FY 2011 SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM – FARM BILL

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Hawaii State Department of Agriculture
Final Report
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2nd Annual Hawai'i Chocolate Festival and Hawaiian-Grown Cacao Month

Final Report

Project Summary
The Hawaii Chocolate Festival was created to stimulate interest in Hawaii’s chocolate industry positioning Hawaii-Grown Chocolate as Hawaii’s newest ambassador of Aloha. In its second year, the Hawaii Chocolate Festival, February 25, 2012, showcased and celebrated all things chocolate with Hawaii-Grown Chocolate spotlighted in particular. The event and related activities supporting Hawaii-Grown Chocolate Month (February) were designed to inform and educate the public regarding the emerging cacao industry in Hawaii, the only state in the U.S. currently growing chocolate. The Festival focused on promoting local culinary talents and products specifically linked to Hawaii’s chocolate industry and its related creations to generate interest in and support for Hawaii-grown cacao crops. The Festival’s intention is to raise awareness of the high quality of Hawaii-grown chocolate and develop the market for its unique products. The event flyer and photos are shown in Appendix 1 and Appendix 1.1

The event promoted the nascent cacao industry in Hawai‘i and 1) created a fun event for locals and visitors that celebrates chocolate in its many forms; 2) educated the public as potential consumers and supporters about Hawai‘i’s cacao and chocolate industries as green, sustainable, high-quality, and economically viable; 3) allowed local growers and producers a venue to showcase their products to consumers, test market new products, and grow brand awareness; 4) gave local growers and producers the opportunity to make connections both among themselves and with local and international buyers and business interests; and 5) highlighted Hawaii-grown chocolate as a specialty product, creating a niche market comparable to that for Kona coffee.

Project Approach
The Festival was the culmination of a month-long calendar of activities in celebration of Hawaii-Grown Cacao month as decreed by the Legislature. During the month of February, the Hawaii Chocolate Festival Road Show literally took the show on the road by producing a series of outreach events to educate the community about the budding cacao industry in Hawaii. There were five events conducted as a lead-up to the Festival. At each of these events professional educational boards were displayed to explain the history of chocolate in Hawaii and show the process of transforming the cacao bean into locally-grown chocolate. In addition, there was Hawaii-grown chocolate tasting, pod samples and literature about chocolate, along with recipes cards for distribution. These events took place at the following locations:

January 30, 2012– Haleiwa Farmers’ Market, Haleiwa, HI
February 11, 2012– Kahala Mall, Honolulu, HI
February 11, 2012– Hawaii Theater Center’s Chinatown Chase, Bethel Street, Honolulu, HI
February 12, 2012– Windward Mall, Kaneohe, HI
February 14, 2012– The Pacific Club, Honolulu, HI
February 25, 2012– Hawaii Chocolate Festival, Honolulu, HI
Among the products promoted at the festival were chocolate beer, vodka, cheesecake and bacon. SPBGP funds were not used to promote these products. The chocolate beer and vodka products were in a separate section of the event which was hosted by Tiki’s Bar and Grill, a local restaurant that provided the liquor license and was responsible to select the products and manage the booth. The products containing alcohol were located in a separate section next to the event with a separate entrance and guard overseeing entrance and exit. The chocolate beer and vodka are regularly featured at Tiki’s Bar and Grill along with an entrée made with locally grown chocolate. This section created interest for the festival, helped the local cacao farmers, and was conducted entirely with private funds.

The chocolate cheesecake was made with locally grown chocolate as the base crust and on the top (shavings) of these tarts, specifically promoting only Hawaii-grown chocolate and how it can be incorporated into baking. The bacon was completely covered with locally grown chocolate showing that a chocolate product can be both a sweet and savory treat. Both of these products were made with chocolate as more than 50 percent of the finished product by weight, however, SCBGP funds were not used to produce the chocolate cheesecake or chocolate covered bacon. These products were produced with private sector funding and demonstrated how chocolate can be used creatively to enhance value-added products such as beer, cake and bacon, with the purpose to increase demand and support the production of cacao in Hawaii.

**Goals and Outcomes Achieved**

The primary goal of the Hawaii Chocolate Festival was to bring chocolate lovers and local chocolate producers together in a celebration of cacao and chocolate in their many forms. The project was to connect with 100 percent of the local growers. Last year’s Festival had an attendance of 1,000 ticketed visitors, 34 vendors and about 5 industry representatives. The goal for the 2012 Festival was to grow that number by at least 10 percent, contributing to the growing awareness of and demand for Hawaii-grown chocolate.

The project manager has determined that 100 percent of the local cacao growers were contacted and were aware of the opportunities to learn and grow their business by participating in the 2012 Hawaii Chocolate Festival. This outcome is based on efforts to contact every grower on a list provided by the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, information found on the internet and phone book, via referrals and through a one-day conference, attended by more than 50 industry stakeholders.

The attendance goal was exceeded with attendance at the 2012 festival of 1,400 visitors, a 40 percent increase in number of ticketed visitors. In 2012, there were 37 vendors and 9 industry representatives, meeting and exceeding the goal to increase those numbers by 10 percent. Of note is that the industry representatives, for purposes of this report defined as buyers, out-of-state entities, that are currently part of the industry – were from China, Dominica, and the West Coast – which the project manager found to be a measure of success demonstrating the impact of the festival.
The goal to conduct 15 outreach events was met. There were 17 outreach events -- six events on behalf of Hawaii-Grown Chocolate Month (listed above) and nine roadshow events shown below.

