

**From:** Farm Products Council of Canada <noreply@fpcc-cpac.gc.ca>  
**Sent:** March-27-14 2:36 PM  
**To:** hearings-audiences  
**Subject:** Participate in a public hearing - APPEARANCE - Strawberry

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Mark

Sweeney

Berry Specialist

BC Ministry of Agriculture

1767 Angus Campbell

Abbotsford

2

1

V3G 2M3

[Mark.Sweeney@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Mark.Sweeney@gov.bc.ca)

To show support for establishing a National Strawberry Council

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**De:** Sweeney, Mark AGRI:EX <Mark.Sweeney@gov.bc.ca>  
**Envoyé:** 11 avril 2014 13:00  
**À:** hearings-audiences  
**Objet:** RE: Blueberry Graph  
**Pièces jointes:** healthresearccor.pptx; Presentation to National Strawberry Council Hearing.docx

Hello Chantal,

Attached is a copy of my presentation and a couple of slides illustrating the link between health research and crop value. Let me know if this is adequate or if you need the original study.

Mark

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**From:** hearings-audiences [<mailto:hearings-audiences@AGR.GC.CA>]  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 7:52 AM  
**To:** Sweeney, Mark AGRI:EX  
**Subject:** Blueberry Graph

Good morning Mr. Sweeney,

During your presentation in Vancouver, you mentioned that you would be providing a graph to the Panel, can I impose on you to send it to us at your earliest convenience.

Thank you.

Best regards,

**Presentation to Canadian Strawberry Council Hearing**

April 1, 2014

Mark Sweeney, P. Ag.  
Berry Industry Specialist  
BC Ministry of Agriculture

I have been employed as the berry industry specialist with the BC Ministry of Agriculture since 1998. My responsibilities are to provide leadership and technical support to encourage the development of the BC berry industries and to facilitate key activities in research, extension, market development and issue management. I participate as an ex officio director on the boards of the BC Strawberry Growers Association, the BC Raspberry Industry Development Council and the BC Blueberry Council. I also serve on the health research committee of the US Highbush Blueberry Council (USHBC) which has given me first-hand insight into the power and impact of a national development and promotional entity.

There are many opportunities and challenges facing the Canadian berry industry over the next decade. On the positive side, berries have experienced strong market demand and growth along with increased availability, quality and a strong association with many health benefits.

The California strawberry industry has been a real success story in growing and dominating the North America market. However, another berry group, the blueberry industry, has led the way in leveraging and directing funds for health research and taking a strong, generic promotional message to a national and international audience. In the process, and in part due to its success, the USHBC has built unprecedented national and international co-operation within the blueberry industry. As a result of these achievements, blueberry growers worldwide have reaped substantial benefits with growth in market demand and profitable pricing. In a recent survey, (<http://www.ridethebluewave.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/USHBC-UA-Study-Executive-Summary.pdf>) when consumers were asked to rank their first fresh berry preference, blueberries came out on top at 36.6 % compared to strawberries at 29.5 % - a reversal from the 2008 results. Is this shift a wake-up call for the strawberry industry – an indication that a new approach is necessary. The USHBC model is one that other industries in both Canada and the US are rightly looking to emulate and, for today's deliberations, one that can provide both justification and example for the Canadian strawberry industry in pursuing a national council.

On the challenge side, the Canadian strawberry industry faces a host of production challenges including pests and disease pressures, yield limitations, shortcomings in available genetics and varieties and issues with labour and mechanization. A national organization can be the catalyst for addressing these

challenges and opportunities in both growing the strawberry market and improving productivity.

From my perspective, the following could be areas of focus for the council which would provide benefits to both domestic and foreign strawberry producers and marketers:

- In collaboration other strawberry industry partners, follow the USHBC model and initiate and fund health research work trials to quantify and demonstrate specific health benefits which will stimulate increased interest in and consumption of strawberries. Health research is extremely expensive and can only be achieved by collaborations to leverage necessary funds.
- Coordinate and carry out a targeted, national, generic marketing campaign to inform Canadians of the many positive attributes associated with high quality domestic and imported strawberries. There has been some discussion on whether importers will benefit from such a program – again the USHBC example demonstrates how a generic program, fresh and process, domestic and imported can be of benefit to all players in the industry.
- Identify, prioritize, coordinate and fund research projects which will have broad benefit across all strawberry growing regions. Examples could be identifying improved genetic sources of resistant to various strawberry viruses, *Phytophthora* or Anthracnose and development of tools for management of Spotted Wing *Drosophila*, thrips and cyclamen mites.

