



Wild Blueberry Commission OF MAINE

5784 York Complex, Suite 52, Orono, Maine 04469-5784

TEL: 207-581-1475

FAX: 207-581-3499

February 1, 2016

Jessica Nixon
Director, Market Development
Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
28 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

RE: Wild Blueberry Real Foods Pick Wild Trade Program Grant – First Annual Progress Report

Dear Jessica:

Enclosed please find the First Annual Progress Report from the Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine (“Commission”) regarding its “Wild Blueberry Real Foods Pick Wild Trade Program,” recipient of a 2015 Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Agricultural Development Grant (#01A 20150211*2590).

The Commission is pleased to share the exciting work that the Program has accomplished in the past year, and we look forward to more activities – and results – in 2016. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Very Truly Yours,

Nancy McBrady, Executive Director
Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine

cc: Mike Collins, Ethos Marketing and Design
Trish Kontur, Program Director, Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine

Encl.

Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine
“Real Foods Pick Wild Trade Program”
DACF Marketing Grant
#01A 20150211*2590

First Annual Performance Report
February 1, 2016

Project Summary:

Over the past year, the Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine has built upon its existing “Pick Wild” campaign by developing a new incremental trade program aimed at capturing a larger share of the blueberry ingredient business for Maine’s special Wild Blueberries. This campaign has been supported by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry’s Agricultural Marketing Grant, awarded in 2015. The **Real Foods Pick Wild Trade Program** has been designed to stimulate short and longer term ingredient demand by developing and communicating a persuasive “wild value proposition” that will influence real food brands to “Pick Wild” as the unique blueberry ingredient of choice for their products.

Goals:

The overall goal of the **Wild Blueberry Real Foods Pick Wild Trade Program** is to develop and execute a concerted trade effort that will win more Wild Blueberry trade ingredient customers, thus increasing sales of Maine’s frozen Wild Blueberries. This goal has and will be fostered through short, medium and long-term efforts.

Short-Term:

- The program conducted detailed consumer and trade research to identify prospects and document the premium value of “Wild” in relation to real foods.

Mid-Term:

- Converted research findings into compelling trade documentation and multi-media presentations and built a preliminary database of ingredient business prospects.

Long-Term:

- Implementing an efficient online lead generating and tracking system that helps the Wild Blueberry industry attract, nurture and convert ingredient business prospect into valued customers for years to come.

Achievements to Date:

In 2015, Ethos, the marketing agency leading this effort, completed the three development phases of the **Real Foods Pick Wild Trade Program** and is now putting the final touches on the launch of a new and comprehensive trade outreach effort commencing in February 2016. They conducted the research necessary to build the foundation for the “value of Wild” approach and trade story. They completed compelling trade videos to help persuade the industry’s trade prospects to consider Wild Blueberries for their Real Food Brands. They developed trade collateral to showcase the “Power of Wild” video and research. They enhanced the trade section of the www.wildblueberries.com website with a comprehensive inbound marketing approach and special landing pages designed to capture and nurture trade leads. Ethos is now launching ongoing trade content development and PR and digital awareness-building efforts.

Phase 1 Completed: Prospect Research & “Value of Wild” Research

Prospect Research helped us understand the Wild Blueberry trade universe in both the foodservice and package goods environment. Ethos used Technomics, a foodservice data research provider to identify 980 restaurant chains with 80,000 nationwide locations that had 2,182 Blueberry mentions on their menus but only a small number of Wild Blueberry mentions. Similarly, Ethos worked with Nielsen, a company with extensive grocery scan data to assist in identifying some of the top blueberry and Wild Blueberry users in the packaged goods and grocery store environment. These two resources helped identify a broad array of blueberry ingredient users that would benefit by picking Wild Blueberries in order to increase the consumer appeal of their offerings.

Value of Wild Research was an extensive three-phase research project to establish positive consumer-validated reasons why the trade should choose Wild Blueberries to support their Real Food brands. The Ethos team used a general omnibus survey to get an understanding for how well “Wild” could connect to the movement favoring real foods. Using information and insights gained from the omnibus they conducted qualitative focus groups with our target consumers to determine which foods would benefit most by calling out Wild Blueberries as a key ingredient vs. regular blueberries and why. Ethos then worked with Portland Marketing Analytics to construct and field a nationwide research study that quantified the value Wild Blueberries could add vs. regular blueberries if highlighted on packages and menus across categories and in a variety selling environments.

