



May 1, 2018

To Whom it May Concern:

The Florida Blueberry Growers Association and Georgia Blueberry Growers Association together represent over 800 growers, and more than 21,000 acres of commercially grown Blueberries. Our combined industries are estimated to be a 108 million pounds (2015) which translates to over \$186 million crop value, making it a U.S. leader in fresh blueberries.

The massive importation of Mexican blueberries during our window are crippling the Florida & Georgia Blueberry Industries. Mexico realizes many cost savings benefits, including but not limited to, lower growing and labor costs, that puts Florida producers at a competitive disadvantage. To add insult to injury, a USDA variety (Biloxi), paid for by US tax dollars at no cost to Mexican growers is the most widely planted variety.

On April 2nd alone, more than 735,000 pounds of Mexican blueberries crossed our border. The week of April 16th 400,000 to 500,000 pounds a day flooded our American grocery stores, directly and negatively impacting our Florida & Georgia blueberry farms.

Year to date Mexico has imported more than 43.5 million pounds of fresh blueberries in the 2018 season; Florida & Georgia has produced approximately half of that at 21 million pounds.

The Florida & Georgia Blueberry industries have experienced growth and stability in the recent past, however the competitive disadvantage with the large volumes of low priced fruit have resulted in a collapsing market, and continual and rapid decline in pricing. It is impossible for our blueberry growers to compete.

The Florida Blueberry Growers Association & Georgia Blueberry Growers support a modernization of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and we applaud the Administration's commitment to a renegotiation with Mexico and Canada. The viability of our industry is at stake. We ask that there be some provisions included to protect the blueberry industry of Florida and Georgia.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brittany H. Lee".

Brittany H. Lee

President

Florida Blueberry Growers Association

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brandon Wade".

Brandon Wade

President

Georgia Blueberry Growers Association