

Ka Lono Pua

"The Flower News"

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Cooperative Extension Service Oahu

County

Security Begins at Home

In light of the terrorist attacks on the mainland we all must be on our guard to protect against being victims. You might have heard about the grounding of airplane pesticide applicators, or the questions into licenses for transporting hazardous material.

Many farms and nurseries have a collection of pesticides. Although most are handled and stored safely, everyone working with these chemicals should take extra care they don't fall into the wrong hands. Always store chemicals in a locked secure facility. Limit access to your pesticide storage and keep unauthorized people out.

Keep an up-to-date inventory, check it regularly and notify authorities of missing chemicals immediately. Don't keep excess inventory.

Post your facility so emergency personnel know they may encounter toxic fumes. Keep a clipboard with the labels of all the chemicals in your storage area. Tell all your employees where the labels are kept. For more on pesticide safety see: <http://www.udel.edu/pesticide/factsh~1.pdf>

In This Issue...

- ◆ Dengue Fever on Oahu
- ◆ In Case of Emergency....
- ◆ Crop Insurance for Cut Flowers
- ◆ Powdery Mildew Control on Poinsettias
- ◆ Organic Flowers Branded.....and more

Future Happenings

Nov 22	Happy Thanksgiving
Dec 13	DOGAH Christmas Party
Dec 15	Ginger and Heliconia Walk with Ray Baker, Lyon Arboretum
Dec 25	Merry Christmas!
Jan 1	Happy New Year!
Jan 10	DOGAH Meeting
Jan 16-18	Mid America Hort Trade Show & GrowerExpo 2002, Chicago
Jan 17 – 19	Tropical Plant Industry Exhibition, Fort Lauderdale, FL
Jan 21	Martin Luther King Day
Jan 31 – Feb 3	Building Industry Assoc. Home Building & Remodeling Show NBC
Feb 14	St. Valentine's Day
Feb 18	Presidents' Day
Feb 21-23	Plant Tour Days, San Diego, CA
Mar 1- 4	Miami International Orchid Show
Mar 2-4	Hawaii Orchid Growers Association Conference, Hilo
Mar 9-15	International Protea Association Conference - Maui
Mar 16-18	Kunia Orchid Show

In An Emergency...

Considering the events of the last couple of months and the fact that Hawaii's hurricane season is in full swing, it is a good time to review some emergency measures we all should take.

- **Develop a plan** for you and your family members. Regular phones may be disrupted and the state of emergency may result in some of the lines being turned off for periods of time. Cellular phone systems may go out due to the overloading of the system. Plan so that your family can either meet or be assured they will know how to regain contact.

- **Set up safety refuges.** In unexpected emergencies such as earthquakes, roads may be blocked or unsafe to travel. Plan for family members away from home to go to a relative's or close friend's house near their school or place of work. Have them stay there until the "all clear" is given. Have backup plans. You might not be able to communicate with them for up to 24 hours.

- **Frequently refuel your vehicles.** Keep your tank at least half full. Traffic may be at a standstill and the last thing you want is to run out of gas. Remember, gas stations need electricity to run and in a terrorist situation, they may be ordered to shut down - even if there is electricity available.

- **Always carry some cash** in lower dollar bills. In a situation with communications failure, no store can process credit card/ATM transactions because these require phone lines. If you frequently forget to keep cash on you, have \$40 in loose bills stored in a secret spot in your car that you use the most. This way, if you get caught on the road without cash, you have that secret stash.

- **Keep enough food and water on hand** for one week. Freshly bottled water is best. One week will be sufficient for trucked water to make it in. The traditional three days is too short. The food should be very simple to make. You should also have enough packaged food for a few days that

require no cooking, should the electric systems be disrupted.

- **Have a portable emergency kit** in a large duffle bag containing essential items, should you ever need to be evacuated. That way, you can grab the bag and go. Essential items should include a one week's supply of medicines, water, food, toilet paper, toothbrushes and paste, flashlights, portable radios, batteries, hand soap, pen and paper, whistle, rope, duct tape, blankets, general toiletries and maybe a few clothes. This can all fit into one large duffle bag for a regular sized family. Pack only essentials. If you evacuate, it is best to go to the Red Cross shelters.

- **If you have pets** make sure you have the appropriate carriers and plan for extra water and food for them. It is a good idea to buy a small bag of food for them and store it with that emergency duffle bag. Do not leave pets unattended.

