



The Taro Tattler



College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawaii
Information Sheet for the Growers, Shippers, Processors of Chinese, Poi, Dasheen and Samoan Taros
from Hawaii

Volume 2. No. 2

February 1990

In this issue of the *Tattler* we present Part II of our **Sources and Resources** series, by focusing on people who may be able to provide you with answers to your questions. As always, however we must do a little backtracking in order to bring you up to date since last we talked.

BACKTRACKING

The export QUALITY Chinese taro bag tags are now being put to use. The tags arrived on February 8th and were handed out a short time after that. Thanks again to the Hawaii Dryland Taro Association for their help. If you are a shipper on one of the other islands, contact Lance Yoshiyama (964-1667) to see how you can get some of these tags for yourself.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Bring Taro (Kalo) To The Schools, Saturday, February 24, 1990

This is the second meeting of a group of individuals interested in promoting and providing information about taro to the general public. Their focus is not only on taro in Hawaii schools throughout the islands, where they are involved in planting taro in school gardens and promoting it in school lunches, but also on developing huli nurseries and taro informational networks among other projects. A \$5 charge will cover a delicious (and nutritious) taro-based lunch prepared by Hale Kealoha Caterers of Kaneohe (see related article below). The meeting is open to those willing to contribute to this effort and will be held in Eckerdt Hall at Windward Community College. It will run from 9 a.m. til noon. For more information call Mitsue Cook-Carlson at 537-9158 or Martha Turner at 239-5754.

EXPORTING TARO TO CALIFORNIA

Taro has enjoyed a relatively good relationship with the agricultural inspectors in California for years. The first line defense for unwanted agricultural pests, the

California Department of Food and Agriculture's (CDFA) Pest Exclusion Branch, tries to keep California crops from being infested/infected by agriculturally destructive pests. (The Hawaii agricultural inspectors play the same role by protecting Hawaii's crops from harmful pests, such as the brown tree snake). For taro, examples of two destructive hitchhikers are the big-headed ant (*Pheidole megacephala*), and the "exotic bulb fly", (*Eumerus* sp.). The latter pest is not found naturally with the production of taro, but most likely comes from improper storage of taro bags and unclean packing-shed management practices. Last year Hawaii farmers had a very large shipment of taros (from a number of growers) sent back to Hawaii because of the exotic bulb fly. This mishap caused Hawaii taro growers to lose some business as it forced Mainland buyers to scramble to purchase taro grown in the Dominican Republic and elsewhere just to keep their customers happy — *not good for short or long run sales!*

California Agricultural Biologist, Scott Koller, states that not all insects (if any) that come in on taro require quarantine action and in these cases, the shipment of taro is released after the determination is made by a CDFA identifier. While each shipment is handled in a case-by-case manner, however, when a harmful pest is found there are four possible options given to the shipper depending on the pest risk:

- 1) the shipment is rejected and sent back to Hawaii.
- 2) the shipment is destroyed in California.
- 3) the shipment is re-shipped to another state (if allowable) or to a different country. (This instance would probably require phyto certification, which in most cases, is not possible when an actionable pest is found in the shipment).
- 4) the shipment is treated

In all four cases, the taro's owner/receiver (local area contact) is notified by phone. Rejection notices are then sent to both receiver and shipper after there is a determination of an actionable pest so that the owner can make a decision as to which option to take under the circumstances. If the taro can be treated, the Hawaii shipper is

given the names of approved certified fumigation services and the taro is treated with a pest-specific insecticide. All treatment costs/risks incurred in the treatment-handling-storage of an infested shipment is the responsibility of the owner/shipper. If there are further questions regarding these requirements, call Dee Sudduth, Southern District Supervisor, Maritime Airport Program, California Department of Food and Agriculture, at (619) 234-0683.