The goals to reach more than a million media impressions, 800 hits on the festival website and 250 likes on the festival’s Facebook page were met. Hawaiian Airlines ran the in-flight video promoting the festival to 900,000 viewers, and an additional 2,200 views to the video posted on YouTube. The festival was promoted via print and television which added to the media impressions. Refer to APPENDIX 1.2 to view the report from Dateline Media Monitoring showing 1,007,880 as the total audience for the February media campaign. There were more than 1000 hits on the festival website, 111,898 Facebook followers and 253 likes.

The goal to realize a 10 percent increase in retail sales at the 2012 Hawaii Chocolate Festival could not be confirmed and therefore not met. This result is because the vendors would not disclose their sales numbers in writing, but reported a 12 – 17 percent increase in sales from the 2011 Festival. One vendor, Paradise Chocolates, disclosed that their sales during the 2012 Festival was the most of any festival in which they have participated. [http://sweetparadisechocolate.com/](http://sweetparadisechocolate.com/)

The second annual festival built on the first year’s success, expanding the size, scope, and educational outreach of the event. Featured speakers discussed how locally-grown cacao is transformed into chocolate, expanding on educational and informational display materials.

The educational events that occurred during the Haleiwa Farmers Market, Kahala Mall, Chinatown Chase, Windward Mall and Pacific Club included displays of live cacao plants, pods (fresh and dried), cacao beans and nibs (pieces of cacao beans that have been roasted, hulled and ready for processing), to educate the public as to what cacao plants, pods, and beans look like as cacao moves from plant to chocolate bar. There were sign-up sheets for those interested in additional information. The events provided flyers with information such as “10 reasons why to support the cacao crop in Hawaii”, recipes cards to encourage the purchase of locally grown cacao, and coloring sheets featuring educational information about cacao and chocolate. Samples donated from local chocolatiers were offered to the public to familiarize them with Hawaii-grown chocolate. These events were intended to educate and increase public awareness regarding locally grown cacao and the products made from the cacao. Staff from the University of Hawaii Department of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources was on hand to provide suggestions on possible varieties that would grow best in various microclimates around the islands. The events were held at locations where there would be high traffic locations or would be attended by influential persons with pre-qualified interest in agriculture and/or specifically, cacao.

No SCBGP funds were used to raffle tickets for the Hawaii Chocolate Festival. Attendees were encouraged to submit a survey form indicating how they heard about the event and one name was selected to receive a brown pearl that was donated to the event. This was done in an effort to track what form of media was effective in drawing the attendees to the event.
The long-term outcomes cannot be assessed as of yet but we have seen an increase in interest from farmers and landowners in converting their coffee plants into cacao and increased interest in the industry documented by emails requesting information on the crop.

Photos from the festival – additional photos in APPENDIX 2:

Additionally the following goals and outcomes were achieved:

1. Conduct The Second Annual Hawaii Chocolate Festival and related events to stimulate interest in Hawaii’s chocolate industry and support “Hawaii-Grown Cacao Month” during February 2012.

Results: As a result of multiple events held in support of Hawaii-Grown Cacao Month, 1,400 consumers and buyers attend the Hawaii Chocolate Festival. Additionally, an industry association was founded as a direct result of the activities as the fledgling industry was spotlighted attracting national and international attention creating a sense of urgency around this crop. (http://www.hawaiichocolate.org/)
Haleiwa Farmers Market -- The first Hawaii Chocolate Festival Roadshow event was on Sunday, January 30th from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Haleiwa Farmers’ Market. This event brought 4,000+ people, all celebrating Hawaii-Grown Cacao and the booth at the event included Hawaii-grown chocolate tasting, educational displays including plants, pods and beans as well as recipe cards and distribution of information on this specialty crop.

Kahala Mall -- The next event was on Saturday, February 11 from noon to 2 p.m. at the Kahala Mall. At the event there was an opportunity to win tickets to the Hawaii Chocolate Festival, sample Hawaii-grown chocolate, get free chocolate recipe cards and learn about this diversified and sustainable agricultural crop. An estimated 2,500 people attended the event in which we sampled Hawaii-grown chocolate, provided educational displays including plants, pods and beans and distribution of information on this specialty crop. An estimated 500 recipe cards were handed out and at least one person expressed interest in growing cacao.

Chinatown Chase -- On the same day the Hawaii Chocolate Festival Roadshow as at Hawaii Theater Center’s Chinatown Chase from 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. The Hawaii Chocolate Festival sponsored a chocolate fountain to sweeten the block party fare and educate participants in this fundraiser. The sixth annual Hawaii Theatre Center Chinatown Chase was an evening with a block party, food and libations, team prizes, silent auction and dancing for upscale adults. About 300 people stopped by to learn more about Hawaii-grown chocolate and to sample Hawaii-grown chocolate as well as experience the Hawaii Chocolate Festival Roadshow.

SCBGP funds were not used to fundraise or for sponsorships. The Chinatown Chase is an annual event to raise funds for the Hawaii Theatre Center (http://www.hawaiitheatre.com/) and includes fun activities for families and individuals. The festival organizers participated with a display table in an effort to encourage attendance at the Hawaii Chocolate Festival as there were many people participating in the Chinatown Chase that could be reached in a short period of time, including influential participants that could be educated about Hawaii-grown cacao and chocolate. There was no fee to participate, supplies were donated (two jars of 9.5 oz. fudge sauce, oil and pretzels), and the table was staffed by volunteers. The chocolate fountain was donated and no funds were expended to use it at the event. Participation in The Chinatown Chase was a no-cost opportunity to connect with people and let them know about the cacao crop in Hawaii and how valuable it is and can be to our state. The display table was set up next to Hawaii Theatre and available to the public and was not exclusive to the Chinatown Chase. The effort resulted in many people stopping by to learn about how the crop is grown, processed and about the products created from the locally grown cacao. Some of the chocolatiers donated baskets of their chocolates to the event in recognition of “Hawaii-grown Chocolate Month” but this was done directly through the chocolatier as part of the community service with no SCBGP funds expended for this purpose.