- **Stay at home** if you are there when an emergency occurs. Do not go out and drive around or wander. Subsequent events can immobilize you away from home and create undue worrying from your family. Doing this also hampers emergency efforts and obstructs life saving efforts.

- **Stay off the phone.** Calling everyone in the world ties up the phone system and obstructs emergency services. It is best to call one party out of state and have them contact everyone else to let them know you are okay.

- **Report suspicious circumstances** to law enforcement immediately. Let them determine the severity of the situation. If an official says evacuate, don't take it lightly.

- **Stay calm.** Just be mindful of the circumstances. Being prepared is one way of avoiding a panic. Pull together and support fire, police and other emergency personnel.

Powdery Mildew Control on Poinsettias

To avoid losses on Poinsettias from powdery mildew, growers need to be aware of early symptoms and to scout crops carefully and regularly. If done properly, preventive treatments should not be necessary since effective fungicide treatment strategies are available.

The Oidium sp that causes powdery mildew on poinsettias is a fungus that is not found on other greenhouse crops. It is possible that other euphorbias may host this organism. A number of weeds are in this group, so that is another good reason to control weeds.

Powdery mildew has been seen on cuttings as early as April, so it pays to inspect cuttings carefully. Yellow spots on the leaf's upper surface may indicate powdery mildew colonies growing directly opposite on the undersurface. The growth of powdery mildew fungus on a poinsettia leaf is not obvious. The use of a hand lens is needed to look for the fungus strands growing across the leaf.

When the colonies start producing spores, they will take on a whiter, more granular appearance. The edge of the white spots is fibrous. If environmental conditions favor the fungus, even a single colony represents a threat and treatment should be started immediately.

Research at Michigan State University has shown that the single most important factor determining onset of a powdery mildew epidemic is temperature. Powdery mildew on poinsettias is often undetected during the warmer months. The high temperature keeps it from colonizing new leaves.

After the greenhouse temperatures begin to stay beneath 89°F during the day, the powdery mildew begins to become obvious in the crop. Scouting for powdery mildew should thus be intensified in the fall. In Hawaii this temperature usually occurs in the last stages of the crop.

Good control of powdery mildew can be gained by fungicides if found early. If discovered late, powdery mildew can cause a total crop loss. If powdery mildew is found, remove the visibly affected leaves or plants by placing them directly into plastic bags at the bench.

Do not attempt to spot-treat for powdery mildew - treat the entire area. The fungicides that research trials have found to be most powerful against powdery mildew on poinsettias are triadimefon (Strike), triflumizole (Terraguard), and myclobutanil (Systhane). All of these materials are systemic and in the same chemical class. They work well with or without the addition of Latron B-1956 as a spreader-sticker.

Injury to bracts has been rare, and has been associated with applications late in the day when it took a long time for the plants to dry. Apply fungicides in the morning, if possible, especially when plants are in bract. Many other fungicides will contribute to powdery mildew management, but growers encountering the disease close to crop finish will gain the longest-term control benefit from Strike, Terraguard or Systhane.

The new strobilurin fungicides Compass and Cygnus are also very effective against powdery mildew on poinsettias, as is Pipron. (Pipron has a label caution suggesting a small-scale test before treatment of poinsettias with mature bracts). If the disease is identified in early fall, alternating between Strike/Terraguard/Systhane and other materials known to be effective against powdery mildew would be appropriate for resistance management.

Read and follow product labels. Mention of particular plant disease control product is for educational purposes only and is not to be considered an endorsement of those products over other similar products not mentioned.

-adapted from Margary Daughtrey, Cornell U.

Crop Insurance for Cut Flowers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Risk Management Agency (RMA) is investigating the feasibility of a crop insurance program for cut flower and foliage growers. The agency has sent a representative to Hawaii to learn about the floriculture industry here. Farmers, U.H. agents and specialists were able to present a lot of information that might help in devising a program that would benefit Hawaii's flower growers.

Although the road to cut flower crop insurance won't be an easy one, the first steps have been taken by the RMA. Hopefully we will hear more about the planning for this program in 2002.

"Flowers. Alive with Possibilities"

The Flower Promotion Organization's (FPO) "Flowers. Alive with Possibilities" campaign will now move to Minneapolis-St. Paul. The FPO program was initially launched during fall 2000 in Philadelphia, Detroit, Chicago, Houston and San Diego and continues in those cities. In the spring of 2002, FPO plans to pick another city in which to expand the campaign.

