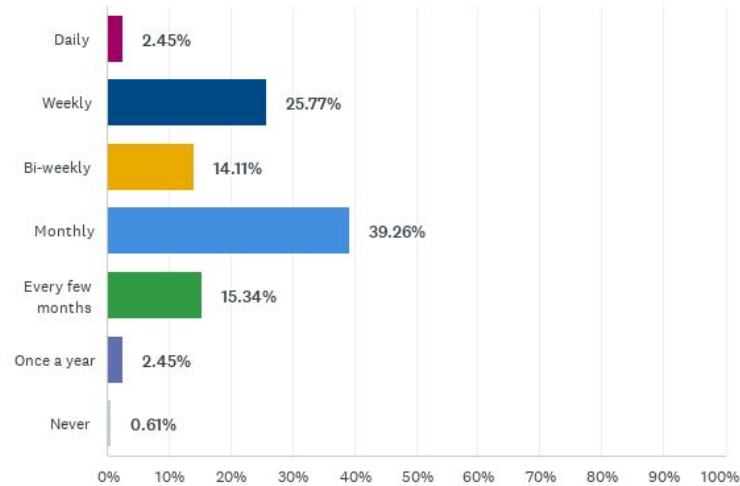
Industry Benchmark Survey

Q21 Which of the following ways do you prefer to learn about what is going on with the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council? Please check all that apply.



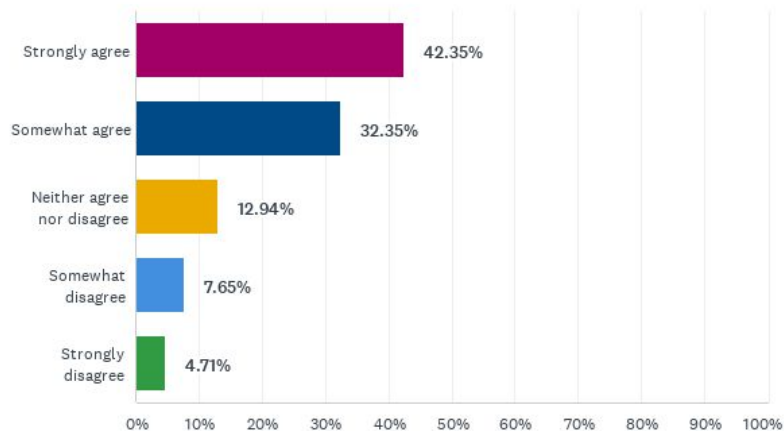
Industry Benchmark Survey

Q29 How often do you want to hear what is going on with the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council?



Industry Benchmark Survey

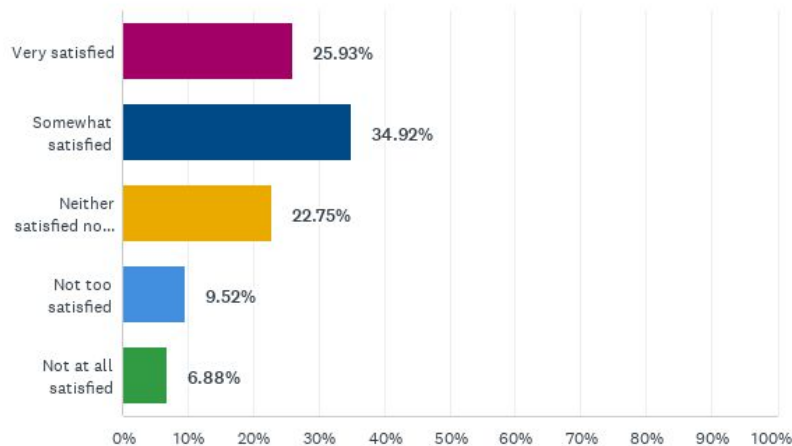
Q18 The U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council plays a vital role in bringing together the industry.



