

**For Immediate Release**

Contact:  
Mark Villata  
U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council  
(916) 983-0111

## **U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council Conducts Regional Member Elections**

March 30, 2018- The U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council (USHBC) is currently conducting an election to fill Regional Member and Alternate positions. Regional ballots will be mailed to growers on April 20, 2018. The voting period will be open for 35 days and close on May 25, 2018. Growers who have not received a ballot by April 23, 2018 are asked to contact the USHBC office at (916) 983-0111.

Those receiving the most votes for each producer seat will be recommended to the Secretary of Agriculture as Regional Council Members. Those who earn the second most votes for each position will be recommended as the Regional Alternate. The names of those who receive the third and fourth most votes will be sent on to the Secretary for consideration as well. Council Members and Alternates will serve a term of three years beginning January 1, 2019. Members and Alternates can serve for a maximum of two consecutive terms. Current USHBC Regional Member and Alternate terms for the Western, Midwest, Northeast and Southern regions will expire on December 31, 2018.

The USHBC has adopted a diversity outreach plan to attempt to achieve a diverse representation on the Council. USHBC programs and meetings are open to all individuals. The USHBC prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, genetic information, parental status and marital or family status. It is USHBC policy that membership on the Council and its committees reflect the diversity of individuals served by its programs. To accomplish this objective, the USHBC will strive to attain representation of growers and other industry participants from diverse backgrounds on the Council and USHBC committees. To this end, the USHBC strongly encourages women, minorities and persons with disabilities to seek nominations to the USHBC and to participate in Council and USHBC committee activities.

Producers and importers of highbush blueberries approved the establishment of the USHBC through a referendum conducted by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service in the year 2000. The USHBC program was formally established in August of 2000. The program is funded by an assessment of \$18 per ton on domestic highbush (cultivated) blueberries and \$18 per ton on fresh and processed imported cultivated blueberries. Market promotion activities funded through the USHBC program began in January of 2002.