In addition to these key potential accomplishments there are a couple of other important points that need to be made:

- The national leadership of a Canadian Strawberry Council will foster improved linkages between Canadian regional strawberry industries and the international strawberry community to resolve challenges of mutual interest.
- As public infrastructure in research and development diminishes it is imperative for Canadian agricultural industries to become more self-sufficient and self-directing. The structure and funding flowing from a national council will be enable the Canadian strawberry industry to manage its own future development. Funding from domestic and imported product can be leveraged from various public and private sources to greatly enhance development efforts.

As an active participant in the development of the Canadian strawberry industry over the last fifteen years, it is clear to me that the formation of an effective Canadian Strawberry Council is essential for the long term viability and development of the Canadian strawberry industry.

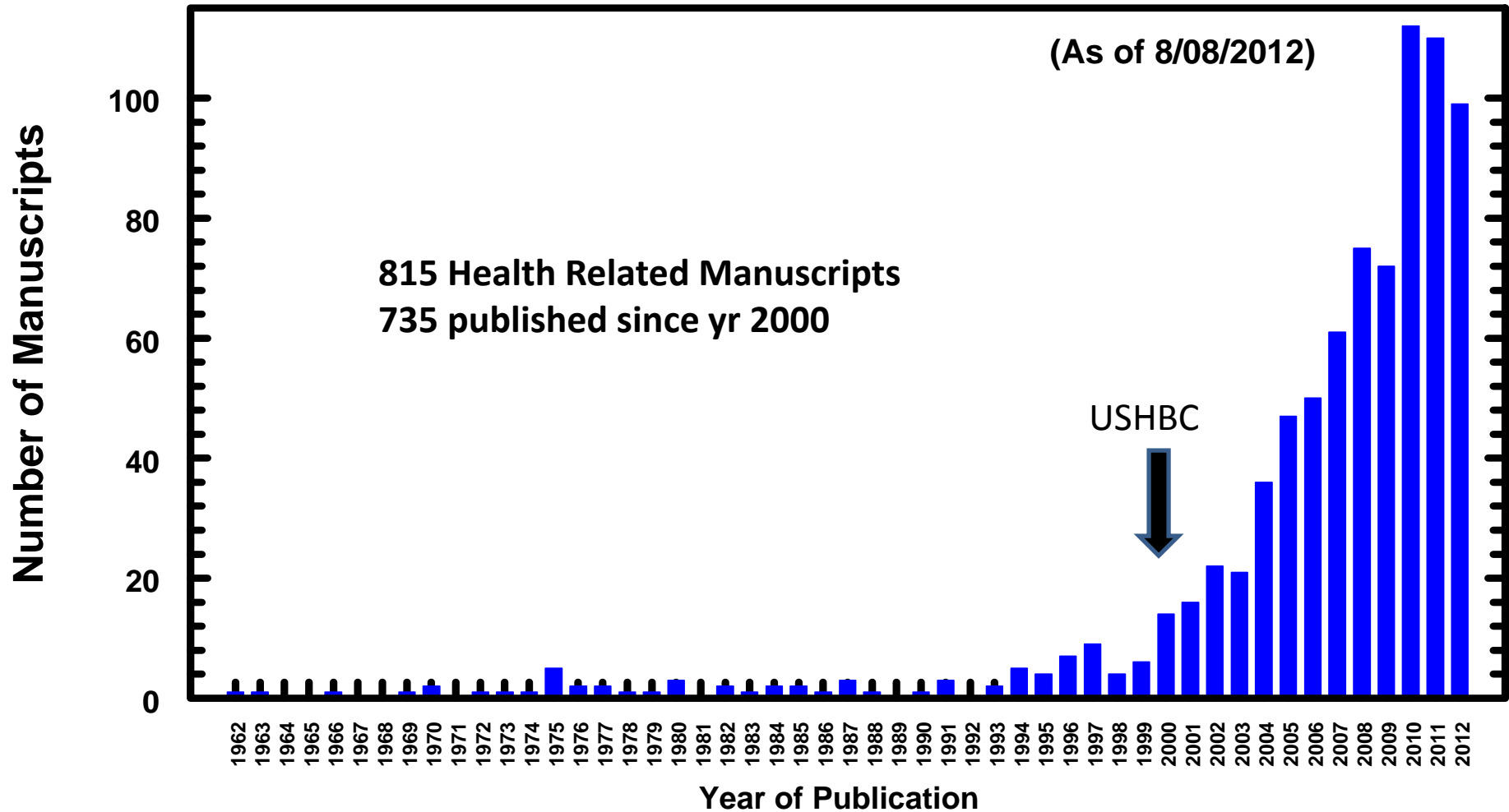
As well as registering my personal support, please note that the BC minister of agriculture is in full support of this initiative of the Canadian strawberry industry.