2023: **74.70%** Strongly Agree/Somewhat Agree
2021: 62% Strongly Agree/Somewhat Agree

Industry Benchmark Survey

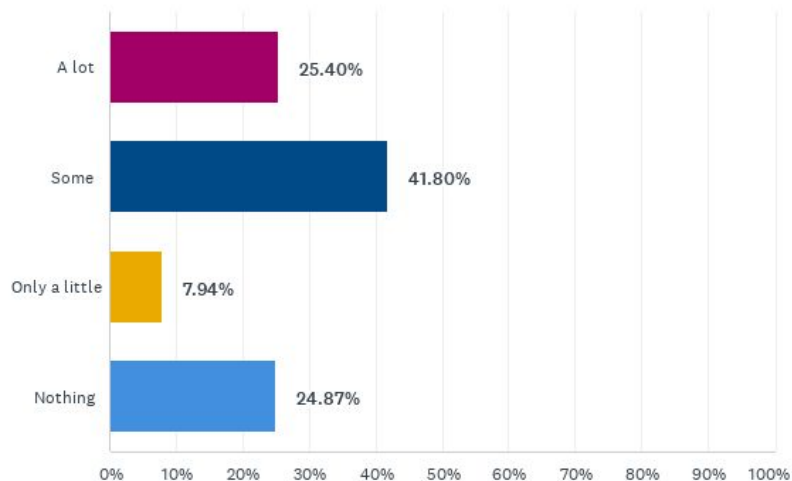
Q10 How satisfied are you with the work of the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council? Are you...



2023: **60.85%** Very Satisfied/Somewhat Satisfied
2021: 56% Very Satisfied/Somewhat Satisfied

Industry Benchmark Survey

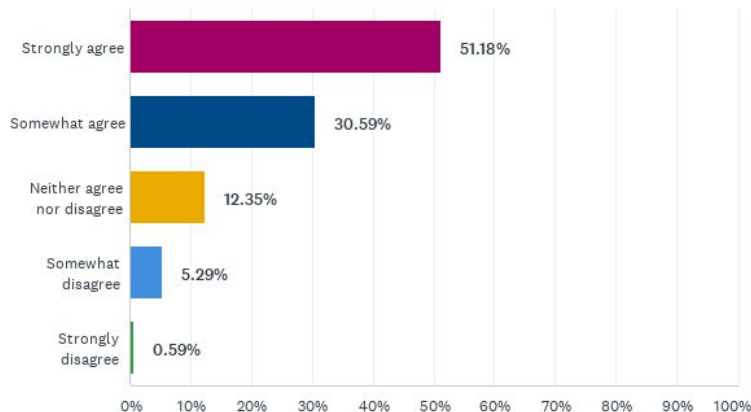
Q5 How much do you know about a program called “Grab a Boost of Blue?”



2023: **67.2%** A lot/Some
2021: 43% A lot/Some

Industry Benchmark Survey

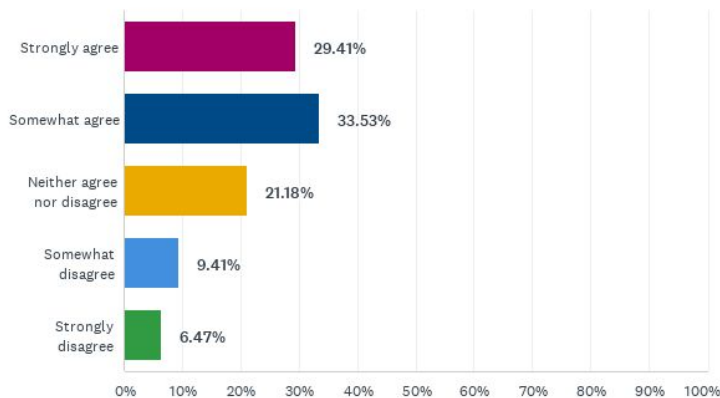
Q11 Over the years, the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council has helped build consumption of blueberries and products that include blueberry ingredients.



