

Wild Blueberries

**MAINE'S *Wild Blueberry* BUSINESS:
INNOVATION, GROWTH, IMPACT**

- Maine's Wild Blueberries have been commercially harvested since the 1840s.
- Wild Blueberry processing innovations began with canning in the 1860s, developing the Individually Quick Frozen (IQF) berries in the 1960s and now include computer color-sorting technology.
- In the late 1990s Maine's Wild Blueberry growers and processors recognized that demand would increase by communicating the health research message to consumers for "Nature's Antioxidant SuperFruit."
- Thanks to comprehensive crop production research and development based at the University of Maine, Maine's Wild Blueberry growers are leaders in the development and adaptation of knowledge-based cropping systems.
- Maine has quadrupled its annual crop yield from 20-million pounds in the 1980s to between 70-million and 100-million pounds today, making Maine the largest producer of Wild Blueberries in the world.
- In 2007, direct and indirect economic impact of the Wild Blueberry business in Maine totaled \$250 million.
- Public policy support for farmers and food processors in Maine is a key to reaching future economic potential of up to \$500 million in annual economic impact over the next decade.

THIS REPORT IS A SUMMARY OF
**THE ECONOMIC & FISCAL IMPACT ON
THE STATE OF MAINE OF THE
WILD BLUEBERRY INDUSTRY,**
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PREPARED BY PLANNING DECISIONS, INC.