MIXED PLATE

Saying Aloha

The Taro Project bids a fond farewell to Dr. Chauncey Ching, Director of the Hawaii Institute of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources and initiator of the Taro Project, and to his lovely wife Teddie. The Chings will be in Washington D.C. for a year while he is on sabbatical. Dr. Ken Rohrbach, Assistant Director of HITAGR and the new head of the Taro Project, says despite Chauncey's absence the Taro Project will be going ahead full steam.

News from Granny

Mr. Virgil Graham, Plant Manager at Granny Goose has also left Hawaii. Virgil has decided to retire from the snack food industry. We all wish him well. His replacement, Tom Keene, wishes to thank taro suppliers for their patience during their hurried relocation late last year. Tom says he is generally happy with the present quality and quantity of taro he receives and hopes that this QUALITY trend will continue.

Taro Researchers Bibliographic Database Established

Since December of last year, Dr. Scott Campbell, Dr. Peter Rotar and their hard working assistant, Lisa Roehm, have been compiling literature citations concerning taro in the computer bibliographic database program, Procite. The program is user friendly and should be an extremely useful resource for those interested in doing research on taro. [For instance, did you know that the Japanese are doing a lot of work on the biochemical aspects of taro?] It is envisioned that this bibliographic taro database will become the most complete of its kind in the world. Because of its completeness it will require a computer with a hard disk to process the 2000 or so citations in an expedient manner. If you have citations on any taro-related topic to add, please send them (in a word processing document on disk preferably) to Scott Campbell, Sherman Hall 127, Agronomy and Soil Science, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822. If you have any questions call Peter at (808) 948-7317 or Scott at 948-6971.

ORGANIC UPDATE

As of this writing there are still no State of Hawaii or Federal guidelines defining organically grown produce.

Currently, at the Federal level some legislation is being sponsored. If passed, the bill would provide some general guidelines which the individual states may then refine to fit their particular situations. If the taro industry or any other agricultural industry or group in Hawaii is interested in getting the ball rolling on organic certification, Sam Camp of the Marketing branch of the DOA, advises that you contact your local legislators and/or your branch of the farm bureau to express your interest. Call Sam at 548-7145 for more information on the Federal bill. By getting those farmers who wish to cater to the organically-inclined market certified the taro industry will be able to offer a greater variety of taro-based products.

In the mean time, you may want to contact the following associations to see what type of certification help (if any) they can provide: **Organic Crop Improvement Association, Inc.**, P.O. Box 6032, Lehigh Valley, PA 18001, (215) 759-5912 and/or **Organic Foods Production Association of North America**, P.O. Box 31, Belchertown, MA 01007.

SOURCES AND RESOURCES

Concerning this issues' focus, we now present just a few of the names, addresses and interests of University and community-based persons/organizations who may be able to provide you with answers to your burning questions - pick up the phone and give them a call (page 3). As more people get involved with this project we will certainly update this list. We hope you find it useful. Oh, if we have somehow missed including you in this listing, we're sorry. Please contact the *Tattler* and we'll let everyone know what you can do for the cause in our next edition.

POUNDING POI

On the poi front there is a lot happening. First off, our sources tell us that George Chong of Chong's Poi Shop on Molokai has sold his business to Kegal-Joe Tancayo and his wife — best wishes in your new business Tancayos! The wireless also reports that the Waipio Poi Factory on the Big Island has closed. On Oahu, however, there is some really good news for the poi-loving community on the North Shore. Paul Reppun sent us the following information on their exciting project:

Hui Ulu Mea Ai

Hui Ulu Mea Ai is a non-profit corporation founded in 1981 to encourage the development of community self-reliance on the North Shore of Oahu. The target area for the program is Kualoa to Heeia, with emphasis on Waiahole Valley as the primary agricultural zone.