2023: **81.77%** Strongly Agree/Somewhat Agree
2021: 75% Strongly Agree/Somewhat Agree

Industry Benchmark Survey

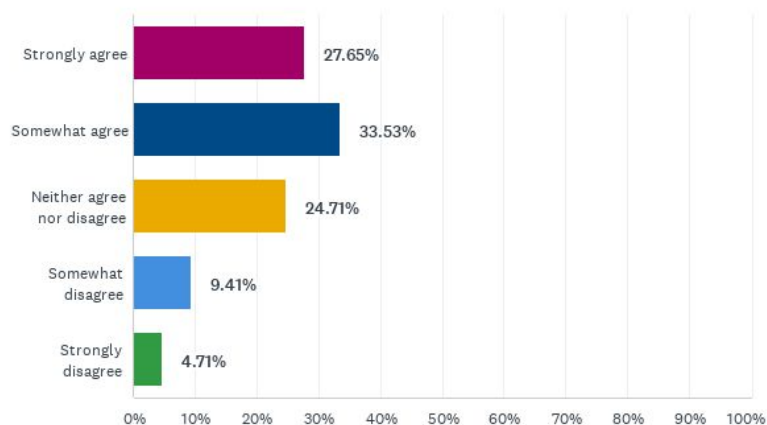
Q13 I trust the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council to do the right things for the blueberry industry.



2023: **62.94%** Strongly Agree/Somewhat Agree
2021: 61% Strongly Agree/Somewhat Agree

Industry Benchmark Survey

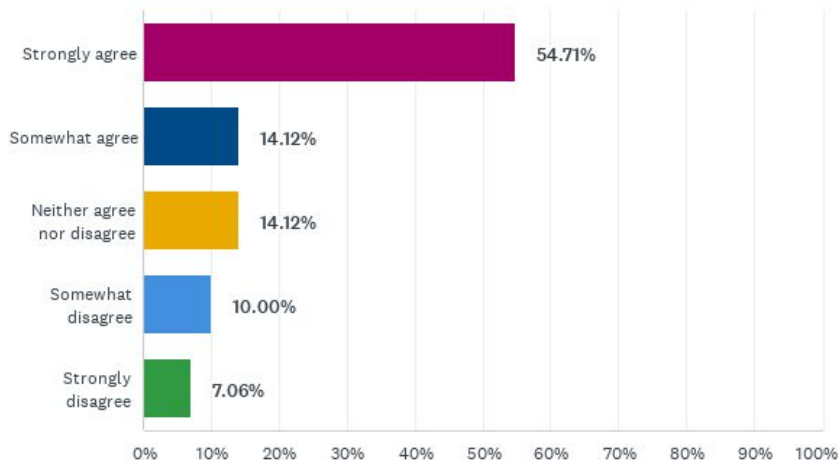
Q14 I trust how the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council uses assessment funds.



2023: **61.18%** Strongly Agree/Somewhat Agree
2021: 54% Strongly Agree/Somewhat Agree

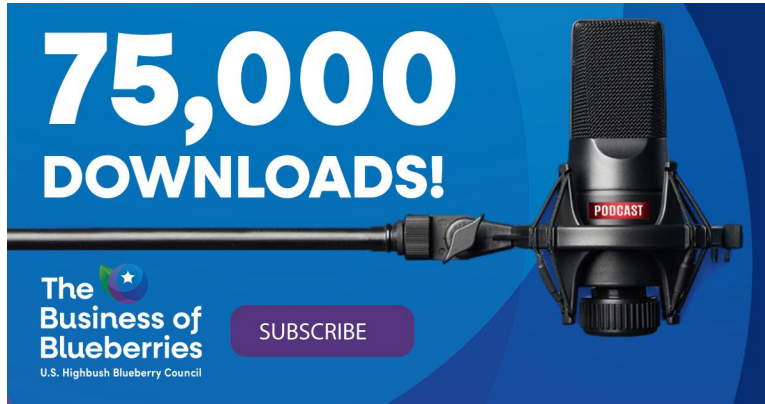
Industry Benchmark Survey

Q17 If there was a vote to continue the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council, I would vote for it.



2023: **68.83%** Strongly Agree/Somewhat Agree
2021: 64% Strongly Agree/Somewhat Agree

IR Communications Highlights



A graphic for a podcast. On the left, a blue background features the text "75,000 DOWNLOADS!" in large white font. Below this is the logo for "The Business of Blueberries" with a star icon and "U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council" underneath. A purple "SUBSCRIBE" button is positioned to the right of the logo. On the right side of the graphic is a black professional microphone on a stand, with a red "PODCAST" label on its body.