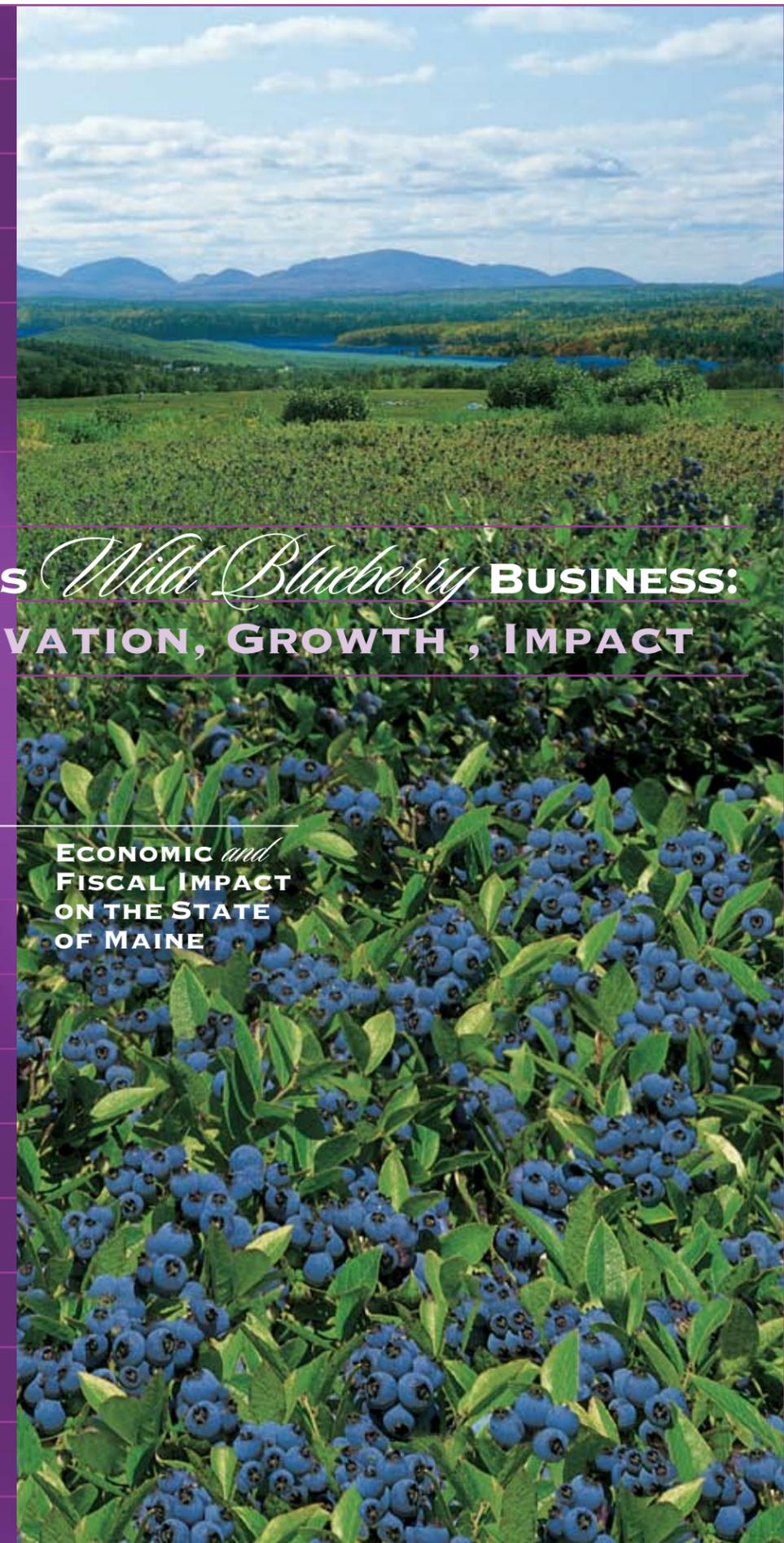


WILD BLUEBERRY COMMISSION of MAINE

University of Maine • 5784 York Complex Suite 52 • Orono, ME 04469-5784
Tel: (207) 581-1475 • Fax: (207) 581-3499

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INNOVATION, GROWTH, IMPACT**

**ECONOMIC *and*
FISCAL IMPACT
ON THE STATE
OF MAINE**



ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT *of the* WILD BLUEBERRY BUSINESS *in* MAINE

MAINE IS THE LARGEST PRODUCER OF WILD BLUEBERRIES IN THE WORLD. THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THIS AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS IS VITAL TO OUR STATE, AS SHOWN BY A RECENT REPORT BASED ON 2007 CROP FIGURES. IN SUMMARY, EVERY YEAR THE WILD BLUEBERRY BUSINESS MAKES A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO MAINE'S ECONOMIC WELL-BEING:

- **\$173 MILLION** in direct sales impact
- Over **\$250 MILLION** in total economic impact
- Approximately **2,540 MAINE JOBS** – many in Maine's most economically challenged areas
- Approximately **\$63 MILLION** in personal income
- Nearly **\$9 MILLION** in state and local tax revenues
- Potential for a **\$400-\$500 MILLION** annual impact over the next decade

INNOVATION AND INVESTMENT

Over the last 30 years, investments in research and development, centered at the University of Maine, have fueled growth and innovation within the Wild Blueberry industry and transformed it into a modern, state-of-the-art food producer.

- **Integrated Crop Management (ICM)**
Today's growers use a sophisticated knowledge-based cropping system.



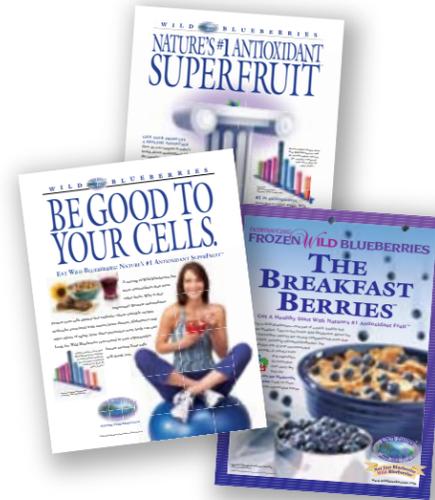
- **Advanced Technology**
Processors use laser color sorters and other high-tech equipment to meet worldwide demand for premium-quality frozen Wild Blueberries.



