



News & Events

MITE-Y WEAPON

Hawai'i beekeepers now have a valuable weapon in the fight against the varroa mite (*Varroa destructor*), and CTAHR's Honeybee Project, headed by Mark Wright (PEPS), was instrumental in getting it in their hands. The Hawaii Department of Agriculture has just licensed a formic acid-based miticide, Mite-Away Quick Strips,TM for use in honeybee hives. This miticide kills mites without harming honeybees and has been used effectively in Canada, but its use in Hawai'i was initially in question. CTAHR's bee research team drove the initial data collection through a series of rigorous trials conducted in collaboration with the manufacturer of the formic acid product and collaborated with the HDOA in providing data for a local needs label for the product. The quick approval of the local needs registration was primarily due to the excellent results the obtained by the research group, in particular Ethel Villalobos (PEPS), Tyler Ito (PEPS), and Scott Nikaido (PEPS, graduate student). Hawai'i's beekeepers are leading the way at a national level in the use of non-synthetic chemicals to control the destructive mite, which was first discovered on O'ahu in 2007 and has since spread to the Big Island. Varroa mites suck the blood of honeybees and their larvae and pupae, which weakens them and causes deformities in emerging bees. This not only cuts down on honey production but also lessens the ability of the bees to pollinate the many tropical crops that depend on them and on which we in the Islands in turn depend.



MORE SPORE WARS

Janice Uchida (PEPS) was recently interviewed on *Hawaii News Now* concerning basil downy mildew, the damaging pathogen that was first discovered in Wai'anae last month and has since spread to Diamond Head, Kahuku, and Kunia. Janice, who heads CTAHR's Spore Warriors against the BDM crisis, emphasized the danger that the pathogen will mutate and become resistant to fungicides being used to combat it. It's important to prune back the plants vigorously, not just take off the tops, before treating with fungicide, she explained.



DIVA OF DEMOGRAPHICS

Sarah Yuan (COF) has been in the news recently discussing some of the findings of the 2010 Census. In *USA Today* she pointed out that nearly a quarter of Hawai'i residents identify as mixed race—this makes



sense, said Sarah, considering the increasing percentage of interracial marriages (the most in the nation) and people's greater willingness to embrace all the ethnicities in their heritage. **KITV News** was more interested in talking with her about the disproportionate growth in some areas' populations, which may require some adjustments to make sure each district is getting appropriate representation. "Politically each district should have a similar number of people [per] representative," Sarah confirmed.



HEARTS AND BONES

Corilee Watters (HNFAS) wrote an article entitled "**For the Heart**" for the Feb. 22 *Honolulu Star-Advertiser* featuring heart-healthy recipes that showcase the color red. (This isn't just about aesthetics; the new USDA Dietary Guidelines suggest serving red and orange fruits and vegetables as a strategy to add a healthful variety to your diet.)



Corilee teamed up with Chef George Mavrothalssitis, owner of noted Hawai'i restaurant Chef Mavro, to produce red-themed dishes such as Red Velvet Tomato Soup and Red Cabbage Salad. Corilee also recently had a project, "How to Motivate Parents to Promote Intake of Calcium-Rich Foods Among Early Adolescents," officially approved by USDA/NIFA, thus moving the focus from hearts to bones.

Grants & Awards

A GOOD EXCUSE TO GO OUT TO EAT

Richard Ha, a longtime supporter and valuable community partner for CTAHR, has been awarded a **2011 Distinguished Alumni award**. Richard, owner of **Hamakua Springs Country Farms**, is highly respected in the community and the agricultural industry. He is an influential and active advocate on sustainability issues and has incorporated these concerns into his business philosophy. Richard



was also **inducted in the Shidler College of Business's Alumni Hall of Honor** in 2008, and his farm received the Outstanding Agriculture Operations Award at the 2006 Ag Conference. All these awards are great—but if you really want to find out what Richard's been doing with his time, drop by one of Alan Wong's restaurants, which he supplies with produce, and taste his delicious heirloom tomatoes and lettuce. Growing vegetables like these—and sustainably, too—is the real success!

Spotlight on Our Community

GONNA WASH THOSE GERMS RIGHT OFFA MY HANDS

The Center for Disease Control tells us that the most important thing people can do to lessen the spread of infectious diseases is to wash their hands. The Germ City program, which started as a 5-state education program funded by USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service and has



now expanded across the US, teaches people to do just that. Lynn Nakamura-Tengan (HNFAS)

(lynnnaka@hawaii.edu) coordinates the Hawai'i program, which supports a statewide team of Extension and health educators, student and adult volunteers, and community agency staff. This Extension and community collaboration offers school-based presentations, outreach at community fairs and festivals, and worksite trainings on hand hygiene for infection control, health, food safety, and emergency preparedness education. The **Hawai'i Germ City Web site**, which Lynn also heads, has served as a resource to national and international school and community-based hand hygiene education programs. The Germ City program is well received in schools and community settings, reaching at least 2,000 adults and youth across the state of Hawai'i annually.

GREENING THE GRADE SCHOOL

Noelani Elementary School's continued partnership with CTAHR's 4-H and Sustainable and Organic Farm Training (SOFT) programs is blossoming. At a recent trip to the Magoon Labs facility, students prepped the soil and planted vegetables and herbs: lavender, lemongrass, rosemary, sage, and more. Not only do the students get to see the miracle of plants germinating, feel the sun-warmed soil in their hands, and literally eat the fruits of their labors, they're fulfilling one of the science components of the DOE curriculum!