- 26,000 downloads in 2023
- 63% increase in listeners in 2023



A promotional graphic for the "Behind The Blue" podcast. At the top left, the text "Behind The Blue" is displayed in a blue sans-serif font. To the right is the "blueberries U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council" logo. Below the text is a photograph of four people standing on a golf course. To the right of the photo, the text reads: "The Blueberry Industry Is Heading to Tucson!" followed by "Registration and housing for [The Blueberry Convention](#), Feb. 28-March 1 in Tucson, Arizona, are open. Today, we're encouraging you to sign up ASAP – because we're offering you the lowest price of the year on registration and housing!". At the bottom right, there is a white button with the text "LEARN MORE" and a right-pointing arrow.

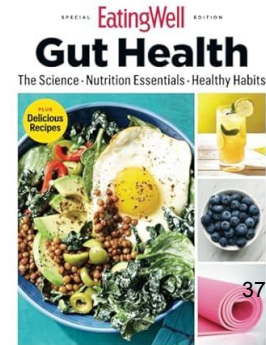
- 48 issues of the **Behind The Blue**
- 36.8% open rate.

IR Communications Highlights

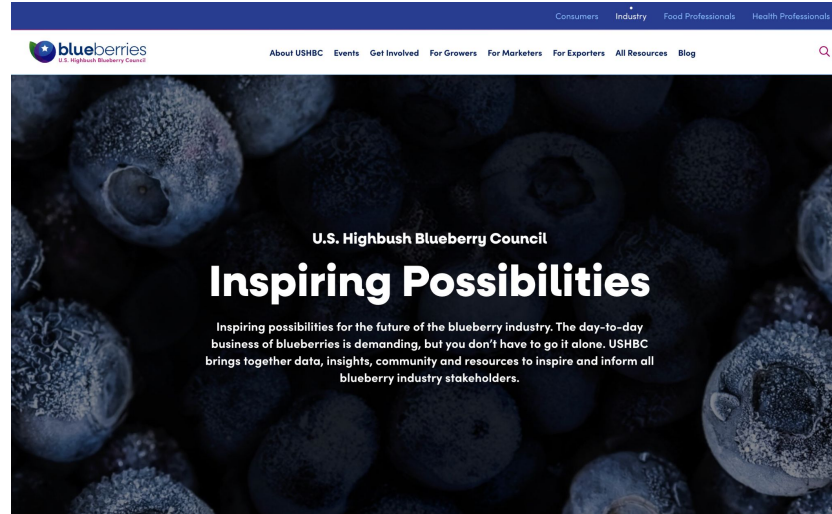
Earned media successes included:

- 100% positive sentiment in placements.
- 59% of placements featured USHBC health-funded research.
- 100% of placements included strategic key messages (e.g., healthy goodness, everyday snack, simply delicious).
- 12% of placements included specific mentions of USHBC.

COSTCO
Connection.



IR Communications Highlights



- 80,000 views in 2023
- 31% increase compared to the previous year
- Data & Insights Center, podcast and blog most visited

Grab a Boost of Blue Industry Engagement

2023 Program Stats

- Grab a Boost of Blue continues to garner support among industry, with 80 current licensees
- American Heart Association walk in NYC

2024 Considerations

- Feature success stories and in-market examples to showcase the power of GABOB for industry stakeholders
- Solicit more content featuring grower stories and favorite blueberry recipes for leveraging in consumer channels
- Build out our U-Pick database and work with these growers to provide materials to promote GABOB at their farms



Thank you.

AGENDA ITEM #7

Items and Scheduling of Next Meeting

SAVE THE DATE!



The blueberry industry has never been more dynamic: high consumer demand, strong pricing and robust industry innovation. In this environment you can't afford to be left out. The Blueberry Summit provides blueberry growers, marketers, suppliers and stakeholders with the information and products they need to succeed.



**Join us September 25-27 in Denver, Colorado
to explore inspiring blueberry possibilities
that are sure to boost your bottom line!**

