



# *Ka Lono Pua*

*"The Flower News"*

Vol. V, No. 4, October 1998

Oahu County

Cooperative Extension Service

## **CES Celebrates 70 years in Hawaii**

The College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) and the University of Hawai'i at Manoa is planning a day of celebration for the 70th anniversary of the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) in Hawai'i. During the day, we will be recognizing CTAHR retirees and CTAHR's major accomplishments and impacts throughout the past decades.

The day of celebration will be Wednesday, November 4th. It will include a tour of the Pearl City Urban Garden Center, a faculty forum sponsored by ΕΣΦ, the honorary extension fraternity, a tour of CTAHR Manoa campus, and a luncheon at Pearl Country Club. If you are interested in participating, contact Ed at 622-4185.

Although the State's hard economic times have led to reductions in CES, the college is committed to assisting the agricultural industry through the Cooperative Extension Service. We look forward to a future of collaboration and mutual support.

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

- ◆ Research Funds for Floriculture
- ◆ Poinsettia Powdery Mildew Alert
- ◆ Phalaenopsis Orchids Regs., other
- ◆ Nursery News Shorts                   ....and more

## **Future Happenings**

- Oct 12       Columbus Day
- Oct 15-18   Honolulu Orchid Show, NBC
- Oct 27-30   Assoc. of Specialty Cut Flower Growers Conf., Raleigh, NC
- Oct 31       Halloween
- Nov 3 (Tue) Election Day
- Nov 2-11    Thailand Orchid Tour
- Nov 4        A Day of Celebration
- Nov 11 (Wed) Veteran's Day
- Nov 12       DOGAH Meeting
- Nov 26       Thanksgiving Day
- Dec 12       DOGAH Christmas Party
- Dec 25       Merry Christmas!
- 1999**
- Jan 1        Happy New Year!
- Jan 18       Martin Luther King Day
- Jul 10-14    Ohio Florists' Association Short Course, Columbus, Ohio
- Aug. 27-29 Farwest Show, Portland, OR  
Oregon Association of Nurserymen
- Sep 27-30   5<sup>th</sup> Annual Hawaii Mid-Pacific Hort  
Conf. And Trade Show, Hilo

## **Ag. Research Programs & Crop Insurance Renewed**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – By a vote of 364 - 50, The House of Representatives passed the conference report to S.1150, The Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998, making final congressional approval of the first major overhaul of agricultural research programs in over twenty years and the restoration of crop insurance for America's farmers.

Rep. Smith (Ore.) said "Strong agricultural research programs have enabled America's farmers and ranchers to produce the highest quality food and fiber in the world at competitive prices. This bill updates and modernizes our research programs so that American farmers will maintain their competitive edge in an increasingly global marketplace".

"We worked diligently to improve upon the current structure of Research, Education and Extension. This bill increases competition and maximizes research for leveraging private dollars with limited federal funds," said Rep. Larry Combest (TX).

"In addition to making a number of improvements to our nation's agricultural research system, this legislation provides necessary funding for crop insurance, nutrition programs, and rural development in a fiscally responsible way" said Rep. Charlie Stenholm (TX).

Over five years, S. 1150 allocates \$600 million to create new agriculture research programs, \$500 million to partially fund crop insurance costs, \$100 million for the Fund for Rural America, and \$800 million to partially fund food stamps for non-citizens.

Committee on Agriculture, U.S. House of Representatives, 1301 Longworth Building, Washington, D.C. 20515

## **National Organic Standards Revised**

After an overwhelming number of negative comments on proposed national organic standards, USDA vowed to make "fundamental revisions," said Ag. Sec. Dan Glickman. "Biotechnology, irradiation and biosolids are safe and have important roles to play in agriculture, but they neither fit current organic practices nor meet current consumer expectations about organics, as comments made clear. Therefore, these products and practices will not be included in our revised proposal and food produced with these products and practices will not be allowed to bear the organic label." Upon publishing a revision to the proposal, which could occur this year, USDA will issue another comment period. <http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop/>

## **Gasoline Fuels Higher Costs in Hawaii**

If you have been reading the local papers recently about the state suing the fuel companies over price fixing, here is what is happening on the mainland.

