

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

Date: March 10,2020

Report Number: SF2020-0008

Report Name: U S Highbush Blueberry Council Visit to South Africa

Country: South Africa - Republic of

Post: Pretoria

Report Category: Market Development Reports

Prepared By: Margaret Ntloedibe

Approved By: Laura Geller

Report Highlights:

During February 26 to March 5, 2020, a representative from the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council (USHBC) visited South Africa. FAS Pretoria facilitated meetings, securing access to a trade show, and providing a U.S. Embassy briefing. Based on the visit, USHBC will produce a market assessment report, but the initial outlook is very positive for U.S. blueberries.

From February 26 to March 5, 2020, a representative from the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council (USHBC) visited South Africa. FAS Pretoria was able to arrange meetings with importers and large retailers, including Woolworths, ShopRite, Spar, and Food Lovers. In addition to retailers, FAS Pretoria facilitated meetings with HortGro, South Africa's horticultural association, and a U.S.-owned blueberry farm in South Africa. FAS Pretoria also organized VIP access to the Hostex Food and Hospitality trade show, including a meeting with the show organizer, and a U.S. Embassy briefing.

Feedback from USHBC was very positive regarding the potential opportunities for U.S. blueberries in the South African market. The U.S. is currently requesting market access for fresh blueberries, but frozen and processed blueberries have access. South Africa's growing season runs from July to January, but the retail stores stop stocking blueberries February to June. Once market access is granted, there is an opportunity for U.S. blueberries to fill the gap in the off season to ensure that South African consumers have year-round access to high quality blueberries.

Based on the preliminary meetings, additional opportunities exist around blueberry juice, which is practically non-existent in South Africa, frozen blueberries, dried blueberries, and blueberry byproducts. USHBC noted the South African blueberry industry does not have the capacity to fully utilize low grade blueberries.

FAS Pretoria and USHBC will continue to work together to identify and maximize opportunities for U.S. blueberries in South Africa.

Attachments:

No Attachments.