

# *Ka Lono Pua*

*"The Flower News"*

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Oahu County

Cooperative Extension Service

## **Populations of Mites and Thrips Growing Early**

If you haven't noticed this winter has been one of the driest on record. For the month of January, Honolulu (airport) received .18 inches of rainfall. That tied the 1986 record low.

Cooler temperatures, shorter days and high rainfall usually depress the populations of mites and thrips during the winter months. This year the warmer than usual temperatures and the lack of rain has allowed the populations of these pests to build despite the shorter day length.

Thrips pupate on the ground before emerging as adults. During wet periods bacteria, and fungi flourish and attack the pupae causing a high mortality. Also rain tends to knock both adult mites and thrips to the ground where they fall victim to pathogens or are unable to regain their place on plants.

Although you may not see these pests easily, they can cause a great deal of damage. Look out for these pests now, especially if you have had trouble with them in the summers past. We can hope the recent rains will slow down these pests.

## **In This Issue...**

- ◆ HOGA Conference Details
- ◆ Hashimoto named CTAHR's Dean
- ◆ Fuel Costs Affecting Mainland Growers
- ◆ A New PGR for Lilies ...and more

## **Future Happenings**

Feb 14	St. Valentine's Day
Feb 19	Presidents' Day
Feb 21-23	Plant Tour Days, San Diego, CA
Feb 25-27	Soc. Amer. Florists Pest & Disease Conference, Orlando, FL
Mar 1- 4	Miami International Orchid Show
Mar 2-4	Hawaii Orchid Growers Association Conference, Hilo
Mar 10	Hawaii To Go Conference, Maui
Mar 15- 21	Asia-Pacific Orchid Conf., Japan
Mar 16-18	Kunia Orchid Show
Mar 17	St. Patrick's Day
Mar 23 -25	Santa Barbara International Orchid Show, Santa Barbara, CA
Mar 26	Kuhio Day
Mar 30 - Apr 1	Windward Orchid Show
Apr 2 -12	California Pack Trials
Apr 15	Easter
Apr 25	Professional Secretaries Day
May 1	Lei Day
May 12	Foster Botanical Garden Plant Sale

# ANDREW G. HASHIMOTO NAMED CTAHR DEAN

In September, the University of Hawaii board of regents named Dr. Andrew G. Hashimoto to be dean of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR). Dr. Hashimoto was vice provost for academic affairs and professor of bioresource engineering at Oregon State University in Corvallis.

A returning native of Hawaii, he graduated from Punahou School in 1962. Since high school, his entire academic and professional careers have been spent on the U.S. mainland. Dr. Hashimoto obtained a bachelor's degree in civil engineering and a master's degree in environmental engineering from Purdue University and a doctorate in agricultural engineering from Cornell University.

He held professional positions at Cornell and the University of Nebraska while he worked for the Agricultural Research Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Dr. Hashimoto was a research leader at USDA's Agricultural Engineering Research Unit in Nebraska before moving to Oregon State in 1986 to become professor and head of the Bioresource Engineering Department. He was promoted to his present position as vice provost at OSU in 1995.

Dr. Hashimoto comes to CTAHR with some familiarity of the college gained when he served on the team that recommended accreditation of CTAHR's biosystems engineering program.

In speaking about Dr. Hashimoto after his appointment was confirmed, Dean O. Smith, UH senior vice president and Manoa campus executive vice chancellor, made these comments: "Dr. Hashimoto brings an exceptional degree of experience and professionalism, which will be essential qualities in leading CTAHR into the new century. His background in biotechnology and agricultural engineering are extremely valuable in the increasingly technological field of agriculture and related industries." Hashimoto's

expertise includes bioconversion processes, ethanol fuels, and waste management systems.

Although Dr. Hashimoto's appointment was effective October 2, 2000, he was in transition until January. With Dr. Hashimoto's arrival, Dr. H. Michael Harrington, who served as interim dean since July 1999, will temporarily return to his post as professor in the Department of Molecular Biosciences and Biosystems Engineering. Before becoming interim dean, Harrington served CTAHR as interim associate dean and director of research, a post he assumed in 1997.

Dr. Harrington will be leaving CTAHR this summer. Dr. Harrington was selected as the executive director of the Western Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors and the Western Extension Directors, Fort Collins, Colorado. It will be good to have a Hawaii advocate in that important position. Mike has helped CTAHR weather some difficult times over the past few years.

## USDA Survey Distributed

Do your part to help the industry by filling out and promptly returning your USDA Floriculture Crops Survey. The information collected plays an important part in getting funding for industry research, university programs, Extension Service and more!