The cost of delivering plants on the U.S. mainland has become cheaper because of drop in gasoline prices. The American Automobile Association (AAA) reported that the price of gas is at its lowest level in 6 1/2 years. The September average price for a gallon of self-serve regular unleaded was \$1.05<sup>7</sup>. That is down 1.8 cents from Aug. and 23.1 cents from 1997. The AAA survey showed the West had the most expensive average price at \$1.21<sup>1</sup> a gallon. Maybe that's due to Hawaii being included in the average. The cheapest I've seen on Oahu is \$1.44<sup>9</sup>, but most stations charge around \$1.51<sup>9</sup>.

Incidentally, the Southeast had the lowest average price at 97.4 cents. Source: AP.

# Nursery News Shorts

On a weekly basis GMPRO sends out via e-mail a short summary of important developments in the nursery/greenhouse world. GMPRO is a monthly magazine for greenhouse professionals. To receive the e-mail news contact editor David Kuack at: [dkuack@bspublishing.com](mailto:dkuack@bspublishing.com). Below are some recent items of interest to Hawaii's growers.

## Phalaenopsis Orchids Regulations

USDA has proposed a regulation change that would allow phalaenopsis orchids in growing media to be imported into the U.S. APHIS has conducted a pest-risk analysis and determined that if the orchids are grown in an approved medium, the degree of pest risk is less than that associated with bare-root orchids. The orchids would be subject to other growing, inspection and certification requirements. APHIS is accepting comments on the proposal until Nov. 2.  
(301) 734-6799: [peter.m.grosser@usda.gov](mailto:peter.m.grosser@usda.gov);  
<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/press/1998/08/orchids.txt>

## Integrated Pest Management Guide

The IPM Guide for Nursery/Floral Producers is available from the Texas Agriculture Extension Service. The guide contains information on the latest IPM developments, biocontrol tactics, pest identification and management, traditional chemical control and more. (409) 845-7341.

## Y2000 IRS Tax Break

The IRS plans to give companies struggling with Year 2000 (Y2K) computer problems a break. IRS will allow full tax deductions in 1 year rather than the usual 3. This applies to costs incurred in the repair or conversion of existing software. Any deductions for improvements beyond fixing the Y2K problem still fall under the 3-year rule. Source: AP.

## Dole Foods Moving into Cut Flowers

Looks like Dole Food Co. is really going bananas over fresh cut flowers. Having recently purchased Sunburst Farms and Floramerica, Dole has also acquired Finesse Farms, an importer and supplier of roses, and Four Farmers Inc. and its Latin American affiliates. The company also signed a letter of intent to acquire the Clavecol Group of companies, including CCI Farms, a Miami grower, importer and distributor of fresh cut flowers. Combining these new and proposed acquisitions with its previous ones, Dole's annual revenues in fresh cut flowers should exceed \$200 million.

## Ohio Short Course Sets Records

This year's Ohio Short Course in Columbus set a record attendance approaching 9,000 participants, compared with last year's 7,800 people. This year's Short Course featured a trade show with 416 exhibitors and 903 booths. There is a waiting list of 109 companies for next year's show and OFA plans to make space available for more exhibitors. The Short Course celebrates its 70th anniversary next year, July 10-14, 1999.  
[ofa@ofa.org](mailto:ofa@ofa.org)

## New Neem Products

More azadirachtin insect control products should be available soon. AMVAC Chemical Corp., a subsidiary of American Vanguard Corp., and Fortune Biotech Ltd. entered an exclusive arrangement in the U.S. to offer products developed from the neem tree, *Azadirachta indica*. AMVAC will formulate a 3% active ingredient product marketed under the trade names Amazin, Ornazin and Ecozin for the mushroom, ornamental and agricultural markets. This biodegradable product leaves no toxic residues and is harmless to birds, mammals and beneficial insects.

# Poinsettia Powdery Mildew Alert

Some poinsettia growers on Oahu have already seen the symptoms of powdery mildew on their plants. The disease either came in on cuttings, survived on last year's left-over plants, or spores were carried in by wind or some other method. When I visit a grower suspected of having powdery mildew, I don't visit other poinsettia growers until I shower and change clothes.

The disease organism responsible for causing powdery mildew on poinsettias is different from the ones that cause powdery mildew on roses, begonias and other crops. It is very host specific – it only affects poinsettias.

Over the hot summer months symptoms on old leaves do not spread to the new shoots and leaves. This is because the fungus becomes inactive above 86° F. As our cooler fall and winter days begin, the fungus will start to spread again and infect the new leaves.