Work began in 1984 on the restoration of the old Waiahole Poi Factory building. Volunteered time

SOME POSSIBLE SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND HELP FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN TARO

Department or Organization	Last	First	Phone	Address	City	Island	St	Zip	Taro Research Speciality or Interest
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII									
CTAHR Administration	Rohrbach	Ken	948-8157	Gilmore 202A	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Taro Project Director
Agronomy & Soil Science	Caldwell	Bob	948-6835	Sherman 130	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Production systems
Agronomy & Soil Science	Campbell	Scott	948-6971	Sherman 127	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Data base/communication
Agronomy & Soil Science	de la Pena	Ramon	822-4984	7370-A Kuamoo Rd.	Kapaa	Kauai	HI	96746	Production/breeding
Agronomy & Soil Science	Ferentinos	Lisa	948-8140	Sherman 101	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96813	Traditional production methods
Agronomy & Soil Science	Miyasaka	Susan	935-2885	461 W. Lanikaula St.	Hilo	Hawaii	HI	96720	Production
Agronomy & Soil Science	Rotar	Peter	948-7317	Sherman 109	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Data base/breeding
Agronomy & Soil Science	Silva	James	948-6906	Sherman Hall 236	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Production/fertilization
Agronomy & Soil Science	Uehara	Goro	948-6593	Sherman 221	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96813	Crop modeling
Ag. Biochemistry	Kawate	Mike	948-6007	Henke Hall 329	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Chemical residue research
Ag. Biochemistry	Miles	Carl	948-8352	Henke Hall 329	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Chemical residue research
Ag. & Res. Econ.	Cox	Linda	948-6755	Gilmore Hall 115	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Financial management
Ag. & Res. Econ.	Hollyer	Jim	948-8800	Gilmore Hall 115	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Marketing/Taro Tattler/Industry coordination
Ag. & Res. Econ.	Leung	PingSun	948-8562	Gilmore Hall 115	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Production economics
Extension-Hawaii	Sato	Dwight	959-9155	875 Komohana Street	Hilo	Hawaii	HI	96720	Production/fertilization
Extension-Kauai	Melchor	Florendo	245-4471	P.O. Box 3150	Lihue	Kauai	HI	96766	Production
Extension-Kauai	Yamakawa	Roy	245-4471	P.O. Box 3150	Lihue	Kauai	HI	96766	Production
Extension-Maui	Hori	Ted	244-3242	310 Kaahumanu Avenue Bldg 214	Kahului	Maui	HI	96732	Production
Extension-Molokai	Arakaki	Alton	567-6698	P.O. Box 159	Kaunakakai	Molokai	HI	96748	Production
Extension-Molokai	Miranda	Ed	567-6698	P.O. Box 159	Kaunakakai	Molokai	HI	96748	Production
Extension-Molokai	Teves	Glen	567-6698	P.O. Box 159	Kaunakakai	Molokai	HI	96748	Production
Extension-Oahu	Hamasaki	Randy	247-0421	45-260 Waikalua Road	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96744	Production
Dept. of Geography	Giambelluca	Tom	948-7683	Porteus 445	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Water usage & water rights
Dept. of Geography	Penn	David	948-7781	Porteus 441	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Water usage & water rights
Food Science	Huang	Alvin	948-7411	Henke Hall	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Food product research
Food Science	Nip	Wai-kit	948-8210	Food Tech 70A	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Food product research
Horticulture	Coltman	Bob	948-7934	St. John 207 A	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Storage quality/chipping/production
Horticulture	DeFrank	Joseph	948-8050	St. John 212C	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Chemical application research
Horticulture	Fukuda	Steve	948-7903	St. John 102	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Production
Horticulture	Hamasaki	Doug	948-8050	St. John 212C	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Video documentation/production
Plant Molecular Bio.	Paull	Robert	948-7369	St. John 516	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Storage quality/chipping/production
Plant Pathology	Ferreira	Steve	948-7854	St. John 102	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Plant diseases
Plant Pathology	Ooka	Jeri	822-4984	7370-A Kuamoo Rd.	Kapaa	Kauai	HI	96746	Plant diseases
Public Health	Hughes	Claire	948-7425	Biomed-D104F	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Taro in diets
GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS									
Department of Agriculture (DOA)	Kitagawa	Yukio	548-7101	P.O. Box 22159	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	(Chairman) Agricultural development
DOA Commodity Division	Camp	Sam	548-7145	P.O. Box 22159	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Grading standards/organic cert.
DOA Marketing Division	Lee	Calvin	548-4250	P.O. Box 22159	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Market development & materials
Department of Business & Econ. Dev.	Ulveling	Roger	548-3033	250 S. King Street	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96813	(Director) Business development
Governors Agricultural Coord. Comm.	Takamine	Yoshito	548-2828	335 Merchant St. Rm 210	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96813	(Chairman) Industry support, research & coord.
Friends of Taro/Taro in Schools	Cook-Carlson	Mitsue	537-9158	50B Bates St.	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96817	Mediation & organizational skills
Hawaii Agricultural Statistics Serv.	Martin	Don	548-7155	P.O. Box 22159	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96822	Agricultural statistics
Hawaii Food Industry Assoc.	Botti	Richard	533-1292	677 Ala Moana Suite 815	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96813	Product promotion & meetings
Native Hawaiian Advisory Council	Martin	Elizabeth	523-1445	1088 Bishop St. Suite 1204	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96813	Water rights issue litigation
Office of Hawaiian Affairs	Colburn	Linda	946-2642	1600 Kapiolani Blvd. Suite 1500	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96814	Native Hawaiian economic matters
TARO PRODUCER ORGANIZATIONS									
Hawaii Dryland Taro Association	Yoshiyama	Lance	964-1667	P.O. Box 227	Papaikou	Hawaii	HI	96781	
Honolulu Poi Hui	Tottori	Ernest	848-2431	288 Libby St.	Honolulu	Oahu	HI	96819	
Kauai Taro Growers Association	Nagamine	Shoichi	335-5586	P.O. Box 322	Hanapepe	Kauai	HI	96716	
Waipio (Taro) Farmers Assoc.	Araki	Sam	961-0331	214 A Hukularani	Hilo	Hawaii	HI	96820	
West Maui-Molokai Taro Assoc.	Dukelow	Oliver	244-1688	841 Kuhio Pl.	Wailuku	Maui	HI	96793	