Also, USDA has a nursery survey in 18 states and a Floriculture and Nursery Chemical Usage Survey in six states this year. The Society of American Florists and the American Nurserymen's Landscaping Association can help you with details on those surveys.

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In order to succeed we must first believe that we can.

Michael Korda

## Fuel Prices Hurting Mainland Flower Growers

The escalating cost of energy is a very real problem among commercial cut flower growers on the mainland. Growers have laid off workers; and some are deciding to sacrifice their Valentine's Day holiday crops because they cannot afford to heat their greenhouses.

“Some California cut flower growers will be forced to close their greenhouses altogether if relief from soaring natural gas prices is not found - and soon,” warns Lee Murphy, president of the California Cut Flower Commission (CCFC). “Heating bills are reaching \$500,000 a month for some growers, as compared to \$100,000 a year ago,” explains Murphy. “Growers simply cannot continue operating with those exorbitant costs. The profit margins in our industry are tight enough as it is, and with nearly a 600 percent increase in heating costs, growers may simply have to close their doors.

“The skyrocketing cost for natural gas couldn't come at a worse time for California's cut flower growers-rose growers in particular. December is the month when buds forming on rose plants produce the critical Valentine's Day crop, which accounts for 25 - 30 percent of a rose grower's annual sales.”

Mainland growers usually heat greenhouses when temperatures drop below 60 degrees, which is a common occurrence even in warmer parts of the country in the winter.

California, which has been particularly affected, produces more than 60 percent of all domestically grown fresh cut flowers and approximately 15 percent of all fresh cut roses sold in the United States. Expect to see the costs of cut flowers, liners, cuttings and other energy intensive products to rise considerably in the coming months.

See <http://www.cfc.org> for more information.

## “Fascination” PGR for Lilies

Valent Professional Products' new “Fascination PGR” is a plant growth regulator that can be used to prevent lower leaf yellowing of Easter, LA hybrid and Oriental lilies. Applied as a foliar spray, it also delays flower senescence.

The product is a combination of naturally occurring compounds that influence plant growth and maturity in several ways. The active ingredients in Fascination PGR are gibberellins 4 and 7 and 6-benzyladenine. Applied as a foliar spray, Fascination delays the aging of leaves, which results in leaf yellowing from the bottom of the plant up, and the aging of flowers.

Valent's research has shown that a single application of Fascination protects plants from lower-leaf yellowing for up to three weeks. Applications later in the season delay flower senescence by promoting further plant development. Research is also under way to determine effectiveness of Fascination on geranium, poinsettia and other potted and bedded plants.

Fascination does not move systemically within the plant, so a uniform application to target leaves is critical. On Easter lilies, Valent recommends three applications. The first should be targeted directly to the lower leaves for prevention of early-season leaf yellowing. This application should be made seven to 10 days prior to visible buds at a rate of 5 to 10 ppm in water. A second application for prevention of late-season leaf yellowing should be applied directly toward the lower leaves seven to 10 days after the bud is visible. To prolong flowering, the third Fascination application can be applied over the top of the crop and should be applied at a rate of 100 ppm to flower buds that are at least 4 cm in length. This late season application has been shown to allow flowers to remain open on plants for up to 24 days after opening.

For more information about Fascination PGR call Valent at 800-898-2536, or explore:

<http://www.valent.com>

# U.S.D.A. Sets National Standards for Organic Food

In December former Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman announced the final national standards for the production, handling, and processing of organically grown agricultural products.

Glickman considered them "the strongest and most comprehensive organic standard in the world". For the organic industry, the standards provide a marketing tool to help boost exports since trading partners will now deal with only one national standard rather than multiple state and private standards.

Essentially, the new organic standards offer a national definition for the term "organic." It details the methods, practices and substances that can be used in producing and handling organic crops and livestock, as well as processed products. It establishes clear organic labeling criteria, and specifically prohibits the use of genetic engineering methods, ionizing radiation, and sewage sludge for fertilization.

All agricultural products labeled organic must originate from farms or handling operations certified by a state or private agency accredited by USDA. Farms and handling operations that sell less than \$5,000 worth per year of organic agricultural products are exempt from certification. Farmers and handlers have 18 months to comply with the national standards.

The final standard includes several changes from the proposed rule issued in March by:

- Making product content requirements stricter before the term organic can be used on the main label, including, changing the percentage of organic ingredients in products labeled "Made with Organic Ingredients" from at least 50 percent to at least 70 percent.
- Providing information for consumers by allowing manufacturers to state the exact percentage of organic ingredients on the principal display panel

- Providing flexibility for organic farmers by simplifying requirements for composting of manure and by providing new options for dairy operations converting a whole herd to organic production.
- Incorporating industry standard practices by allowing wine produced with sulfur dioxide to be labeled "made with organic grapes" and adopting 5% of the EPA pesticide tolerance as the pesticide residue level above which a product cannot be sold as organic.