Thank-you for the opportunity to present this submission.

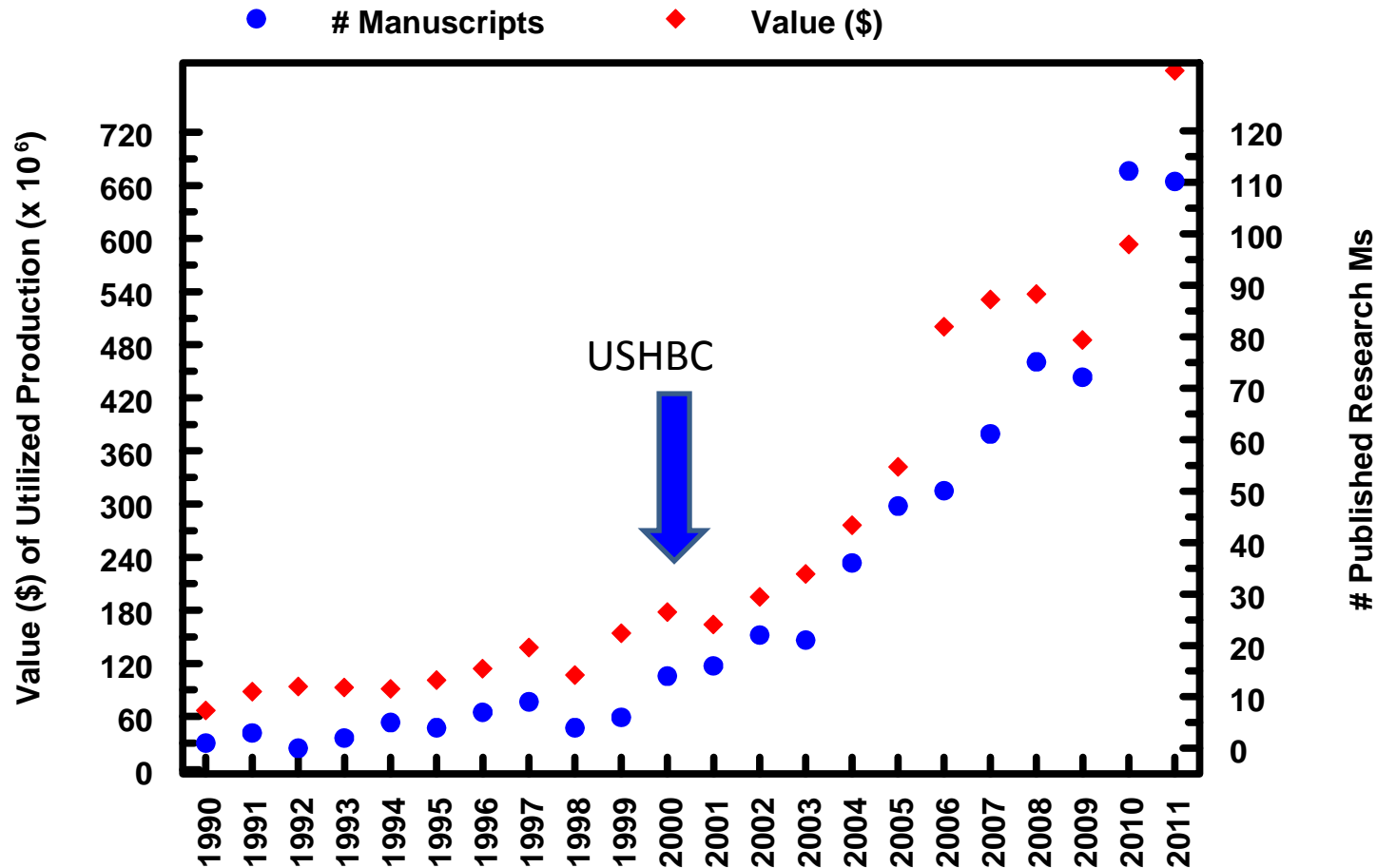
# Health Research Publications



## BLUEBERRY/BILBERRY Health Related Research Publications



# Crop Value Tracks with Health Research Publications



Source: USDA, ERS, May 2012