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Canada

Post: Ottawa

High Bush Blueberry Production in Canada

Report Categories:

Fresh Fruit

Agricultural Situation

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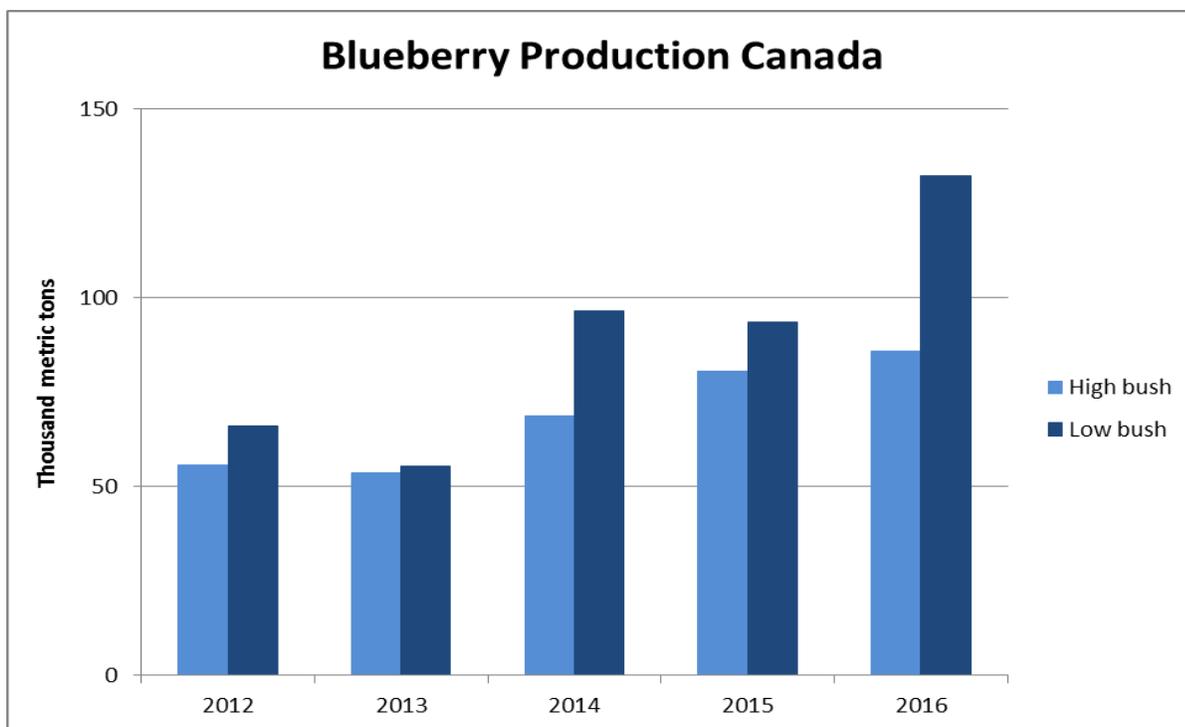
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Report Highlights:

Blueberries are the top horticulture crop in Canada, accounting for approximately 25 percent of horticultural farm gate value. In the last five years, Canadian low bush (wild) and high bush (cultivated) blueberry production has grown significantly. While increased production and changing consumer trends have contributed to a decline in farm gate value for low bush blueberries, high bush blueberry farm gate values increased through 2016. The majority of Canadian high bush blueberry production is concentrated in the Province of British Columbia, which exports more than 95 percent of Canadian fresh cultivated blueberries.