Results from the quantitative survey of over 1000 consumers supports compelling reasons to Pick Wild. Across all categories covered in the research (smoothies, muffins, yogurt, jams etc.) the majority of all consumers were more apt to buy products that contained Wild Blueberries vs. those same products containing blueberries. The research clearly demonstrated the value that Wild Blueberries can bring to packaged goods or foodservice offerings on a number of dimensions:

- Consumers said they would buy more and were even willing to pay a bit more for products containing Wild Blueberries.
- Consumers believed products containing Wild Blueberries would taste better, be healthier, and support sustainability better than those same products containing cultivated blueberries.
- Consumers said they would feel better buying products that were made with Wild Blueberries vs. blueberries.

We will be able to use the research to drive home all the reasons why it makes sense for our trade targets to pay attention to the blueberry ingredient they select for their consumer products. By picking Wild they can differentiate themselves and better connect with what their consumers want.

Phase 2 Completed: Trade Story/ Video Development

Ethos completed the foundational Real Foods Pick Wild Video that will be used to get the attention and interest of our trade prospects. The video consists of several components to help us tell our story.

- **Trade testimonials with trade influencers** who already understand what Wild Blueberries contribute to their brands. (e.g., Panera Breads and Stonewall Kitchen)
- **Interview on Cultural Food Trends** with top selling author Mark Schatzker, who explains shifting food trends and the move by today's consumers and food manufactures to reconnect with food that connects taste and nutrition the way nature intended.
- **Interview on the Wild Difference** with blueberry specialist, David Yarborough, discussing the unique story of the Wild Blueberry plant that enjoys advantages in taste, health and sustainability over its cultivated cousin.
- **Beautiful Wild Blueberry harvest footage and "Power of Wild" Research** helps us weave the story together and gives the viewer a reason to engage with us further on our website.
- **Video link-** Both a short and longer form version of our "Power of Wild" video were created. Link to the short version below:
 - Power of Wild (short)- <https://vimeo.com/153546515>

Phase 3- In Process: Campaign Outreach Commences in February- Set-Up of Hubspot Inbound Marketing, Creation of Additional Trade Collateral, Direct mail, Trade Blog, PR pitching and Digital Media Campaign Outreach.

Ethos created inbound landing pages to help start a dialogue with trade prospects visiting the website and to collect their information for our trade database. They have created sales collateral to support processors and brokers in their direct selling efforts and a direct mail video card that can be used to target key trade media influencers and top trade prospects. They also transformed the research into a “Power of Wild” white paper that is being used to gain prospective emails in exchange for the full report. Ongoing trade content is being developed in partnership with the Culinary Institute of America. This thoughtful content will be used to feed our new “Power of Wild” blog and trade email program and to maintain and strengthen regular connections with newly recruited prospects.

Please see the following three pages for examples of the materials created to support the **Real Foods Pick Wild Trade Program**.

Primary Web Landing Page: encourage download of report and capture emails

Wild About Blueberries Blog [f](#) [t](#) [@](#)

Wild Blueberries THE BETTER BLUEBERRY HEALTH & RESEARCH RECIPES WHERE TO BUY WHOLESALE & TRADE PRESS

There are two kinds of blueberries.

ONE CAN CHANGE YOUR BRAND.

RESEARCH SHOWS WILD BLUEBERRIES CAN INCREASE YOUR SALES.

Including Wild Blueberries:

- Increases purchase intent
- Increases purchase volume
- Increases price premium

DOWNLOAD THE FULL REPORT NOW!

Consumers reported that they were more likely to buy, buy more, and pay more for wild blueberry products vs those with cultivated blueberries:

- **Higher Purchase Likelihood:** Up to 69% more likely to buy
- **Greater Purchase Volume:** Up to 73% would buy more
- **Price Premium:** Up to 64% would pay more

See what top food marketers & trend watchers say about the power of Wild Blueberries.

Tom Gumpel
Head Baker at Panera Bread
"Food as it should be"

Wild Blueberries improved taste, health, and sustainability perceptions over regular blueberries in every category tested.

There's a growing buzz about real foods that are as 'nature intended.' Unaltered ingredients enhance product appeal and help food formulators and brand managers connect brands to the 'Real Food' movement sweeping America.

Click below to get a taste of the research for your category:

Download the Power of Wild Research Report

Get specific data detailing how Wild Blueberries boost sales in your category.

Name

Email

Company

Phone

Download Now

Suppliers

Find the best Wild Blueberry Supplier to satisfy your needs

Direct Mail Video Card: sent to top trade targets and used as a Power of Wild selling tool.



There are two kinds of blueberries.

