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WILD BLUEBERRY ASSOCIATION TO HOST RECEPTION IN SHANGHAI FOR MAINE GOVERNOR'S TRADE MISSION TO CHINA

***Education and tasting event intended to develop additional opportunities
in Chinese market.***

Portland, Maine – Representatives from the Wild Blueberry Association of North America will host a reception and Wild Blueberry seminar this week in Shanghai for Maine Governor Paul LePage and members of the Chinese business community to help launch the governor's trade mission to China. The trip is the first trade mission led by a Maine governor to mainland China.

"Blueberries are a popular ingredient and whole food in China, and we know there are tremendous additional opportunities for Wild Blueberries in both consumer and food ingredient markets," notes David Bell, executive director of the Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine. "This reception and seminar is an opportunity for us to share the unique story of Wild Blueberries and develop relationships with key business leaders."

After opening trade mission remarks from Governor LePage, members of the Wild Blueberry delegation will present information on the many characteristics that make Wild Blueberries attractive to the Chinese market.

Dr. Vivian Chi-Hua Wu, associate professor of microbiology and food safety at the University of Maine, will present the unique nutritional and health benefits associated with Wild Blueberries that are supported by an increasing body of research related to slowing memory loss, reducing risk factors for diabetes and heart disease, preserving eye health and more.

Patricia Kontur, program director at the Wild Blueberry Association, will talk about the incredible versatility of Wild Blueberries as an ingredient in a wide variety of products, and, because of state-of-the-art processing plants in Maine, the ability for frozen fresh Wild Blueberries to be delivered to Chinese markets with the quality of the fruit and nutrient value intact.

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Additionally, industry leaders in Maine believe the story of Wild Blueberries makes them attractive because they grow wild in limited areas and are one of Maine's key natural resources in a state known for its rugged beauty.

"Nature endowed the Wild Blueberry with a number of wild advantages that both the trade and consumers want from their blueberries," says Kontur. She explains that Wild Blueberries are smaller and more compact than cultivated blueberries, which means they deliver more than twice the number of berries per pound for better looking, better tasting products.

"On taste, Wild Blueberries deliver a variety of sweet and tangy tastes that cultivated blueberries simply can't match, and in relation to antioxidant capacity, Wild Blueberries are leaders in the fruit world," continues Kontur. "In fact, they have more than double the antioxidant capacity per serving of the larger, cultivated blueberries. All of these Wild Advantages add up to a healthy little product from Maine that we want to introduce to our overseas customers so that they will get to know this special Maine product better."

Attendees will enjoy Wild Blueberries in several recipes that showcase their tangy, sweet taste, including Wild Blueberry Smoothies, Wild Blueberry Tarts and Smoked Turkey Sandwiches with Wild Blueberry Chutney.

"The Chinese are interested in high quality foods with potential health benefits, a taste that excites their customers, and a unique sense of place and history," says Bell. "Wild Blueberries deliver the complete package, and we are excited about the potential of this trip."

About the Wild Blueberry Association of North America (www.wildblueberries.com)

The Wild Blueberry Association of North America is a trade association of growers and processors of Wild Blueberries from Maine and Canada, dedicated to bringing the Wild Blueberry health story and unique Wild Advantages to consumers and the trade worldwide.

For news, recipes, and related health information about Wild Blueberries, visit www.wildblueberries.com and www.wildblueberryhealthblog.com, and follow www.facebook.com/wildblueberries and www.twitter.com/WildBBerries4U.

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