



Newsletter

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2023 SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

On August 18th, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) announced the opening of the 2023 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program! CDFA anticipates that up to \$22 million will be awarded to projects enhancing the competitiveness of California specialty crops. Grant amounts range from \$100,000 to \$500,000. CBC staff submitted a concept proposal to CDFA on September 16th. The project is titled, *Temperature inducible pgSIT for Drosophila suzukii Control for California Blueberries*, with a total funding request of \$362,307. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the CBC office with any questions.

FINAL SEASON UPDATE WITH BMRIC

The CBC has received the preliminary final numbers for the 2022 California Blueberry Crop. It is important to note that these numbers are not yet finalized and are subject to change, however, we do not anticipate significant changes at this point. For the 2022 California blueberry season, the BMRIC system is reporting a total of 55,479,294 lbs. The original CBC estimate for the 2022 season, established in April 2022, was set at 75,000,000 lbs. There were a total of 10,612,481 lbs. processed and 44,866,813 lbs. total fresh. Of the 44,866,813 lbs. total fresh, organic production was reported at 17,611,282 lbs., representing 39% of the total fresh volume. The CBC will provide updated numbers once the BMRIC reports are finalized for the season. If you would like additional information on 2022 season pricing, please log in to the BMRIC system. If you have any trouble logging in or would like any additional information on these numbers, please do not hesitate to contact the CBC office.

RESEARCH PRIORITIES

The CBC's research priorities were decided by the Research Subcommittee in July. Request for Proposals were distributed to California and out-of-state universities, California Farm Advisors, and private research companies. Proposals were due to the CBC by September 1st for the Research Subcommittee to review. The CBC Board of Directors will approve projects for funding at the annual September Board meeting.

2022-2023 research priorities:

- Mechanical Harvesting for fresh blueberries
- Packing house automation techniques
- Mechanical pruning
- Management of Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD)
- GPS Blueberry Acreage Mapping
- Irradiation of Blueberries
- Low-cost UAV Based System for Bird Control
- Frost detection/prevention technology
- Postharvest treatments/alternatives to methyl bromide fumigation
- Increase shelf life/quality preservation
- Alternate packaging options instead of single use plastic in response to CA state laws
- Any other topic related to cost reduction/increasing the effectiveness of California blueberry production.

JULY LEGISLATIVE VISITS

In July, CBC staff traveled to Washington D.C., to advocate on behalf of the California blueberry industry in preparation for the reauthorization of the 2023 Farm Bill. CBC staff met with over twenty different Congressional offices in both the House and Senate. If you have any questions or any topics of interest for the 2023 Farm Bill, please do not hesitate to contact the CBC office.

MEET THE GROWER VIDEOS

CBC staff is excited to announce the completion of three new Meet the Grower Videos! To view the finalized videos, access the CBC's YouTube channel [here](#). These assets have been provided to the USHBC and CA Grown to use in promotions such as National Blueberry Month and California Farmer and Farmworker Month. Thank you to the Marthedal Farms, Family Tree Farms, and Homegrown Organics for participating!



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **CBC Board of Directors Meeting**
 - September 21, 2022
- **United Fresh Washington Conference**
 - Washington, DC-September 26th
- **NABC/USHBC Conference & Expo, Nashville, Tennessee**
 - October 5th-7th
- **Produce Marketing Association (PMA) Fresh Summit Orlando, FL**
 - October 27th-29th



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CALIFORNIA BLUEBERRY PROMOTIONS

IN SE ASIA

The California Blueberry Commission was selected as a participant in the California Department of Food and Agriculture's (CDFA) trade-focused "Taste of California" media events. CDFA hosted a series of two events, one in Manila and one in Singapore during the week of July 18th. Each event was designed to showcase California agricultural products to chefs, media/social media, and key trade contacts in each country. The event included a guided tasting of up to 5 dishes featuring California ingredients, a video promotion, and presentations by California agricultural group representatives. Please do not hesitate to reach out to Elizabeth at the CBC office with any questions regarding this event.



CBC Board Member, Young Kwun, and CBC Employee, Elizabeth Carranza, pictured at the CDFA Taste of America Trade Event in Manila

CA BLUEBERRY COMMISSION PARTICIPATES IN USDA AGRIBUSINESS TRADE MISSION TO MANILA

Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) Administrator Daniel Whitley led a USDA trade mission to the Philippines from July 18–21, 2022. He was joined by representatives from 29 U.S. agribusinesses and farm organizations and 10 State departments of agriculture, working together to strengthen trade relationships and further expand export opportunities. The California Blueberry Commission was pleased to participate in this event which included retail site visits, in-depth market briefings on the Philippines as a trading partner, and business to business meetings. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the CBC office for any additional information regarding this event.

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