The symptoms of powdery mildew are white fuzzy spots on the leaves. In warmer periods, the first symptom may be just a pale yellow spot on the leaves. Growers should scout their plants regularly and often. Catching the fungus early is one of the best ways of limiting the damage. Plant pathologist, Gary Moorman of Penn State University suggests looking at the top and bottom of the four most mature leaves on one of every thirty plants.

Infected leaves should be removed from the plant, bagged on the spot, and taken from the shadehouse or field. This may sound like an university egghead thing to do. But leaving infected leaves in the growing area is like trying to put out a wildfire by stomping on it. The fungus spreads very quickly, and each fuzzy spot has hundreds of spores waiting for the next breeze to carry them to other plants.

After removing infected leaves, Moorman suggests spraying plants every two weeks with Strike at 4 oz./100 gal. Don't add spreader

stickers. Continue to scout and discard infected leaves. There are a number of other fungicides that can also be used. They include Cleary's 3336, Dithane M-45, Domain, Fungo-Flo, Phyton-27, SysTec 1998, Systane, and Terraguard.

Most of these are protectants, that is they protect the uninfected leaves from being invaded by the fungus. Relying only on these can be risky. Problems arise when what looked to be clean plants went out to retailers. In the stores the plants developed powdery mildew symptoms and could not be sold.

According to specialists at Cornell, Texas A&M, and Michigan State Universities, Terraguard has a strong localized systemic action. Strike and Systhane have systemic action that will protect the bracts. Growers should apply fungicides with systemic action twice at a two-week interval before shipment. Be cautioned to follow the label instructions – do not give a higher dose than labeled.

Keep in mind that our conditions in Hawaii are often warmer and sunnier than on the mainland. Test a chemical on a few plants before spraying your whole crop. And remember: Scout your crop, take fast action if you find powdery mildew, and you will have a successful poinsettia crop.

~~~~~

Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson went on a camping trip. In the middle of the night, Holmes said, "Watson, look up into the sky and tell me what you see?"

The Dr. said "I see millions of stars."

Holmes asked, "And what does that tell you?"

Watson replied, "Astronomically, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and billions of planets. Theologically, it tells me that God is great and that we are small and insignificant. Meteorologically, it tells me that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you, Holmes?"

"Somebody stole our tent!"

## Funding For Floriculture Research

The House Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee designated \$1.2 million for floriculture and nursery crop research. This is the first time a major appropriation has been made for ornamental horticulture research. Funding would be used for USDA and land grant university research, including establishment of an ornamental germplasm center at Ohio State Univ.

Also, the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee voted to restore \$200,000 allocated in last year's budget for USDA floriculture and nursery research.

A conference committee of key senators and representatives is meeting to resolve differences in the House and Senate versions of the agriculture appropriations bill that includes floriculture and nursery research funding. The differences in the two bills must be resolved into a final bill. The Society of American Florists and the American Nursery and Landscape Association have urged legislators to accept the House version of the bill. We will soon know the outcome of this effort.

## Colors for 2000

The Color Marketing Board has designated the following as some of the "in" colors for the year 2000: Thai Gold, Spa, and Salso Lito.

## New Publication

CTAHR announced a new publication entitled "What do Anthurium Buyers Want in Their flowers? Results of a Market Survey" (EFS-27, 4 p.) by John Halloran and Heidi Kuehnle. Copies can be found at the CTAHR web site at: <http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/>

## "Ka Lono Pua" Goes Electronic

Because the cost of mailing out "Ka Lono Pua" is high in regards to printing, producing and posting, we are going to e-mail copies to those that we know have e-mail. E-mail is faster, too - if you check your mail regularly.

If you would like to continue to receive the hard copy in the future, please give me a call at 622-4185. If we do not hear from you, future editions will arrive by e-mail only.

Also if you would like to receive "Ka Lono Pua" by e-mail and haven't, contact us so we can add your e-mail 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."

Mahalo!

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). Check out our web site "Ask the Experts" at <http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/~experts/>

Edwin F. Mersino  
County Extension Agent  
Agriculture Program

~~~~~

Only In America...

..can a pizza get to your house faster than an ambulance.

..are there handicap parking places in front of a skating rink.

..do banks leave both doors open and then chain the pens to the counters.

**DON'T FORGET TO VOTE**

- ❑ What's going on this month?
- ❑ What's the big upcoming problem for Poinsettia growers?
- ❑ Where can you go to find the latest nursery news?
- ❑ What can you do to help the floriculture industry?
- ❑ How many years has CES been in Hawaii?

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