Keywords: Canada, CA17048, Blueberry



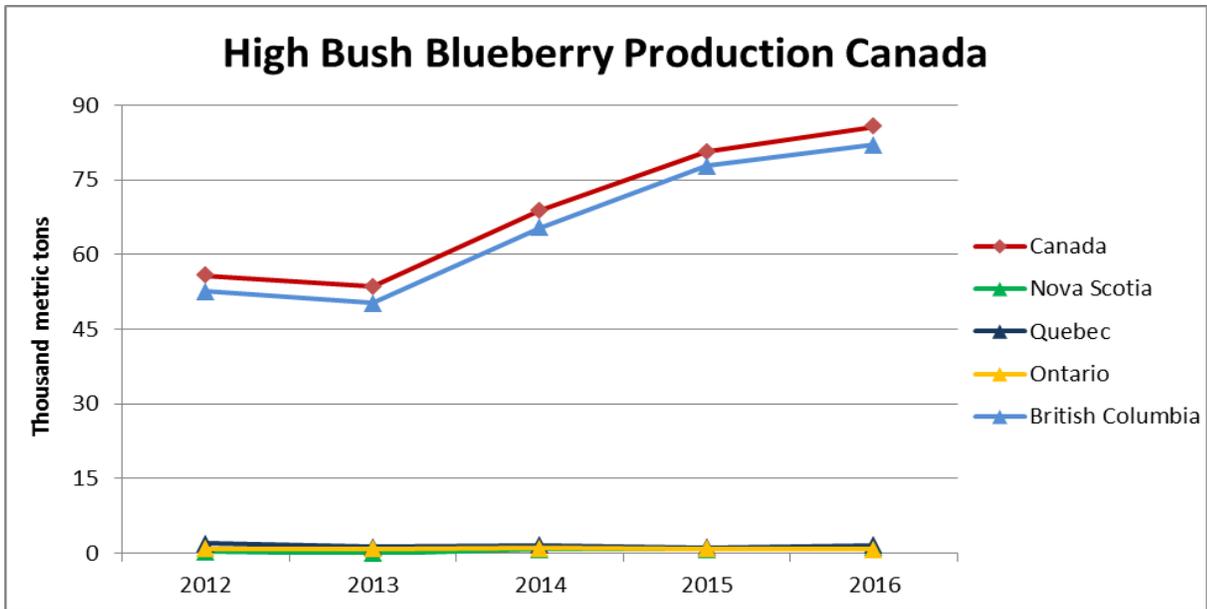
Source: Statistics Canada

CANADA: High Bush Blueberries

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Production (metric tons)	55,737	53,549	68,830	80,615	85,769
Area planted (hectares)	9,830	9,780	9,490	10,511	10,523
Area harvested (hectares)	8,249	8,891	8,881	10,127	10,093