Windward Mall -- On Sunday, February 12th from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. the Hawaii Chocolate Festival Roadshow went to the Windward Mall. There was an opportunity to win tickets to the Hawaii Chocolate Festival and sample Hawaii-grown chocolate, get free chocolate recipe cards and learn about this diversified and sustainable agricultural crop. Approximately 1,500 people stopped by to learn more and to sample chocolate.
Pacific Club -- Finally, on Valentine’s Day, we had an educational display at The Pacific Club and had Hawaii-Grown Waialua Estate Chocolate incorporated in the Valentine’s Day dinner and sampled. Approximately 250 diners were served. The event also featured the Hawaii Chocolate Festival Roadshow informational display.

2. Produce a series of outreach events as part of the Hawaii Chocolate Festival Roadshow that include tours and tastings that engage the local growers of cacao at public spaces such as malls, shopping centers, clubs, Farmers’ Markets and cultural plazas.

Results: 2012 Roadshow events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haleiwa Cacao Festival – January 29 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm</td>
<td>January 29</td>
<td>10:00 am to 2:00 pm</td>
<td>Sampling of chocolate from Waialua on the North Shore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madre Chocolate – Truffle Making Class, February 12 from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm</td>
<td>February 12</td>
<td>1:00 pm to 4:00 pm</td>
<td>Classes continue with topics that include “Bean-to-Bar Chocolate Making Class”, Mexican Mole-Making as well as tours and tastings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapolei Shopping Center – Chocolate Sampling, February 18 from 11 am to 2 pm</td>
<td>February 18</td>
<td>11 am to 2 pm</td>
<td>Sampling of Hawaiian Fudge Sauce and Waialua Estate Chocolate was conducted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madre Chocolate – Chocolate and Beer Pairing – February 19 from 4:30 pm – 6:00 pm</td>
<td>February 19</td>
<td>4:30 pm – 6:00 pm</td>
<td>Sit down event at the Wine Stop in Honolulu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SCBGP funds were not expended for the purchase or distribution of alcoholic beverages. The vendor featuring beer did so at their own expense. These products were placed in a separate location next to the event with a barrier between the two areas and guard controlling entrance and exit in and out of the area where alcoholic beverages were served. A beverage purveyor provided a 30-minute demonstration featuring beer and chocolate pairing where they provided samples of the beer and samples of chocolate, both donated to the event. Volunteers assisted in executing the short session.

Ag Day at the Capitol – March 29 from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm
Sampling and display for legislators and public

SCBGP funds were not expended for lobbying activities. This annual event is sponsored by the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation where commodities are invited to provide an educational and informational table at Agricultural Awareness Day -- “Ag Day at the Capitol” that is open to the public. The event featured examples of the plants, pods and beans plus photos and displayed “empties” of boxes and bar wrappers. Legislators and staff were able to attend the two-hour event, however, no lobbying occurred, no chocolates were presented to or literature handed out to legislators. The event encouraged attendees to learn more about the crop through photos of the growing stages and the displays. Hawaiian Fudge Sauce donated sample spoons and one 9.5 oz. jar of Hawaii Grown Fudge Sauce for tasting. We did not visit any legislators’ offices or provide printed materials with any legislative agenda to legislators or their staff. The event was an opportunity to network with other industries and focused at showing a strong commitment to grow the industry and establish legitimacy as a “real crop” by joining other crops participating in the event. The event was attended by the community coming to find out about potential jobs in agricultural fields and entrepreneurs looking to find industries that they
can create a niche to build a business which is perfect to support the efforts of the Hawaii Chocolate Association.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Big Island Chocolate Festival – June 8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sampling and displays</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hilo Shark’s Cacao Plantation Tours</td>
<td>Ongoing event in Papaikou, Hawaii Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menehune Mac Chocolate Factory Tour</td>
<td>Ongoing event in Honolulu, Oahu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Original Hawaiian Chocolate Factory – Bean to Bar Tour</td>
<td>Ongoing event in Hualalai, Kona, Hawaii Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian Bath &amp; Body North Shore Soap Factory Tour</td>
<td>Ongoing event in Haleiwa, Oahu includes soap making; offers Hawaiian Mint Chocolate Soap</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SCBGP funds were not expended for this Roadshow event. This factory tour is solely operated and sponsored by the North Shore Soap Factory who uses the winnow husk of the cacao bean incorporated into their soap as an exfoliate. It is another example of the versatility of this specialty crop which is why it was included as a method to spotlight the specialty crop’s wide range of uses that even the discarded part of the crop not used in manufacturing can be beneficial. The soap factory is located at the Waialua Sugar Mill which is where Island X samples and sells Hawaii-grown chocolate, nibs, as well as Waialua Estate Chocolate which are single origin chocolates with the cacao fields located directly across the street from the location of the factory which is a draw for consumers to visit. The factory tour is part of the growing agritourism industry of Hawaii and is funded by the owner of the factory.

Foster Botanical Garden Tour
Ongoing event where the earliest cacao trees were planted in the 1850’s

3. Include a trade show element as part of the promotion of cacao allowing the farms and producers of Hawaiian cacao and cacao-based value added products to showcase the products for sale to local, national, and international buyers.

