



CALIFORNIA
Blueberry
COMMISSION

Wishing you a Happy New Year!

Newsletter

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U.S.-JAPAN TRADE DEAL APPROVED BY JAPAN'S PARLIAMENT

On Wednesday, December 4, 2019, Japan's Parliament officially approved the trade deal that was agreed upon by President Trump and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe earlier in 2019. It is also important to note that Congress does not have to pass this agreement. This trade deal will eliminate and reduce tariffs between the U.S. and Japan on a number of products, including blueberries. The agreed upon tariff reductions and eliminations are set to take effect on January 1, 2020. Specifically, the agreement includes the following tariff concessions from Japan on blueberries:

- **Immediate elimination** on January 1, 2020 of Japan's 6.0% tariff on fresh blueberries (HS 0810.40)
- **Immediate elimination** on January 1, 2020 of Japan's 9.0% tariff on dried blueberries, including those in mixtures (HS 0813.40.010)
- **Immediate elimination** on January 1, 2020 of Japan's 11.0% tariff on dried blueberries, sweetened or unsweetened (those imported under US 2008.99.212)

HOUSE PASSES FARM WORKFORCE MODERNIZATION ACT

On December 11, 2019, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to pass the Farm Workforce Modernization Act with a strong bipartisan vote of 260-165. The legislation, introduced by members Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) and Dan Newhouse (R-WA), includes provisions designed to stabilize the current domestic workforce by creating an earned legalization process, as well as improvements to the current H-2A program, including wage relief.

The Farm Workforce Modernization Act will not head to the U.S. Senate for a vote, and then must be signed by President Trump. Further negotiations are expected to begin after the holiday season, and it has been reported that the bill could be introduced to the Senate as early as March. The CBC will continue to voice support for the passage of this bill in upcoming meetings with CA's Senate representatives. The

CBC understands that while this bill is not perfect, it does include many provisions that will help establish a continuous, reliable, and skilled labor force in California. If you have any questions regarding the Farm Workforce Modernization Act, please do not hesitate to contact the Commission office.

USMCA AGREEMENT REACHED

In December, President Trump and House of Representatives Democratic Members have reportedly reached a deal that will allow the much anticipated ratification of the U.S. Mexico Canada Free Trade Agreement (USMCA) by the end of 2019.

According to House Speaker, Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), Democrats have made improvements to the initial agreement made between the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, which was signed last November by the three countries' leaders. Specifically, these changes involve labor, enforcement, and several pharmaceutical provisions contained in the deal. Regardless of these changes, however, USMCA still offers significant improvements over NAFTA, which it will replace following an official vote from the House of Representatives and ratification from all three countries. At this point, Mexico is the only country that has officially passed the USMCA through the appropriate government channels. If you have any questions regarding the USMCA, please do not hesitate to contact the Commission office.

COMMISSION CONDUCTS MARKET VISIT TO THE MIDDLE EAST

From November 11-15, 2019, the Commission traveled to Dubai, UAE to conduct market visits, meet with key retailers, importers, and distributors, and attend the annual International Perishables Exposition. This exposition features opportunities for the entire fresh produce industry, and provided the Commission the opportunity to conduct meetings with importers and retailers from other regions in the Middle East outside the UAE. During the trip duration, the Commission worked closely with the U.S. Agriculture Consulate General's office, based in Dubai, and participated in meetings with the

top market players in an effort to establish relationships and explore new business opportunities for the California blueberry industry. A trip report, in addition to relevant contact information has been distributed to the industry, and is also available upon request. Please contact the Commission if you did not receive a copy and would like additional information.



CBC Visits the Fresh Fruits Company's Fresh Market in Dubai, UAE

NEW YORK PRODUCE SHOW

On December 11-13, 2019, the Commission attended the New York Produce Show (NYPS) annual convention in New York City, NY. The four-day event includes networking opportunities, a one-day trade show of over 400 companies, retail “thought-leader” breakfast panel, educational micro-sessions and tours of the region’s vibrant industry. The NYPS provides connections that allow members within the

industry to expand business opportunities and increase sales and consumption. If you would like more information, please contact the Commission office.

Slow Cooker Meatballs with Blueberry Sriracha Sauce



Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup brown sugar
- 2 tsp cornstarch
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 cup fresh California blueberries
- 2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 package (1 lb) frozen meatballs
- 2 tbsp sriracha hot sauce
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 tsp toasted sesame seeds
- 2 tsp sesame oil

Directions:

- Combine brown sugar, soy sauce, apple cider vinegar, sriracha, garlic, sesame oil, cornstarch, and blueberries in 4-quart slow cooker. Stir in meatballs.
- Cover and cook on High setting for 3 to 4 hours, or until meatballs are tender and heated through and sauce has thickened. Sprinkle with green onions and sesame seeds before serving.

Recipe courtesy of www.blueberrycouncil.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Winter Fancy Food Show
 - January 19-21, 2020
 - San Francisco, CA
- 1st Annual Symposium for Sustainable Agriculture
 - January 31, 2020
 - International Agri-Center - Tulare, CA
- CBC Continuation Hearing
 - Date - TBD
 - Location - TBD



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