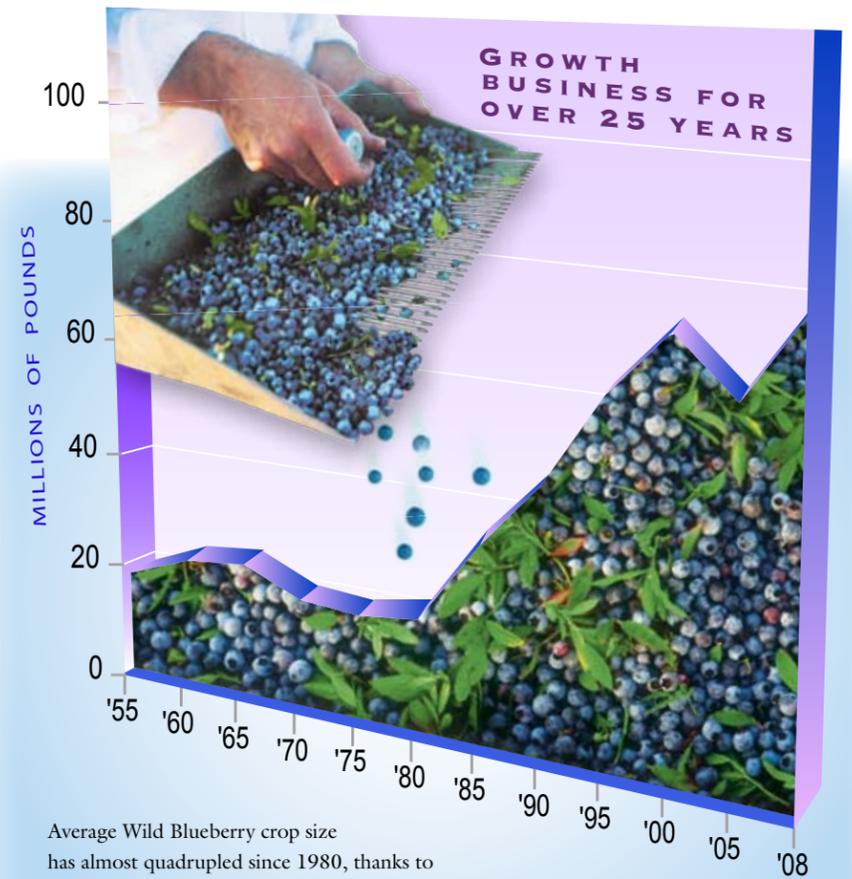
- **\$16 Million in Capital Investment**
Annual industry investments such as land improvements and new equipment add to Maine's direct sales economic impact.

AN ECONOMIC ENGINE FOR THE FUTURE

The economic impact of the Wild Blueberry industry benefits Maine as a whole and in particular some of the most economically challenged areas of our state including Downeast Maine where farming and food processing provide jobs and business diversification. As demand continues to grow, this impact has the potential to nearly double over the next decade.



- **Marketing and Promotion**
Funded by growers and processors, marketing and PR efforts have elevated consumer awareness of the health benefits of Wild Blueberries, driving ever-greater demand for this "antioxidant superfruit." See www.wildblueberries.com.
- **Sales Growth**
Sales of Wild Blueberries and Wild Blueberry products have increased consistently over the last decade and are projected to continue increasing well into the future.
- **\$400- to \$500-Million Potential**
With continued improvements in field productivity and processing facilities, and continued local, state and federal support, the annual economic impact is expected to increase twofold over the next decade.



Average Wild Blueberry crop size has almost quadrupled since 1980, thanks to long-term investment in research and development and reinvestment by Maine's growers and processors.

HERITAGE OF INNOVATION

Wild Blueberries have been part of Maine's agricultural heritage for centuries. Prized by Maine's native inhabitants for their nutritious and healing properties, Wild Blueberries were first harvested commercially in the 1840s. Today, Wild Blueberries are in high demand worldwide, considered an anti-aging superfood and a premium fruit ingredient. With further innovation, investment and policy support, this business will maintain its commitment to Maine's outdoor heritage and increase its contribution to Maine people and the economy.