Results: Created and promoted an environment at the Hawaii Chocolate Festival for farmers and producers to showcase and sell their products. Vendors at the Festival provided samples, sold their products, and provided information about their products. There was collaboration with all of the vendors to put together an invitation list of potential wholesale buyers to attend the festival as a VIP guests.
A group of 25 Chinese female entrepreneurs who were in town to attend an event for Friends of the Zhou Enlai Peace Institute were invited to the Hawaii Chocolate Festival as they were looking for investments and business opportunities. Additionally, we had a guest list at the door for other buyers invited by our vendors. Also, consumers were also able to purchase during the event. Further, exhibitors reported that they have had repeat visitors to their stores or purchasing their products on-line throughout the year as a direct result of the festival where attendees had sampled and/or purchased product. This further created ongoing stimulus to the specialty crop.
4. **Promote the “Buy Local, It Matters” call-to-action campaign and the “Seals of Quality” program appropriately during the project.**

**Results:** Table top signage featuring the “Buy Local, It Matters” logo was on all promotional materials including, but not limited to, stage banner, advertisements, recipe cards, and passports. In addition, table-top signage featuring the “Buy Local, It Matters” logo and the statement “Locally Grown Hawaii-Chocolate” was displayed at all applicable booths. Seal of Quality exhibitor Original Hawaiian Chocolate Factory participated in the event showcasing their seal. Attendees were exposed to the “Buy Local, It Matters” and "Seal of Quality" brands spotlighting these two campaigns in a focused method at point of sampling and sales.

5. **Conduct outreach to locally grown cacao stakeholders statewide highlighting the farmers and their farms, and producers and their products, to create revenue growth/sales opportunities.**

**Results:** An event was held at the State Capital on Sept 28, 2011, to gauge the interests of local farmers, manufacturers and retailers in the industry. Sixteen people from all islands attended. This event sponsored by the Hawaii Chocolate Festival created an opportunity for industry leaders to meet and network in an effort to grow the industry. Then on Sunday, February 26th, the 44 industry leaders met at the University of Hawaii, Manoa to discuss the future of the Hawaii-grown chocolate industry at the first annual Hawaii Chocolate and Cacao Conference. These activities led to the formation of an official statewide association representing the chocolate and cacao supply chain stakeholders from production, manufacturing, distribution, marketing and retailing. ([http://www.hawaiichocolate.org/](http://www.hawaiichocolate.org/))

The list of attendees to the September 28, 2011 event can be found in **APPENDIX 3.**

The list of attendees to the February 26, 2012 meeting can be found in **APPENDIX 4.**

SCBGP funds were not used to pay for entertainment at the festival. Income received from the festival was not used to pay for entertainment provided by the Halau Hula ‘o Na Pua Kukui for their performance and contribution of volunteers that conducted their silent auction. Income funds received were used towards event expenses that were supplemented by industry contributions and donations of labor from a variety of sources that allowed this event to be affordable to industry stakeholders. To clarify, each year the Halau performs at the Merrie Monarch Festival which is a popular statewide hula competition which occurs in March or April on the Big Island. The halau provided entertainment with no fee associated to their performance. They do this as a practice for their coming program performance which takes place on another island. They find the event an opportunity to showcase their performances for their family and friends who are not able to travel to another island.
Beneficiaries

Direct beneficiaries of the project activities were farmers, potential growers and producers of cacao and Hawaii-grown chocolate who participated in the events, as well as the public who gained knowledge received about this emerging industry. Attendance numbers for each of the events are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haleiwa Farmers' Market</td>
<td>January 30, 2012</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kahala Mall - Roadshow</td>
<td>February 11, 2012</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii Theater Center’s Chinatown Chase - Roadshow</td>
<td>February 11, 2012</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windward Mall - Roadshow</td>
<td>February 12, 2012</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Pacific Club - Roadshow</td>
<td>February 12, 2012</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The businesses have reported increased media coverage, locally, nationally and internationally and while difficult to directly attribute to the Hawaii Chocolate Festivals, they feel fortunate for the publicity and will continue to support the Festival and local chocolate industry activities.

The Hawaii Cacao and Chocolate Association (http://www.hawaiichocolate.org/) reports increased interest in the organization that has resulted in membership increase from local, national and international entities.

Lessons Learned

A lesson learned related to measurable outcomes that rely on surveys or sales numbers to determine the success of an activity or event. Despite the project manager’s pledge that the information provided would be confidential, and the requirement to return a survey, pre- and post-event efforts to secure information was not successful. From the information that was gathered, there were sales increases reported and comments were positive, however, this cannot be quantified to meet the 10 percent increase in retail sales that was the goal of the project. The lesson learned is that rather than ask participants to reveal information that they feel is confidential, the measurable outcome could be the number of vendors that repeat participation at the festival. If this was the measure and the goal was to have 50 percent of the vendors repeat participation in the 2nd Annual Hawaii Chocolate Festival, that goal would have been met and easily quantifiable. For example, of the 37 vendors that participated in the 2nd festival held in 2012, 24 were repeat vendors from 2011, which represents a 65 percent repeat of vendors in the second year. Another measurable that would rely on information from the participants that they would likely provide is a follow-up email/phone call to obtain the number of customers or media that visit their store or make contact as a result of the festival. This could be realized with a special business card that is returned to the store within a week / month after the event for a sample or benefit to the customer.
Contact Person

Amy Hammond
Hawaii Chocolate Association
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(808) 234-0404
Email: specialeventshawaii@gmail.com
http://www.hawaiichocolate.org/

