



Ka Lono Pua

"The Flower News"

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Oahu County

Cooperative Extension Service,

Be Safe – Don't Burn

We are in the midst of some dry summer weather that has followed a very wet spring. The rains of March and April have enabled grass and other plants to grow and thrive. This build up in the "fuel load" has made much of the island very susceptible to disastrous wildfires.

Besides the danger to people, homes, businesses, farms and nurseries, fires destroy vegetation that holds soil and moisture. Fires also destroy habitat for native species and rare and endangered plants.

We must do what we can to prevent wildfires and take action to mitigate the effects of any that do get started. To prevent forest fires don't start them. Now is not a good time to burn that pile of dead trees and plants. Don't park your vehicles with hot engines and exhaust systems over dry grass. Make sure anything that can cause a spark is far away from any type of flammable material.

To prevent wildfires from destroying your home and nursery build a buffer zone free of fuel. Keep dead leaves and brush and other dry material at least 30 feet away. If you have a lawn, irrigate it enough so that it doesn't dry up and become a source of fuel. (Continued on page 2.)

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Future Happenings

- Aug 5 Halawa Xeriscape Plant Sale, Halawa Xeriscape Garden 9 – 3 p.m
- Aug 10-12 SNA 2006 TheWorld's Showcase of Horticulture, Atlanta, GA (770)953-3311 www.sna.org
- Aug 18–20 The Nursery/Landscape Expo, San Antonio, TX; www.sna.org
- Aug 18-20 Made in Hawaii Festival, NBC, Honolulu, HI (808) 533-1292, www.madeinhawaiifestival.com
- * Aug 24 Strategic Planning Meeting 1 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. UH Manoa Gilmore 212.
- Aug 24–26 Farwest Show, Portland, Oregon (800) 342-6401 www.farwestshow.com
- Sept 7 – 8 Organic Farming Workshop, See: <http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/organic/events.asp> or call Steve Fukuda at 622-4185.
- Sept 27–30 SAF Naples 2006, Naples, FL (703) 836-8700 www.safnow.org
- Sept 28-30 Florida Nursery & Allied Trades Show (FNATS) , Orlando, (800) 375-3642 www.fngla.org
- * Oct 24-27 Hawaii Ag Conference see: <http://www.agconference.org>
- * See newsletter for details

Be Safe – Don't Burn (Con't)

Trees that are close to homes and nurseries should be low-lying. Prune taller trees of lower limbs (6 – 10 feet) so trees don't catch fire. Avoid ladder fuels that allow the fires to climb.

Blowing embers tend to fall and collect where other leaves and debris collect. Clean those areas out. Those are areas such as rain gutters, eaves, corners, along fence lines and walls of houses and shade houses.

For your own and your families' safety make sure that smoke detectors are in operational order. Now is a good time to replace their batteries. Conduct a fire drill so that everyone knows what to do and where to go in case of a fire.

Fire safety at this time of year and especially this year is of the utmost importance. Even typically wet windward areas are affected by our dry weather. Be safe – Be prepared.

Snail/Slug WebSite

The website for the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program for the Pacific Northwest was started in 2002 by Oregon State University. It contains information about a number of pests including insects, mites, diseases, weeds, mollusks (read slugs and snails), abiotic, and vertebrates.

Much of the information is relevant to Hawaii's growers. What is really impressive is the section on slugs and snails. It doesn't have a lot of information about all of Hawaii's species, but it has everything else you ever wanted to know about slugs and snails. See:

<http://oregonstate.edu/Dept/nurspest/index.htm>

Waimanalo Water Restrictions

Our dry summer weather has caused low water storage levels at the 60-million-gallon Waimanalo Reservoir on Oahu. As of August 1, 2006 the level was down to 21.5 feet. In mid June the level had dropped to 33 feet, and a Phase I voluntary water conservation plan of 10% was initiated by HDOA. Because of the continuing drop in level, a Phase III mandatory water conservation of 30 percent was instituted.

