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TO: Highbush Blueberry Industry Members

FROM: Maureen T. Pello, Marketing Specialist  
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The U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council (USHBC), which administers a national research and promotion program for highbush blueberries, is seeking nominees to fill regional, importer, exporter and public member and alternate positions on the USHBC. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA, which oversees the program, would like to encourage all eligible industry members to participate in the process. In an effort to enhance the diversity of the USHBC, USDA also encourages women, minorities and people with disabilities to seek positions on the USHBC.

As you may know, the USHBC is composed of 20 members and 20 alternates that are appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture. The USHBC meets throughout the year to review marketing and research activities and make recommendations to USDA regarding its programs. The national program became effective in 2000 and is funded by assessments on domestic producers and importers. The purpose of the program is to increase the consumption of highbush blueberries.

Seven of the 20 USHBC positions (each with an alternate) will expire December 31, 2018. Of the seven positions, four represent U.S. regional producers, one represents importers, one represents exporters<sup>1</sup> and one represents the public. The USHBC will hold elections for the producer seats and the USHBC's Industry Relations Committee will recommend a slate of potential importer, exporter and public member nominees to the USHBC's Executive Committee. The USHBC will then make recommendations to USDA for the producer, importer, exporter and public member seats. The positions are for a 3-year term of office ending December 31, 2021.

Nomination applications for importer, export and public nominees are due to the USHBC by January 29, 2018. Nomination applications for regional producers are due to the USHBC by February 26, 2018. Applications are available at [www.blueberry.org](http://www.blueberry.org) or from the USHBC.

If you are interested in increasing your involvement in the blueberry industry, we encourage you to consider running for a position on the USHBC. Detailed information on the process is being provided to you by the USHBC. If you would like more information on the program or on serving on the USHBC, please contact Mark Villata, USHBC Executive Director, at 916-983-0111 or by email at [mwillata@ushbc.org](mailto:mwillata@ushbc.org); or Maureen Pello, USDA Marketing Specialist, at 503-632-8848 or by email at [maureen.pello@ams.usda.gov](mailto:maureen.pello@ams.usda.gov).

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<sup>1</sup> This position represents producers that ship blueberries into the United States from the largest foreign blueberry production area (currently Chile).