Additional Information

APPENDIX 1 Hawaii Chocolate Festival Flyer
APPENDIX 1.1 Photo of organizers and Proclamation; Cacao Plant
APPENDIX 1.2 Dateline Media Report
APPENDIX 2 Festival Photos
APPENDIX 3 List of attendees to September 2011 event at the State Capitol
APPENDIX 4 List of attendees to February 2012 event at the University of Hawaii
Statewide Coffee Cupping Competition

Final Report

Project Summary

Hawaii produces some of the finest coffees in the world. One of the challenges of the Hawaii coffee industry is helping the world understand that Hawaiian coffee is worth its above-average price. HCA would like to increase the national and international consumption of Hawaiian coffee and coffee-based products by raising the awareness of the quality of Hawaiian coffee. Coffee cupping competitions are a proven tool in marketing specialty coffee quality in other coffee growing areas of the world. Hawaii Coffee Association’s (HCA) cupping competition is the only statewide cupping competition in Hawaii and this project sought to improve the effects of this competition to benefit the Hawaiian coffee industry by including internationally acclaimed cupping experts who judged coffee from all seven coffee growing regions of Hawaii. HCA used the results in an international marketing push for Hawaiian grown coffee. In this marketing push, the individual farms that excelled in the competition were highlighted and provided direct links between buyers and farmers.

The international marketing effort was designed to increase awareness and subsequent sales of Hawaiian coffees in the international arena, with an emphasis on direct connections between buyers and farmers. The project determined the high quality of Hawaiian coffees through a professional cupping process and disseminated the information through international media streams. The coffees cupped and promoted were from all seven coffee growing regions of Hawaii and individual farm names were mentioned in media releases. All participants in the competition were furnished with descriptive cupping analyses and an official cupping score for use in the promotion of their specific coffee.

Project Approach

The Cupping Committee was formed after the HCA annual conference in July of 2011. Coffees were delivered to each districts’ representative for shipping to Maui, Maui Oma Coffee Roasting Co., then shipped to the cupping panel in May 2012. Big Island coffees were shipped directly to the west coast as a precaution to prevent the possible spread of Coffee Berry Borer. With the outbreak of Coffee Berry Borer on the Big Island, the committee felt it best that all coffees should be sent to the West Coast for Roasting and Cupping. This allowed for all the coffees to be cupped and scored several times. The coffees were judged and scored prior to the HCA Conference in July of 2012, which allowed the committee to present the awards and certificates at the conference and not several weeks after the event. Most important the growers had an opportunity to talk openly about their coffees. The cupping panel was also able to host and deliver impactful workshops citing experience from the judging. The Cuppers were also able to take away a greater appreciation for Hawaiian Coffees and the care and passion our farmers put into their crop. This message was then passed on to the coffee buyers they came into contact with after the conference.
The Cupping Committee members were comprised of six HCA Board members:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Gridley</td>
<td>Chairman&lt;br&gt;Maui Oma Coffee Roasting Co.&lt;br&gt;Maui Coffee Association Board Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greg Stille</td>
<td>President&lt;br&gt;Piliani Kope Farm&lt;br&gt;Maui Coffee Association President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Seachrist</td>
<td>Makahiki Farms&lt;br&gt;Kona Coffee Council Board Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Manfredi</td>
<td>Kau Farm &amp; Ranch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger Kaiwi</td>
<td>Kaiwi Farms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim Martin</td>
<td>Kauai Coffee Company</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

http://www.hawaiicoffeeassoc.org/board.php

Additionally, the seven coffee growing regions / districts were served by a board member to assist them with the competition:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Board Member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hamakua, Puna and Kau (Hawaii Island)</td>
<td>Chris Manfredi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kona (Hawaii Island)</td>
<td>Jonathan Seacrest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kauai</td>
<td>Tim Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maui and Molokai</td>
<td>David Gridley</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Cupping Panel:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul Thornton</td>
<td>Coffee Bean International&lt;br&gt;<a href="http://www.coffeebeanintl.com/users/paul-thornton">http://www.coffeebeanintl.com/users/paul-thornton</a>&lt;br&gt;Vice President of the Specialty Coffee Association of America&lt;br&gt;<a href="http://www.scaa.org">http://www.scaa.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shawn Hamilton</td>
<td>Java City Roasters&lt;br&gt;<a href="http://javacity.com/ecogrounds.php">http://javacity.com/ecogrounds.php</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren Muller</td>
<td>Inter American Coffee&lt;br&gt;<a href="http://www.iaccoffee.com/interamicanteam/californiabay/californiabayrader/warrenfmullerjr">http://www.iaccoffee.com/interamicanteam/californiabay/californiabayrader/warrenfmullerjr</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Timeline for the July 2012 HCA Cupping Competition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 2011</td>
<td>Send out entry packets for 2012 Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2012</td>
<td>Place ads, flyers and announcements to encourage participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February – April</td>
<td>Receive entries at specified receiving areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Certify and consolidate entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repack, seal and number entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Send numbered entries to Cupping Panel for initial evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Order awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Place ads announcing the Conference and Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July (HCA Conference July 19 – 21)</td>
<td>Final cupping at HCA Annual Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public able to sample different coffees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cupping Panel presents impressions of Hawaiian Coffees and results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Announcement of winners at 17th Annual HCA Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Press releases to major local, national and international coffee media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distribute Feedback Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Compile data from cupper’s notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare Certificates and Letters describing coffees for each entry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Send out Awards, Certificates, Feedback Surveys and Letters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The deadline for cupping entries was set as April 1, 2012, making the samples fresher, and allowed for more time to handle the increased number of entries and compile the data in order for the results to be ready for the HCA Conference in July. The Cupping Panel was comprised of well-respected coffee cuppers from the West Coast. All are leaders in their field and well connected to the coffee industry. Not only did they bring credibility to the competition, but through their contacts, they opened many eyes to the quality of Hawaiian Coffee. They were not in any way connected to the farmers and all the cuppings were blind.