Hopefully, recent rain will restore the level of the reservoir. Updated status reports can be seen on the HDOA website at:

<http://www.hawaiiag.org/hdoa/arm-waimanalo.htm>

2005 Floriculture Crops Value up 1%

The 2005 wholesale value of floriculture crops is up 1% from 2004, according to the Floriculture Crops 2005 Summary from USDA Nat'l Ag Statistics Service. Total crop value at wholesale for all growers with \$10,000 or more in sales is estimated at \$5.36 billion for 2005, compared with \$5.28 billion for 2004.

The number of growers for 2005, at 10,563, is down 7% compared with the 2004 count of 11,385. Total covered area for floriculture crop production was 916 million sq. ft., 3% less than in 2004. Greenhouse space for 2005, at 550 million sq. ft., is down less than 1% from 2004.

GMPRO greEn-MAIL, for May 8, 2006

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“Those in the cheaper seats clap. The rest of you rattle your jewelry.”

- John Lennon

## Floral and Nursery Industry Strategic Planning Update

In January 2006, a statewide strategic plan development meeting with floral and nursery industry associations was held in Hilo. The participants identified several key issues that all industry associations' representatives agreed would enable the expansion of the ornamental industry. Those industry associations participating represented orchid, anthurium, and tropical flower growers associations as well as landscape and foliage nurserymen. There were also representatives from government agencies and allied industry members such as Fedex and Hawaii Farm Bureau.

The purpose of the strategic planning retreat was

- to determine how best to meet a changing business environment,
- to build capacity towards a unified voice for the ornamental industry, and
- to better focus our resources to benefit the industry.

As a follow-up to the January meeting a Floriculture Task Force has been formed with two representatives from each participating association to establish a framework for an "umbrella" organization. All related associations are encouraged to participate and designate their two representatives.

A grower's survey was mailed out to identify what your organization does well and what an "umbrella" organization could do for you. The results will be used as a guide for the task force members.

The next statewide meeting will be using the U.H PolyCom system and will be on:

**Thursday, August 24, 2006**  
**UH Manoa, Gilmore Hall, Room 212**  
**1:00 PM to 4:30 PM**

## AG Conference Set for October

Ag Conference 2006, Maximizing Your Bottom Line has been scheduled for October 26th at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Beach Resort & Spa in Waikiki. This statewide conference will be presented by the Agricultural Leadership Foundation of Hawaii, the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation (HFBF), the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources and Hawaii Department of Agriculture.

The Ag Conference is being held in conjunction with the HFBF Annual Convention and other seminars:

|              |                               |
|--------------|-------------------------------|
| Oct. 24 & 25 | HFBF Annual Convention        |
| Oct. 26      | 2006 Agricultural Conference  |
| Oct. 27      | HI Trop. Flower Coun. Seminar |
| Oct. 27      | HI Agri. Bioenergy Workshop   |

The goal of the conference is to bring industry together for capacity building, to develop opportunities to be more successful in business, and to create an environment where people can exchange ideas.

Registration will be open soon. For more information go the website at:  
<http://www.agconference.org>  
Questions may be e-mailed to:  
[info@agconference.org](mailto:info@agconference.org) or call 808-947-2914.

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During an auction, proceedings were halted and the auctioneer announced: "A fellow in the room has just lost his wallet containing one thousand dollars. He offers two hundred bucks for its return."

Came a voice from the rear: "Two hundred and ten!"

-H. Matty Simmons

Thrips Host List Expands

It has been reported that Chili thrips, *Scirtothrips dorsalis* Hood, has expanded its host list to include Ligustrum, Gardenia, Pittosporum, English ivy and basil. Florida researchers are particularly concerned about infestations on various woody ornamentals and the weedy tropical Mexican clover. Both Chili thrips and Mexican clover are found in Hawaii. According to Lance Osborne of the U. of Fl. the damage to ligustrum was very significant.

Chili thrips look very similar to Orchid thrips and have more than 100 recorded hosts. Some of them include: Chrysanthemum, roses, jasmine, camellia, purple amaranth, cashew, peanut, asparagus, citrus, tomato, mango, and eggplants.

Chili thrips feeds on buds, fruits and leaves, but prefers the young leaves. Attacked tender leaves, buds, and fruits turn bronze to black in color. Damaged leaves curl upward along the edges. Plants that are infested become stunted. Like other thrips, chili thrips populations drop in the rainy season, but become high during the dry season.