ONE CAN CHANGE YOUR BRAND.

Wild Blueberries Make a Big Difference.

In every category tested, Wild Blueberries vs cultivated blueberries:

- INCREASE PURCHASE INTENT
- INCREASE CONSUMPTION
- INCREASE PRICE PREMIUM

Here's a Taste.

What Wild Blueberries add to smoothies vs cultivated blueberries:

- 73%** ARE WILLING TO BUY MORE
- 85%** BELIEVE THEY TASTE BETTER
- 81%** THINK WILD BLUEBERRIES INCREASE HEALTH BENEFITS
- 63%** ARE WILLING TO PAY MORE

Source: Cited from Power of Wild, Portland Marketing Analytics, 2015. A US Quantitative Consumer Research Study.

Get the Full Research Report.

Download the full category research and see how Wild Blueberries could give your brand a boost. The report includes quantitative consumer findings on 8 different food service and packaged goods categories. Report available at wildblueberries.com/powerofwild.

VIDEO

Learn why top food marketers and trend watchers love Wild Blueberries.

"People are looking for real food, food that's authentic, food that tells a real story. That's what's driving food trends now."
Mark Schatzker, author of "The Dorito Effect"

Wild Blueberries

Using Wild Blueberries boosts purchase intent in every category tested.

Yogurt, Jams/Preserves, Ice Cream, Muffins

Get all the data for your specific category. And get ahead of the trend.

Download the Power of Wild Research Report. wildblueberries.com/powerofwild

Wild Blueberries

Power of Wild Report: Excerpt from full research report that helps the trade make informed decisions about the added value consumers place on Wild food ingredients and on Wild Blueberries showcased in the foods they buy.



THE REPORT AT A GLANCE

Members of the packaged food and food service trade must routinely decide what ingredients to include in the products they sell to consumers. The purpose of this report is to identify the factors associated with an increased or decreased correlation between the use of wild foods in consumer products, and specifically, the consumer product preferences of Wild Blueberries vs. regular cultivated blueberries.

Using three studies, we examined the data collected from a cross-section of consumers to discover the perspectives and attitudes around “wild foods,” then how foods containing Wild Blueberries would perform in the market today vs. those utilizing regular blueberries.

These findings were then directly correlated with the commercially desirable behaviors of purchase likelihood, purchase volume, and reduced price sensitivity. Further examination addressed the roles that taste, health, sustainability, and resulting sentiment play when a consumer chooses between a product containing Wild Blueberries versus the same product containing cultivated blueberries.

Summary of Key Findings:

- 1 “Wild foods” are premium in the context of health and taste benefits.
- 2 “Wild foods” and Wild Blueberries deliver enhanced consumer preference because they imply food in its purest form.
- 3 Including and labeling Wild Blueberries (instead of cultivated blueberries) in a product increases purchase intent, purchase volume, and price premium in multiple categories.
- 4 Consumers believe Wild Blueberries make a product taste better, healthier, more sustainable, and consumers feel better about themselves when eating it.
- 5 LOHAS brands are best positioned to leverage “The Power of Wild.”

FOOD PRODUCTS STUDIED

Yogurt
Muffins
Smoothies
Jams/Preserves
Ice Cream/Frozen Yogurt

CONTENTS

Introduction
page 2
Types of Food
Products Studied
page 3
Consumer Types
page 4
Measurement
page 5
Key Finding #1
page 6
Key Finding #2
page 7
Key Finding #3
page 8
Key Finding #4
page 10
Key Finding #5
page 12
Conclusions
page 13
Appendix
page 14

MORE INFORMATION:

For questions regarding
this research, email
wbresearch@wildblueberries.com

Next Steps:



With all of the support materials now in place, Ethos will now start pitching the trade media on our “Power of Wild” connection to the Real Food movement. They will also commence a digital media campaign to attract trade prospects to our “Power of Wild” video and associated research and trade assets which will be housed in the trade section of our website. (Key word advertising, LinkedIn, Facebook, popular trade news outlets, etc.) This PR and Digital outreach is where the Wild Blueberry Commission will begin tapping into the grant money awarded to support this important Wild Blueberry trade initiative. As we attract more of the blueberry ingredient trade to our website, we expect to start turning preliminary prospects into leads and eventually into loyal Wild Blueberry customers.

Ethos will track and record traffic to the new landing pages, the number of prospective trade contacts that it adds to the database, and will be in communication with Wild Blueberry processors to determine the successful acquisition of new trade clients/accounts. High-level results will be compiled and shared with the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry.