

Time for Polish Superfruits!

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Poland is number one in Europe and number six in the world when it comes to blueberry production. Interestingly, it is the leader of consumer growth. The blueberry is perceived as a superfruit and has become one of the pillars of a healthy lifestyle. This July, producers from around the world met in Poland at the International Blueberry Organization Summit to learn how to combine growing exports with multifaceted promotion on the domestic markets.

Blueberry consumption in Poland in 2022 was at an impressive 1.83 kg per person which is more than the USA - home of the blueberry - can boast with just 1.78 kg per person. According to the IBO, it is one of the greatest success stories of the global industry in the last decade.

Polish growers believe that growing domestic demand is the foundation for the development of the industry and their future export potential. They rely on promoting the habit of regular blueberry consumption. They have also learnt to combine the messages “eat local” with “eat healthy every day!”.

Producer cooperation and involvement in food education

Poland enjoys a centuries-old tradition of food production. The cooperation between Polish (cereal) growers and Dutch merchants was important for the history of Europe and gave rise to globalisation. Polish blueberry production started 50 years ago and added blueberries to the list of other berries already grown in the country. For hundreds of years, berries have been a mainstream produce type that is grown and processed in Poland.

Berries are well suited to the Polish temperate climate. The country enjoys warm days with cool nights, beautiful sunny summers and snowy, frosty winters.

The considerable daily and annual temperature fluctuations help Polish berries to gain their flavour and colouring. Interestingly, Polish producers also use this climatic feature as a part of their marketing communication to both domestic and international consumer audiences.

For the past 30 years, Polish blueberries have been present in a number of exports markets. They have always enjoyed a good reputation due to their overall quality and taste. The importers know that the combination of high chill periods and hot summers helps to create the balance between sweetness and acidity, giving Polish blueberries their unique flavour which is difficult to obtain in the growing regions in the south of Europe.

Positioning blueberry as a Superfruit

The newest chapter in the book of promotional activities is being written by the producers themselves. The “Time for Polish Superfruits!” campaign is a year-round promotional activity that positions berries as a daily superfood with the universal nutritional recommendation regardless of age and lifestyle. The campaign highlights the benefits of everyday consumption of berries and maintains a strong presence in media and Business-2-Business (Supply Chain) relations.

Berries are promoted in Poland as 'superfruits rich in health-promoting substances' with a real positive influence on immunity, regeneration and beauty. The logo of the campaign takes the form of a hashtag **#PolishSuperFruits** which highlights their added benefits.

The promotional activity applies to direct sales, self-picking and freezing of seasonal fruit. Fresh fruit is shown during the harvest season and later gives way to blueberry preserves. Autumn and winter are equally important to producers when it comes to promotional activities. Among others, three events stand out that promote the future of the berry industry.

Berry Fest – the most important Polish competition for berry alcohol products

Innovation Conference – review of new categories and interesting developments worldwide

Branding Ovation – a competition for the most interesting berry brand

These events are all meant to be incubators for new products, concepts, brands and labels.

Solidarity, cooperation and creativity

The blueberry promotion project in Poland is a collaboration between the Polish Blueberry Promotion Foundation, a few organisations in the industry and several producer groups.

The activities are partly financed by the Fruit and Vegetable Promotion Fund, which is co-created by the growers.

The success of the Polish blueberry industry and the extraordinary growth in consumption experienced strongly supports the "Berry Basket" promotional approach that is about to be launched here in Australia and you can read more about this new marketing approach on PAGE 72.



'CZAS NA MROZENIE' translating to **'TIME TO FREEZE'** is a key component of the year-round berry marketing campaign encouraging consumers to buy volume and freeze it when berries are at their peak in quality and availability

Photo credit: Polish Blueberry Promotion Foundation



Polish Blueberry Season Opening Ceremony at this year's IBO Summit in Poland

Photo credit: Polish Blueberry Promotion Foundation



Just like Australia, the use of social media to promote fresh berries is a major component of the year-round marketing campaign

Photo credit: Polish Blueberry Promotion Foundation

Poland Snapshot

- With just under 38 million inhabitants, Poland is the eighth most populous nation in Europe.
- Just over half of the population are city-dwellers and with 306,230 Km² of land, there's plenty of space for agriculture which has always been an important part of the country's economy.
- Poland is characterised by warm summers, with a mean temperature of around 20°C in July, and chilly winters (by Australian standards!) averaging -1°C in December.
- Poland is a big berry producing nation; they are the 7th largest producer of strawberries, 4th largest producer of raspberries, and now the 6th largest producer of blueberries in the world.
- Blueberry production is centred in the Mazovia, Lodzkie and Lubelskie areas in central and south eastern Poland.