Consumers will begin to see new organic labeling on products in their local grocery stores by the summer of 2001, with full implementation by mid-2002.

Organic farming is one of the fastest growing segments of U.S. agriculture during the 1990s. USDA estimates that the value of retail sales of organic foods in 1999 was approximately \$6 billion. The number of organic farmers is increasing by about 12 percent per year and now stands at about 12,200 nationwide, most of them small-scale producers. According to a recent USDA study, certified organic cropland more than doubled from 1992 to 1997. Two organic livestock sectors, eggs and dairy, grew even faster.

The final national organic standards rule, which takes into consideration over 300,000 public comments, was published in the Federal Register on December 21, 2000. The rule, detailed fact sheets and other background information are available on the web at:  
<http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop>.

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Education is when you read the fine print.  
Experience is what you get if you don't.

- Pete Seeger

# Hawaii Orchid Growers' Association Conference

Hawaii is presently the third largest producer of potted orchids in the nation with a total 1999 wholesale value of \$13,355,000 (after Florida at \$30.9 million and California at \$23.9 million). Potted orchids represent the fastest growing agricultural export commodity in the state.

The Hawaii potted orchid industry is approaching a crossroads. The importation of potted orchids from Asia to the mainland is just around the corner and huge new nurseries are being developed in California. How can we best prepare for what will soon be fierce competition, similar to what the cut orchid industry has been facing during the past decade?

This HOGA conference has been designed to address these questions and to especially support anyone who is now or might be interested in producing potted orchids. The subject matter being presented has been selected to be of interest to growers of potted plants, hobbyists, marketers (wholesalers and retailers) of tropical potted plants and other individuals who handle potted and cut-flower plants commercially, professionally or as a hobby. The opportunity provided for networking with these individuals should be of benefit to those who service this rapidly growing industry.

The intent of this conference is to support the production of a quality product, encourage the creation of sound nursery businesses, and stimulate the creation of new markets and marketing techniques that will keep Hawaii competitive as the competition from other areas increases.

Presenters are being brought from the mainland and various parts of the state to provide conference participants with the latest information on:

- the best greenhouse designs available for the cost-effective production of consistently high-quality plants,

- which orchid varieties are available as planting material,
- which orchid varieties are best to plant to fulfill the future mainland markets,
- how best to grow the orchids (fertilizer and environmental factors) and
- how to manage all of this to create a successful commercial orchid nursery.

In addition, businesses that support our industry will present the latest in the material and services that they provide. These goods and services will be on display. Representatives of each company will be available to discuss questions and unique needs directly with them.

Networking will be encouraged through a golf tournament Friday morning, a benefit auction Friday evening, breaks during the conference on Saturday and an all-day nursery tour on Sunday. Many people consider networking to be the most important part of any industry conference since it provides contacts that can be instrumental in resolving problems, finding markets, improving production techniques, saving money on materials, equipment and design and many other aspects of business.

Register early (by Feb. 28) to save \$10.00 on the all-day event. Registration (and HOGA membership) also provides access to the Friday evening Benefit Auction where "heavy pupus" will be served, sponsored by United Horticultural Supply (UHS).

See page 6 for the conference schedule and the last page of "Ka Lono Pua" for a registration form. For more information contact Neal Okimoto at (808) 965-9299 or Fax: (808) 965-1402 or e-mail: orchid@aloha.net.

# Orchid Growers' Association Conference Schedule

## Friday March 2, 2001

Benefit Golf Tournament at Volcano Golf Course

9:00 a.m. Registration

10:00 a.m. Tee-off

Lunch will be served between the front and back nine. Awards and prizes to be presented at the Benefit Auction.

Cost: \$55 for 18 holes and lunch

Benefit Auction (sponsored by UHS)

6:30 p.m. Pre-registration for conference (only registered attendees and HOGA members admitted)

7:00 p.m. HOGA welcome, Neal Okimoto

7:05 p.m. UHS welcome, Reggie Hasegawa

7:10 p.m. Update on new pesticides by Dr. Arnold Hara

7:30 p.m. Golf Awards

7:45 p.m. Auction (for more info contact Bob Burkey at (808) 968-8505)

## Saturday, March 3, 2001

7:30 a.m. Registration, Exhibits, coffee

8:30 a.m. Welcome, County of Hawaii

8:40 a.m. Welcome HOGA president, Neal Okimoto

8:45 a.m. The Latest in Breeding for Commercial Potted Orchid Plants, Bob Hamilton

9:45 a.m. Networking, Exhibits, coffee

10:30 a.m. Greenhouse Design and Automation, C. Patrick Coleman, Agra Tech

11:30 a.m. Secrets to Proper Nutrition of Potted Orchids, Joan Cloutier, Scotts Co.

