

Introduction

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It's hard for me to believe that that it's only been since September of last year that the coffee berry borer was confirmed as present on the Big Island. So much has happened and has been decided since then, and at a rapid pace. First, there were the Informational meetings held in Kona and in Kauai...a chance for coffee industry leaders and researchers to consider together the implications of this invasionand what we must do to control it, prevent its spread, and maintain our quality and markets.

Many of us were blind-sided by this bug. We might have heard the name, but didn't fully appreciate what a serious pest it was, or were unaware that Hawaii was one of only a few coffee growing areas in the world where this pest had not yet invaded. Most of us didn't realize to what degree this bug was about to change our lives. Very early on, the coffee grower groups began organizing for the battle ahead, gleaning all they could from the internet and from talking with experts, both in the US and abroad. In the past these different coffee grower groups have not always seen eye-to-eye on marketing issues. One positive effect of these differences is that it created strong organizations. Since the invasion, these grower groups have been very proactive, collecting and disseminating information and urging those of us who are researchers to get involved to address this threat to our coffee industry. The Hawaii Dept. of Agriculture also wasted no time getting involved. With the assistance of growers and USDA-APHIS they undertook a survey to find out where the beetles are present, and how to prevent their spread. HDOA instituted an Incident Command system to respond to the emergency, and industry leaders as well as researchers at the University of Hawaii and PBARC were included as part of the team. This structure ensured good communication and teamwork and prevented duplication of effort. The alliances formed between industry leaders, researchers and regulators in these early days were formalized in the formation of the Coffee Berry Borer Task Force, the within this group, a Science Advisory Panel was created to identify and direct research needs.

For this symposium, Eric Jang and I have assembled a group of *experts* and coffee industry leaders who will provide an overview of the problem facing Hawaii, as well

as a considered discussion of potential solutions. We'll start with Fernando Vega, our nation's expert on coffee berry borer and its control. Dr. Vega is based in Beltsville, MD. Unfortunately, his appearance here was prevented by a plane door that wouldn't close in Salt Lake City. Undeterred, he will be joining us this afternoon by telephone, his voice patched through my cell phone and amplified for all to hear. Neil Reimer of the Plant Pest Division of HDOA will talk about the situation on the ground here in Hawaii, and HDOA's plans to prevent the spread of this pest. Dan Kuhn, chair of the Coffee Berry Borer Task Force, and will tell us what is being done organizationally to deal with the Invasion and protect the livelihoods of our growers. A University of Hawaii researcher, Russell Messing, will emphasize research needs relating to the biology of the pest, with an emphasis on the practice of sanitation for control. Many of us have heard that alcohol traps are being used to catch beetles in Hawaii: no doubt these traps are useful survey tools, but the question is, can they be used to control the beetle? Our last speaker before the refreshment break, Mark Wright, will answer that question.

There are only 3 talks after the break, but you don't want to miss them. First, there is Suzanne Shriener, an Environmental Engineer turned Coffee Grower. She is passionate about the need for attacking this pest with biological control agents. Her testimony was influential in convincing the Hawaii Board of Agriculture in January that *Beauveria bassiana*, arguably the most important natural enemy of coffee berry borer, must be made available to all coffee growers **NOW**, before the beetles have a chance to ravage the next crop. Agricultural Research Service Scientist Stefan Jaronski follows Suzanne, and will give a primer on the use of *Beauveria* for insect control. Based in Montana, Dr. Jaronski is imminently qualified to give this talk: he was the scientist, at that time working for a startup company called Mycotech, who took the lead in registering the GHA strain of *Beauveria bassiana* which is now used across the nation for control of insect pests. One month ago, products containing this fungus were cleared for import into Hawaii for use by all Hawaii farmers in accordance with the product label. Eric and I were very happy that Dr. Jaronski agreed to come all of this distance for this talk today. On Thursday morning, Dr. Jaronski will meet with growers to share his knowledge and provide a hands-on training on the use of *Beauveria*. Finally, Eric Jang of the Pacific Basin Agricultural Research Center will talk about prospects **and** the **need** for area-wide management

of Coffee Berry Borer. Eric will also summarize some of the main points made by other speakers. I thank you for coming to the symposium. We have a remarkably qualified roster of speakers, and, like many of you, I'm excited for this unique opportunity to learn more about how to control this devastating pest.