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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 nominations to fill seven 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 16 members and 16 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 16 USHBC positions (each with an alternate) will expire December 31, 2012. Of the seven positions, four represent U.S. regional producers, one represents importers, one represents exporters, and one represents the public. The USHBC will hold elections for the producer seats and make recommendations to USDA for the importer, exporter and public member seats. The positions are for a 3-year term of office ending December 31, 2015.

Nomination applications are due to the USHBC by February 17, 2012. Applications are available at 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; or Maureen Pello, USDA Marketing Specialist, at 503-632-8848 or by email at maureen.pello@ams.usda.gov.