With the intent to encourage more entries, two Divisions were created for this year’s competition, -- Commercial and Creative.

- The Commercial Division applied to larger farms that submitted a minimum of 300 pounds of green coffee (from which the submitted sample was drawn) and made available for sale April 1, 2013.
- The Creative Division applied to entries with less than 300 pounds of green coffee (from which the submitted sample was drawn) and made available for sale April 1, 2013. The Creative Division was intended to encourage entries from small farms and / or experimental (creative) lots.

This resulted in 117 entries, twice as many as the previous year. There were a lot of new farms and many took advantage of multiple entries. The breakdown:

- 66 - Creative, 45 of the 66 Creative entries scored 80 and above (68 percent).
- 51 - Commercial, 32 of the 51 Commercial entries scored 80 and above (63 percent).

From a total of 117 entries, 22 entries chose to take advantage of the option to not publish their scores, about 19 percent. About two-thirds of the field had scores of 80 and above.
Many cupping contestants attended the workshops:
- Beginning and Intermediate Roasting Workshop, by Paul Thornton
- Cupping Workshop, by the Cupping Panel -- Paul Thornton, Shawn Hamilton, and Warren Muller

With the work of judging completed on the mainland, there was more time the Cupping Panel to interact with the farmers and allowed them to speak to all attendees about the importance of Cupping, Cupping Scoring and segued into the announcement of the awards for the district winners. The keynote speaker was a local news celebrity, Howard Dicus, who announced the awards for the top ten in the Creative and Commercial Divisions and the Champions.

Because of the early cupping before the Conference, the evaluation packet for each applicant was available at the July 21st event. Each packet included:
1) Certificate - highlighting the farm, the coffee entry, and positive cup qualities.
2) A Personal Letter - with their cupping score and rank in their District, Division, and Overall, plus any additional aspects of their coffee.
3) An Evaluation form - to help measure the impact and success of the competition.

**Goals and Outcomes Achieved**

The goal to reach 100 percent of the Hawaiian coffee growers was very nearly met. It is believed that 98+ percent of the growers knew about the opportunity based on outreach to the farms and farmers by the HCA Board. The Committee agreed that there might be small creative lots that they were not aware of, and decided that they had reached over 98 percent of the growers in the districts by a combination of personal visit, phone call or mailing.

The goal to receive 100 entries was exceeded with 117 entries received.

There were 117 entries in the competition and of those entries 28 (24 percent) submitted evaluation forms. Despite the efforts of the Committee to collect 100 percent of the evaluations, a majority of the participants chose not to submit their evaluations, which included the sales information that was part of the deliverables of the project. This goal was not met.

Scores were high (3.8-4.0 / 5.0) for structure and organization of the event. Sales increase scores were up both domestically and internationally, 4-5 percent and 2-3 percent respectively. The goal to increase direct sales between specialty coffee buyers and farmers by 5 percent was met, as reported by 24 percent of the entrants.

New inquiries and new buyers were both up in the range of 5 to 8 new contacts. And perhaps most importantly, in terms of sales and quality improvement, 42 percent of respondents reported that they were able to increase prices following the event, and a significant 47 percent of respondents reported receiving a higher score in the competition than in past years.
Coffee sampling, offered by the farmer, was open to the public and created increased awareness and interest about Hawaii coffees; estimate more than 500 samples consumed.

Cupping scores for several farms increased and some of the coffees later represented Hawaii at the Specialty Coffee Association of America in Portland, OR and competed in the Coffee of the Year Cupping Competition.

The 4th Annual Hawaii Coffee Association Statewide Cupping Competition results were announced on Saturday, July 21, 2012 at the Maui Tropical Plantation on Maui, Hawaii. Results can be found at http://www.hawaiicoffeeassoc.org/hca-cupping-results-2012.pdf and attached as APPENDIX 5.

These results demonstrate that HCA has a well-run event that results in measurable improvements to product marketing, revenue, and quality.

**Beneficiaries**

The Farmer received much needed feedback on the characteristics and quality of his coffee from industry professionals and became more aware of the cup quality of their coffee.

A quantification of the benefits to the coffee farmers as a result of this project can be demonstrated in the scores received during the cupping competition. The Specialty Coffee Association uses a scoring system on a 100 point scale. The scores are based on a set of attributes (fragrance/aroma, flavor, aftertaste, acidity, body, balance, uniformity, clean cup, sweetness, and defects) and each attribute receives a score. These are then combined to achieve an overall score.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORE</th>
<th>RATING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Above 85</td>
<td>Excellent specialty coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 80</td>
<td>Considered a very good specialty coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 to 80 range</td>
<td>Good; considered above average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 to 70 range</td>
<td>Generic, commercial grade coffee; “Grocery Store” quality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Entrants were given their overall individual scores as a way to benchmark their coffees and also given the individual attribute scores as well to identify areas of improvement needed. Of the 117 entries, 66 percent scored in the “Above 80” range, with 85 percent scoring above 70 — a very good showing for Hawaiian Coffee and the Coffee Farmers. Only 5 percent scored below 60. These benchmark individual attribute and overall scores provided valuable information to the coffee farmer. Each farmer could identify specific points in their operations that they could change in order to improve an attribute and attain a higher score, which would indicate a better cup of coffee and potentially lead to increased demand, higher selling price and higher profits.