For good control it is important to monitor the thrips population and take action before a full-scale infestation occurs. There are a number of pesticides available to control thrips. Be sure to rotate insecticides with different modes of action to avoid the development of resistance in the thrips population.

For a management plan and a list of insecticides that are effective for the chili thrips see: <http://www.mrec.ifas.ufl.edu/LSO/CHILLI%20THRIPS%20MANAGEMENT%20GUIDELINES.doc> When you get the "Enter Network Password" message, click "cancel".

For a wealth of information on chili and other thrips see: <http://www.mrec.ifas.ufl.edu/LSO/thripslinks.htm>

AGR-Lite Farm Insurance May Be Coming to Hawaii

Adjusted Gross Revenue-Lite (AGR-Lite) is a USDA farm insurance program. Hawaii farmers may soon be able to participate in the program if all goes well. The Risk Management Agency of the USDA has granted preliminary approval to expand its program to include Hawaii farmers. Before final approval will be granted, a risk assessment must be completed by USDA. It is hoped that the farm insurance program may be available in early 2007. HDOA has estimated that 95 percent of all farms in Hawaii will qualify for this program, in which the government pays a portion of the premium.

The AGR-Lite is a farm revenue protection plan of insurance. It covers all crops and animal produced under one farm policy umbrella. The plan provides protection against revenue loss due to unavoidable natural disasters and market fluctuations that affect income during the insurance year.

To be eligible for coverage, growers must:

- Be a U.S. citizen or legal resident;
- File a calendar year or fiscal year farm tax return;
- Have less than \$2,051,282 in approved gross income (coverage limited to \$1 million);
- Have appropriate IRS tax forms available for the previous five consecutive years under the same tax entity;
- Have no more than 50 percent of total revenue from commodities purchased for resale.

The government will pay between 48 and 59% of the premiums depending on the level of coverage from 80 to 65% respectively.

For more details, go to: <http://www.rma.usda.gov/pubs/2003/PAN-1667-07.pdf>

Poinsettia News & Websites

Poinsettias have been arriving for several months in Hawaii, but more are arriving every day. As your cuttings come in, be sure they are pest free. We have seen some already infected with *Sphaceloma poinsettiae* aka Scab. This disease causes spots on the leaves and stems and as the plant matures, stems quickly elongate creating unsaleable plants.

Also be especially on the lookout for whiteflies on incoming cuttings. To our knowledge Hawaii doesn't have the Q-biotype silverleaf whitefly yet. It is impossible to visually distinguish this pest from the B-biotype, which we have had for a number of years. The Q-biotype has established itself on the U.S. mainland and is resistant to some of the insecticides Hawaii growers have successfully used. It is critical to control the Q-type silverleaf whitefly before the infestation gets widespread. For more information on controlling this pest see: <http://www.mrec.ifas.ufl.edu/LSO/best.htm>

Another good website for poinsettia information can be found at the Poinsettia Zone sponsored by Greenhouse Product News. It is at: <http://www.gpnmag.com/gpn/index.cfm?fuseaction=showZoneMenu&zoneID=1>. You can find information on the many various cultivars, growth regulators, controlling diseases and insects, as well as a couple of experts you can contact about your poinsettia problems. In addition there is a collection of past articles that focus on every poinsettia subject imaginable.

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Overheard: "I really don't understand my wife sometimes. She insisted on buying a new bathing suit before we went on vacation just because her old one had a hole in the knee."

-Andy Betz

## National Floral Standards

VeriFlora is a standard for floral products that was developed by Scientific Certification Systems (SCS) in June 2005. SCS was contacted by members of the floriculture industry including growers, wholesalers, and retailers, to develop a standard that addresses the environmental and socially responsible aspects of flower growing.

About 250 million stems were certified by late 2005. The certification process involves extensive audits of growing and handling practices.

The core principles that the certification rests upon include: advanced agricultural practices, conservation of water and ecological resources, waste management, social responsibility and product quality.

For more information about the program see: <http://www.scs-certified.com/csrpurchasing/veriflora/>

### **"Ka Lono Pua" Goes Electronic**

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

- What is AGR-Lite insurance?
- When is the next Ag conference?
- Why should you worry about chili thrips?
- What should you do about fire safety this summer?
- Where can you find tons of info on slugs and snails?

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