and money have worked together since then, and in 1989, the commercial kitchen facilities were completed. Hui Ulu Mea Ai serves as manager of the certified kitchen, with members and users coming from the target area. Ultimately, fruit and vegetables, as well as seafood products from this area, will be able to be stored, processed and/or sold through the facility, thereby giving local producers more control over their marketing. Small businesses, individuals or Ohanas utilizing raw materials produced in the area can use the facilities to get started or on a part time basis. As a result of this community-based business opportunity, jobs and small businesses will be created for the people in the communities surrounding the facilities. Local consumers will also benefit because they will now be able to obtain fresher and cheaper food. Fees for the use of the building will eventually be used to operate training and educational programs at the old poi factory site.

The first business to operate from the kitchen is a catering business — Hale Kealoha Caterers — catering for all occasions. Tammy Smith and Herbert Hoe, owners of this business can be reached at 237-8249. Sometime in March, Waiahole Poi, will begin processing regionally-grown taro. At present there are only three poi taro farms in the area, but it is hoped that production will be stimulated now that a processing facility in the area has been opened. Contact

Waiahole Poi and Hui Ulu Mea Ai through Paul Reppun at 239-4223.

CHATTING CHIPS

From Maui comes word that there is an existing taro chipping company in Kahului. Artie Garcia, owner of Mamasita's, says that he has chipped taro for years, but lately he couldn't get enough corms to justify heating up some oil. Artie said that he is very interested in doing some chips if there are farmers willing to supply him with quality taros on a full time basis. Give Artie a call at 871-0775, or stop by his restaurant at 153 Alamaha.

For more information please write:

The Taro Project
Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics
Gilmore Hall 115
University of Hawaii
Honolulu, HI 96822
Attn: Jim Hollyer

Reference to a company or product name does not imply approval or recommendation of the product by the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawaii.



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