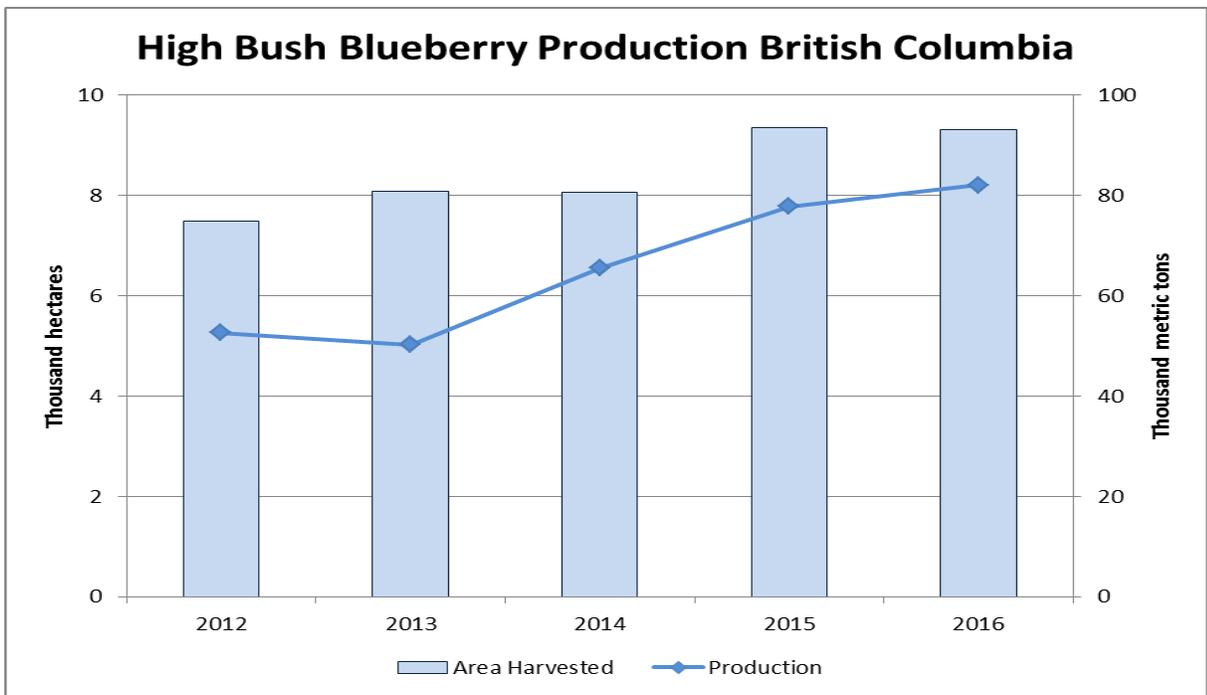
Source: Statistics Canada

Blueberries are Canada's top horticulture crop according to reports from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, with blueberries accounting for approximately 25 percent of fresh fruit farm gate value in Canada and remaining the top fruit export by value despite the 2016 decline in export volumes and values. From 2012 to 2016 Canada saw large increases in blueberry production with low bush blueberry production increasing 100 percent from 66,044 metric tons (MT) to 132,235 MT and high bush blueberry production increasing 54 percent from 55,737 MT to 85,769 MT. Low bush blueberry production is concentrated in Eastern Canada, with the province of Quebec being the largest producer followed by New Brunswick. Approximately 96 percent of Canadian high bush blueberry production is in the province of British Columbia.



