



Newsletter

Issue No. 19

March/April 2018

COMMISSION ATTENDS CAPITOL HILL DAY

During the week of March 13-15, 2018, the California Blueberry Commission met with key Congressional leadership and other agencies in Washington D.C. The meetings were designed to inform and educate the different partners and leaders regarding the significant issues that California's agriculture, specifically blueberries will face in the near future. One of the issues discussed, was the upcoming 2018 Farm Bill that Congress is now currently writing. For more information, please contact the Commission office.

CONCERNS OF FREEZE ON EARLY BLUEBERRIES

California's blueberry crop has suffered damage from the recent cold temperatures throughout California. Some freeze damage that has occurred, but the extent of damage is still being examined. For the next several weeks, the Commission is participating in conference calls to discuss the crop forecast and evaluate which varieties were affected the most. For more information regarding the freeze, please contact the Commission office.

DISCUSSIONS BEGIN ON 2018 FARM BILL

The U.S. Farm Bill is a comprehensive piece of legislation that Congress is currently writing. It covers most federal government policies related to agriculture in the United States. The Farm Bill comes up for renewal every five years. Many individuals and organizations contribute to the Farm Bill, including members of government and special interest groups. The provisions of the Farm Bill are divided into what are called "Titles", which are overarching categories related to food and farming in the U.S. The 2014 Farm Bill had 12 titles, and new titles can be added during the re-authorization process. Several things to note, if included in the 2018 Farm Bill, will be the re-examination of crop insurance, and a trade policy revamp.

CONGRESS REACHES DEAL ON SPENDING BILL

Congressional leaders finalized a \$1.3 trillion budget bill that will keep the federal government open through the remainder of the current fiscal year, ending September 30, 2018. This is good news because a government shutdown is unlikely to happen, preventing disruption to programs including H-2A processing. It also means important programs such as specialty

crop research, Market Access Program (MAP), and crop insurance will continue to be funded. The deal is reported to include \$1.6 billion in funds for border security, but does not include funds for a wall, mandate E-Verify or include guestworker or DACA provisions. For apple growers who belong to co-ops, this should result in a status quo as regards to their bottom lines and deductions. For more information, please contact the Commission office.

CHINA TARGETS U.S. AGRICULTURE IN IMPOSING NEW TARIFFS

China is imposing new tariffs on meat, fruit, and other products from the United States as retaliation against tariffs approved by President Trump on imported steel and aluminum. The announcement follows warnings Chinese officials have made for several weeks in an escalating trade dispute, between the world's two largest economies. China's Customs Tariff Commission is increasing the tariff rate and imposing a new 15 percent tariff on 120 other imported U.S. commodities, including almonds, apples and berries which could end up hurting the American farmers. The Commission will be following closely and will continue to update the industry as needed.

NABC AND USHBC SPRING MEETING IN UTAH

The North American Blueberry Council and the United States Highbush Blueberry Council conducted their spring meeting on February 28 through March 2, 2018, in Salt Lake City, Utah. The NABC and the USHBC held meetings for their respective committees, discussing current topics and updates. Industry members from around the country had the chance to meet and discuss the blueberry industry at the semiannual meeting. The NABC and USHBC next Fall 2018 Meeting will be held in New Orleans, Louisiana. For more information please visit (<http://www.blueberry.org/>) or contact the Commission office.

COMMISSION MEETS WITH UNDERSECRETARY MCKINNEY

On April 24, 2018, the Commission met with USDA Undersecretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs Ted McKinney, and the California State Board of Food and Agriculture President Don Cameron. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the importance of international trade markets to California agriculture. Specifically, the discussions

focused on the new tariffs implemented by China, the India market, the constant changing MRLs for export markets, including the EU, and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Currently, California exports approximately 12 - 18 percent of its blueberry crop. However, export issues that directly impact other states will have an indirect effect on California blueberries. If blueberries are not exported, those fresh or processed berries may stay in the domestic market, driving down prices when increasing supply. It is important to ensure that these markets remain open and competitive in order to ensure that both international and domestic markets remain healthy. The Commission will continue to communicate the importance of free and fair trade with the administration and update the industry as these issues continue to move forward.



Find us on social media!



#calblueberry

@calblueberry

***Did you know you can receive an e-newsletter instead of the snail mail version? If you would like to sign up, please email intern@calapple.org.*

Blueberry Bites Blueberry Walnut Salad



Ingredients:

- 1 (10 oz.) package mixed salad greens
- 1 Pint fresh California blueberries
- 1 ¼ C Walnuts
- ½ C Raspberry Vinaigrette dressing
- ¼ C Feta Cheese Crumbles

Directions:

1. In a large bowl, mix together salad greens with fresh CA blueberries, walnuts, and raspberry vinaigrette. Top with feta cheese to serve and enjoy!

Recipe courtesy of allrecipes.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **United FreshMKT Expo**
-Date: June 25-27, 2018
-Chicago, Illinois
- **Asia Fruit Logistica**
-Date: September 4-7, 2018
- **United Fresh Public Policy Conference**
-Date: September 24-26, 2018
-Washington, D.C.



California Blueberry Commission

2565 Alluvial Ave, Ste. 182

Clovis, CA 93611

PH: (559) 221-1800

FAX: (559) 456-9099

Calblueberry.org