The judging panel chosen were expert judges selected based on their coffee scoring credentials and positioning within the industry. They were from: the Coffee Quality Institute (CQI), The
Pacific Coast Coffee Association (PCCA), The Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA), and The Roasters Guild. The strategy to select respected and competent judges from the major coffee organizations to score the coffee was to expect that they would “spread the word” about the quality of Hawaiian Coffees. These results further enhanced the quality perception of our Hawaiian Coffees to the combined membership of over 3,000 members represented by the panel of experts. The Hawaii coffee industry benefited from the attention to be gained from media coverage of the resulting improvements in cupping scores achieved in future local, national and international contests.

The Hawaii coffee industry was provided media attention and was provided information about their product that could be used for further improvement and to enhance their marketing efforts. The HCA was well-represented by this project and received attention from local politicians and government agencies.

Lessons Learned

The decision to separate the coffee farms as Commercial and Creative will be reviewed. The size of the farm should be the variable rather than the amount of coffee submitted for the competition, for example.
Determining that April would be the date for entries was a positive as the harvest season, August to January, is over and this decision allowed for the freshest coffees to be presented to the cupping panel.
The Committee promoted the event before and after which created great exposure for Hawaiian Coffee.
The HCA should include a requirement to complete the evaluation in the registration document and highlight the importance of the results as part of their participation in the event.

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Additional Information

APPENDIX 5 – Cupping results
Specialty Crop Export Initiative- Year 2

Project Summary

The issue addressed by the Specialty Crop Export Initiative-Year 2 Program (SCEI-II) was the low-rate of agricultural exports among Hawaii small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The SCEI-II built from Year 1 by providing opportunities for the participating specialty crop SMEs to travel to their target markets to more effectively identify worthwhile trade opportunities and engage in successful trade transactions. Specialty Crop Export Initiative - Year 1 (SCEI-I) brought the introduction of Export University Training, a straightforward, comprehensive training program that taught companies essential export curriculum; Year 2 focused on putting Year 1 Training into practice and engaged specialty crop SMEs in "second-level" activities designed to get participants in front of buyers to make export sales, and also provided additional training through Advanced Export Training Seminars.

The objective of the Specialty Crop Export Initiative program was to give participants the tools necessary to increase their global competitiveness in an increasingly integrated marketplace. The goal of the SCEI-II, was to increase the number of companies exporting their specialty crops through Advanced Export Training Seminars and provide travel to a new market at reduced cost to the specialty crop participants. In April 2012, the HPEC requested to remove the project objective to provide advanced training as this would be provided by the Small Business Administration. Since the specialty crop producers were eligible to attend and would receive the advanced training, the change in the SCEI-II objective was approved and would allow SCEI-II to increase the cost-share portion of the project by $2,300. The request was approved by the state after determining that additional cost-share for travel to the SMEs' target market, would have as much or more potential to lead to export sales transactions. Additionally, the advanced export training program is being converted into an online webinar to reach interested companies.

Specifically, the project objectives of Year 2 built on Year 1 Training by providing: 1) Continued export counseling to small and medium-sized enterprises; 2) Complex export education that utilized individualized Advanced Export Training Seminars, which covered specific and advanced topics such as Export Control Compliance, Labeling Requirements in Asia, and other related topics (provided by SBA); and 3) Provided travel at a reduced rate for SMEs to participate in Overseas Trade Missions to their preferred market. SCEI-II aligned with the purpose of the SCBGP to solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops by providing specialty crop SMEs the resources required to export globally and increased the "effective marketing and promotion of specialty crops."

Partners involved with the program include state agencies (Small Business Administration, Small Business Center for Development, etc.), government agencies (Hawaii Export Assistance Center, the Foreign Trade Zone, Economic Development Agencies, Small Business Development
Center, The Small Business Administration, etc.) and private companies that agreed to contribute to this program, such as FedEx.

The Hawaii Pacific Export Council (HPEC) is a volunteer non-profit organization associated with the U.S. Commercial Service (www.hawaiiexportsupport.com). Its Members are appointed by the Secretary of Commerce to provide mentoring on exporting and have played a pivotal role within the Specialty Crop Export Initiative. The nearly 30 volunteer members comprised of local leaders and experienced international business professionals provide assistance to local businesses that are expanding into international markets. Many members of HPEC have contributed their time and talents to this program by participating as speakers during the trainings, counseling companies individually, scoring International Business Plans, and discussing grant-related topics during their bimonthly HPEC meetings.

Project Approach


1. **February-April 2012:** Hired Lesley Harvey as the part-time Project Coordinator. Lesley recruited specialty crop SMEs, coordinated the training sessions, and facilitated the Overseas Trade Missions. As Project Coordinator, she identified and attended local outreach sessions and sent promotional materials to neighboring organizations to identify and encourage SMEs participation. Lesley conducted outreach to non-exporting specialty crop SMEs and specialty crop SMEs offering the SMEs the potential to expand their international business.

2. **May-July 2012:** The training portion of the project conducted, but was removed from SCEI-II as it was provided by another agency with the funds allocated to training moved to increase the travel cost-share portion of the project.

3. **August-October 2012:** All SMEs that participated in Year 1 Export University or Year 2 had the opportunity obtain the Gold Key Service, attend a trade show, or initiate contact with trade partners in the third or fourth quarter. The results are shown in the table below.

4. **November-January 2013:** Year End surveys were distributed to the 11 participating specialty crop SMEs. Survey results are included in the Goals and Outcomes achieved section of this report. SMEs were encouraged to continue to plan for exporting beyond 2013 with continued support from the Hawaii Pacific Export Council, the Hawaii Export Assistance Council, and community partners.