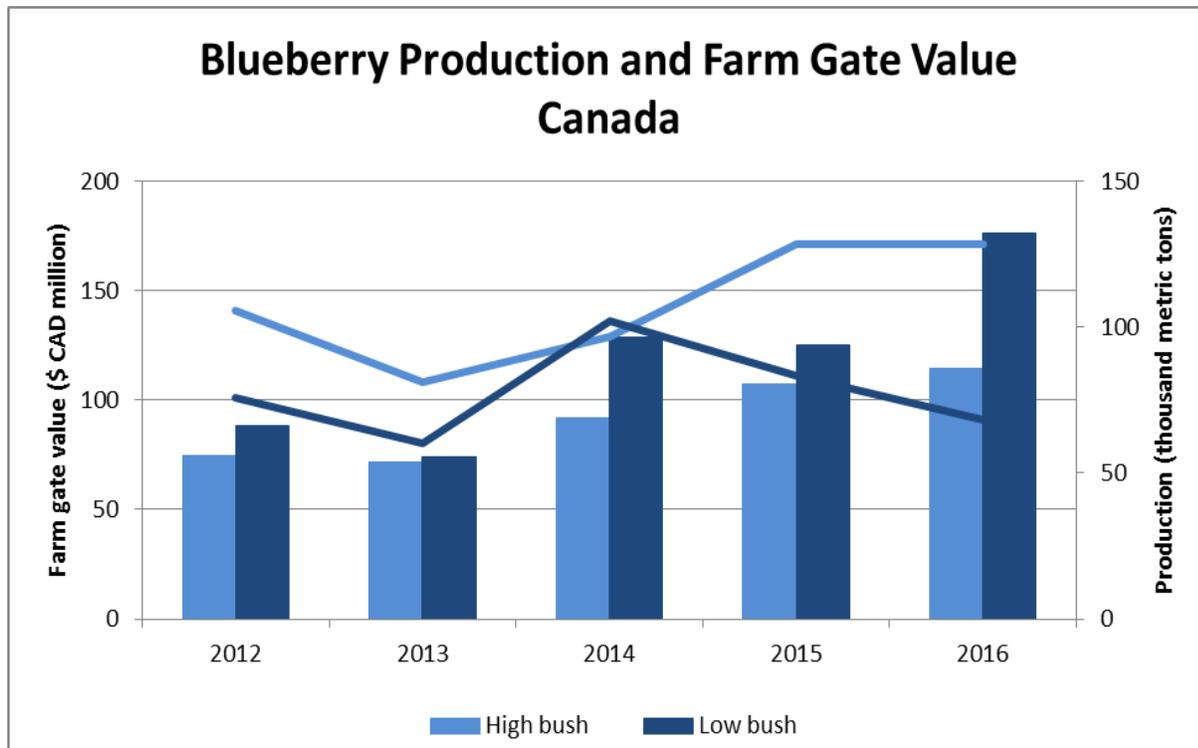
Source: Statistics Canada

British Columbia high bush blueberry production increased 56 percent from 52,597 MT in 2012 to 82,005 MT in 2016. Planted area increased 9 percent over that time period while harvested area increased 24 percent as previously planted area reached maturity.



Source: Statistics Canada

While the farm gate value of low bush blueberries has been in decline, falling to \$91 million CAD in 2016 after peaking in 2014, the farm gate value of high bush blueberries increased to approximately \$171 million CAD in 2016.



Source: Statistics Canada

British Columbia High Bush Blueberry Exports

British Columbia produces between 96 and 98 percent of Canadian exports of fresh cultivated blueberries in any given year, with 98 percent of exports destined for the United States. With increased competition from geographically proximate U.S. growers, Oregon and Washington State in particular, the province of British Columbia has been exploring Asia-Pacific markets for increased export opportunities.

In 2016, China approved 10 packing companies and 19 production facilities in British Columbia for export to the Chinese market. Reports indicate that Canadian exports to China were negatively impacted in 2016, as an early harvest in British Columbia placed Canadian fresh cultivated blueberries in direct competition with Chinese product. Sources indicate that the 2017 harvest, beginning in mid-July, was more in-line with traditional harvesting times and more complementary to the Chinese growing season, which typically winds down at that time. However, year-to-date trade data indicate Canadian exports of fresh cultivated blueberries to China are down 8 percent from 2016. This may be a result of a slightly smaller British Columbia crop leaving less production for export, a lack of demand from the Chinese market, or the high landed cost of Canadian fresh blueberries after tariffs.

In 2016, Canadian blueberry exports to China faced a 30 percent tariff rate. While media outlets have reported a tariff rate decrease in 2017, Global Affairs Canada (GAC) confirmed that Canadian fresh

blueberries continue to face a 30 percent tariff in the Chinese market. GAC noted that China did reduce tariffs for certain Canadian fruit and vegetable products in 2017, but the tariff for Canadian fresh blueberries remained unchanged in 2017. The World Trade Organization reported a [30 percent bound duty for Most-Favoured-Nations](#), including Canada, in 2017.

Data through October 2017 indicate that Canada is on pace to recover from 2016's fresh cultivated blueberry export declines and return to the record high export level of 2015. Exports to Hong Kong, while representing a very small share of Canada's total exports, reached 10-year highs in 2016 and 2017. Hong Kong does not impose a duty on fresh blueberries. Canadian exports to Japan and Australia have been falling in recent years, particularly as Australia is reported to be improving production techniques and making its own inroads into East Asian markets.

Canada: Exports of cultivated blueberries (HS 08104012)

Calendar year/ Quantity in metric tons

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017*
World	21,804	21,498	24,437	25,692	21,922	24,365
United States	21,672	21,395	24,290	25,150	21,621	24,102
China	0	0	8	2	84	77
Australia	0	0	21	120	81	40
Hong Kong	9	14	40	9	66	72
Japan	86	69	44	64	27	17
All other countries	37	20	34	347	43	57

*Year-to-date (October 2017)

Source: *Global Trade Atlas*