The FPO program has been responsible for an increase in cut flower sales to the target group during traditionally slower times of the year. Aimed at women 25-54 who already purchase flowers, the campaign entices them to purchase more frequently by giving them new "possibilities" for using cut flowers around the home.

For more information about the FPO, check out their web site:

<http://www.flowerpossibilities.com>.

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Never go to a doctor whose office plants have died.  
- Erma Bombeck

## Organic Flowers Branded

Organic Bouquet will be the US's first branded organic floral company. Based in Novato, Calif., it plans to bring its first crop of organic tulips to market in January. It will be followed by a variety of other flowers for Mother's Day. There have been a number of commercial flower producers in the U.S. that have gone organic. Now several of them have started organic production that will be marketed under the Organic Bouquet brand.

The company plans to wholesale flowers to upscale natural food retailers. It will also market its products directly to consumers through its catalog and online store. It will have a lot of experience doing this since Dave Smith, co-founder and former president of Smith and Hawken, is president of Organic Bouquet. Smith and Hawken was established in 1985 to bring in garden tools from Great Britain. Now they have over 40 stores and an important mail order and online business.

Smith will focus on launching the catalog and online store. Gerald Prolman is CEO of Organic Bouquet. He was President and CEO of Made in Nature, Inc., a marketer and distributor of certified organic produce.

There is an estimated 20 to 25% annual increase in the organic market. Organic flowers may become a growing niche for Hawaii's nurserymen and farmers, especially if it follows other organic markets.

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Late one night a man answered the phone: "How do I know?" he asked. "Why don't you call the weather bureau?"

"Who was that?" his wife inquired.

"Beats me. Some guy wanted to know if the coast was clear."

-Steve Wozniak and Larry Wilde

Dengue Fever on Oahu

If you haven't heard about Dengue Fever, you must have been living under a rock for the last month or so. As of Nov. 15, there have been 15 confirmed cases on Oahu. Most are in Laie, Hauula and Kaneohe. For a current count, check the Department of Health's (DOH) web site at <http://www.state.hi.us/health/dengue/index.html>.

Since growers often work outside in areas with standing water, precautions must be taken to avoid becoming a victim. Growers in areas with confirmed cases of Dengue Fever should be especially vigilant. Attached you will find a brochure developed by the DOH. You can direct questions to their Oahu number at 586-8352.

Aster Yellows Reported

A preliminary report has been made that aster yellows has been found on Oahu. Aster yellows is a viral-like disease and is caused by a phytoplasma (previously called a mycoplasma-like organism or MLO). Specifically, they fit between bacteria and viruses. They are spread by aster leafhoppers. Hosts include marigold, zinnia, petunia, rose, chrysanthemum, daisy, many vegetables and weeds. A number of plants that are less susceptible are nicotiana, geraniums, salvia, cockscomb, impatiens, portulaca and verbenas.

Infected plants look like they have a virus. They appear stunted, yellowish, stiff and bushy. The flowers may be deformed with leafy petals that are partially or totally green. Control of the disease entails controlling the aster leafhopper and destroying affected plants. More information will be forthcoming about aster yellows if/when the preliminary report is confirmed.

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Advice is what we ask for when we already know the answer but wish we didn't.

- Erica Jong

## New CTAHR Publications

Two new College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources publications have been released. "2001 Federal Tax Reform and You" can be found at <http://www2.ctahr.hawaii.edu/oc/freepubs/pdf/FC-58.pdf>. And "Dealing With Sudden Unemployment" is at <http://www2.ctahr.hawaii.edu/oc/freepubs/pdf/FC-59.pdf>.

### "Ka Lono Pua" Goes Electronic

Because the cost of mailing out "Ka Lono Pua" is high in regards to printing, producing and posting, we will happily e-mail copies to those that have access to e-mail.

If you would like to receive "Ka Lono Pua" by e-mail, contact us so we can add your address to our listings. If you don't have e-mail or we don't know what it is, you will continue to receive a regular copy of "Ka Lono Pua."

If you have any questions or suggestions, give me a call at 622-4185, Tuesdays and Thursdays or e-mail me at [mersino@hawaii.edu](mailto:mersino@hawaii.edu).

Mahalo!

Edwin F. Mersino  
County Extension Agent  
Agriculture Program

Jenkins started a new job and became friendly with a long-time employee. "Do you like it here?" Jenkins asked.

"It's great," answered the old timer. "Not only do we have a good pension plan, but working here ages you faster."

*-The Larry Wilde Treasury of Laughter (Jester)*