12:30 p.m. Lunch

1:30 p.m. Production Management: How to Keep It All Under Control, Susan Matsushima, Alluvion

2:30 p.m. Networking, Demonstrations

3:00 p.m. What the Mainland Wants in Potted Orchids, John Rutter, Rutter's Orchid Service

4:00 p.m. Panel: Rapidly Mounting Competition: How Can Hawaii's Orchid Industry Survive the Planned Mega-Production from our Competitors? John Rutter, Rutter's Orchid Service, Glen Barfield, The Orchidworks & Neal Okimoto, Pacific Paradise Orchids

5:00 p.m. Summary, Conclusion

## Sunday, March 4, 2001

Orchid Nursery Tour with an emphasis on construction and environmental controls.

8:30 a.m. Departure from Naniloa Hotel

9:00 a.m. Carmela Orchids

10:30 a.m. Orchidworks

12:00 Lunch at Orchidworks new greenhouse in Kaumana

1:30 p.m. Hilo Orchid Farms

3:00 p.m. Winning Orchids LLC

5:00 p.m. Return to Naniloa Hotel

Cost: \$25.00 includes lunch. For more information contact Tom Richmond (808) 964-5544 or tomr@aloha.net

## Agriculture Leadership Program Restarts

The College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources' Ag Leadership program in partnership with the Hawaii Ag Leadership Foundation will be soon starting another year-long class.

Are you an aspiring ag organization leader, want to improve your people skills, be a part of a state-wide network of doers, and see ag in all its wonders on all islands? If you are, or know someone who is, contact Donna Ching for information and an application at 956-2255 or e-mail: [donnac@hawaii.edu](mailto:donnac@hawaii.edu). Alumni of this important program are the people who are leading Hawaii's agriculture into the 21st century.

### Sabbatical Leave Note

Faculty at U. of H. are strongly encouraged to update their own knowledge, skills and education, and allowed to apply for a 6-month sabbatical every 6 years. It has been 10 years since my first study leave. My application was approved for this year, so I will be on sabbatical leave beginning March 1 to August 31. Most of the 6 months will be dedicated to visiting growers and attending professional conferences, seminars and trade shows across the U.S. I'll also be spending about three weeks in Ecuador, one of the world's fastest growing flower exporters.

For emergency problems during my absence, you can contact Dr. Kenneth Leonhardt at 956-8909 or Dr. Mel Wong at 453-6058. You can also e-mail me at [mersino@hawaii.edu](mailto:mersino@hawaii.edu), although I am not sure how often I'll be able to access my mail while traveling.

Edwin F. Mersino  
County Extension Agent  
Agriculture Program

## HOGA Conference Registration Form

Sign Up for: \_\_\_\_\_ By 2/28: \_\_\_\_\_ After: \_\_\_\_\_

- |  |      |      |
|--|------|------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Morning Session and Lunch | \$55 | \$60 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Afternoon Session & Lunch | \$55 | \$60 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whole Day with Lunch      | \$75 | \$85 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch Only                | \$25 | \$30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friday Golf Tournament    | \$55 | \$65 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nursery Tour by Mini Bus  | \$25 | \$30 |

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Travel arrangements:

Air, room and car packages have been arranged through Regal Travel. Contact any of the following Regal managers and ask for travel to the Hawaii Orchid Growers Conference, sales code T-\*SAF4.

Oahu – Mrs. Hadama 988-7095

Maui – Mrs. Hadama 1-800-373-6917

Kauai – Mrs. Cabinatan 246-6007

Hawaii Orchid Growers Association

P.O. Box 2152

Keaau, HI 96749

Neal Okimoto (808) 965-9299 FAX (808)

965-1402 or e-mail: [orchid@aloha.net](mailto:orchid@aloha.net) or

Dr. Ruth Iwata (808) 961-2043 or e-mail:

[yayaiwata@hotmail.com](mailto:yayaiwata@hotmail.com)

- ❑ What can you use to prevent Lily leaves from yellowing?
- ❑ Where can you go to learn about exporting your crop?
- ❑ Who's the new dean of the College of Tropical Agriculture & Human Resources?
- ❑ Where can you learn about growing potted orchids?
- ❑ Want to change things? Find out how with the Hawaii Ag Leadership Program.

The answer to these and many other questions can be found inside.