Support and counseling were provided to SMEs throughout the grant year.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved

The GOAL of the SCEI-II was to increase the number of companies exporting their specialty crops using the following measurable: 1) 50 Hawaii specialty crop companies participate in one of the Export Training Seminars; 2) 10 companies travel to their target market to engage in a Gold Key Service; 3) 5 specialty crop companies export; 4) 85 percent of the 50 participating companies find the program beneficial to the growth of their business. SCEI-II provided the
specifically, the ultimate goal of SCEI-II was to ensure that 5 SMEs export their specialty crop for the first time or to a new market, measured by the number of Export Successes during the grant year, an increase of 60 percent from the Year 1 goal. An Export Success was defined as a Hawaii specialty crop SME selling their product in a new market abroad. All participating companies completed a short survey measuring their level of exports at the start of the program and at the conclusion, or order to gauge the effectiveness of SCEI-II.

as previously mentioned, the training program was removed as a component in this program as to not duplicate services offered by another agency. The cost share component remained. Duplication of funds did not occur within the specialty crop travel cost share, or any other component of this project. As such, two of the four goals no longer applied, specifically goals one and four. The ultimate goal of five specialty crop companies exporting their good for the first time or to a new market was dependent on the training component, as well. Goal two and three were both specific to the modified project plan and were achieved.

**Goal 2** Eleven companies traveled to their target market. The goal of 10 companies was exceeded. Two of the SMEs that traveled participated in a Gold Key Service. (Gold Key is to introduce companies to new, potential trade partners). Eight companies attended a tradeshow and one company traveled to meet new distributors.

**Goal 3** Seven specialty crop companies exported their products, two more than what was originally proposed. These seven companies generated $412,100 in export sales as a result of their participation in the SCEI-II.

in comparison to Year 1, a higher percentage of participating companies exported (7 out of 11, this year versus 8 out of 33 last year), and the sale values generated from these exports were 253 percent larger this year than last.

the project goal to increase export sales was met.

Summary of post-project survey results:
- Eleven companies traveled to their target market; average travel cost-share from the project was $1,980 with the companies contributing an equal or greater share.
- $412,100 in export sales realized from the cost-share program
- 8:1 return for funding received for SCEI-II
### Beneficiaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Target Market</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Specialty Crop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aloha Excellence</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>GKS</td>
<td>Coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tea Chest</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Tokyo International Gift Show</td>
<td>Tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian Chip Company</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Tokyo International Gift Show</td>
<td>Potato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oils of Aloha</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>GKS</td>
<td>Nut Oils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradewinds Global</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Tokyo International Gift Show</td>
<td>Honey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maui Grown Coffee</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>Café Show</td>
<td>Coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rusty Hawaiian</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Specialty Coffee Association of Japan</td>
<td>Coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maui Gold Pineapple</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Tokyo International Gift Show</td>
<td>Pineapple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat Law Farms</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
<td>Produce Marketing Association Fresh Summit 2012 (in California)</td>
<td>Basil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noni Biotech</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Meeting with Distributors</td>
<td>Noni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mulvadi Corporation</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Tokyo International Gift Show</td>
<td>Coffee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*GKS: Gold Key Service- a service provided by the Department of Commerce's U.S. Commercial Service to match local Hawaii companies with international partners; No duplication of funding provided by the DOC and the USDA occurred.*

### Lessons Learned

The SCEI-II went very smoothly due to 1) obstacles or difficulties were anticipated and solved by Year 2; and 2) companies had heard about the success of SCEI-I and were enthusiastic to be involved.

The main obstacle this year was the disappointing final version of the webinar. HPEC used the best resources available at no cost and spent considerable time editing and polishing the webinars. Unfortunately, they did not turn out as well as hoped. The lesson learned is to contract with professionals to produce the deliverables such as webinars.
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### Additional Information

APPENDIX 6 – Quotes and Stories from Specialty Crop SME participants
Building New Markets for Hawaii’s Ultra Exotic Ethnic Tropical Fruits

Project Summary
Hawaii’s tropical climate allows for the production of a wide variety of tropical fruits that the Hawaii Tropical Fruit Growers (HTFG) identified as unharvested, underutilized, and unknown to the majority of the farmers, consumers, chefs, and retailers statewide. The project introduced ultra-exotic ethnic tropical fruits to the people of Hawaii through retail sampling demonstrations, recipes and in-store activities where specialty crops such as bilimbi, pummelo (Zabon or Jabong), calamonsie, jackfruit and other lesser known fruits were featured. The project manager created awareness and motivated farmers to plant more trees to support the increased demand resulting from this project.

Project Approach
The project started with a number of meetings and much communication with the project manager and HTFG members and officers on each island. Meetings were held to determine which fruits would be offered to chefs that, as project partners, created recipes and participated at the in-store sampling and preparation demonstrations. Consideration was given to seasonality and availability of the fruits selected.

The project relied on the HTFG officers on each island to choose the retail stores and conduct the follow up necessary to confirm chef participation at each of the 14 events. The project manager coordinated and conducted each event and solicited feedback from the chefs, grocers and HTFG members after the first two events to determine if changes would improve the project. Feedback indicated that the project manager should reconsider the day of the week and time of day to conduct the events, based on the island where the sampling and chef demonstrations were held, in order to maximize consumer/shopper participation. It was decided, for example, that on Kauai, in Lihue, Friday afternoon in conjunction with the Farm Bureau Farmers market was the best time to hold events for the Hanalei side, Saturday morning was selected as the best day and time. Saturday lunchtime was chosen as the preferred time for Maui and Oahu locations and for Hawaii Island, any weekday lunchtime was deemed to be the best day and time.

After the taste testing and chef demonstration events were completed, recipes were printed and distributed to the participating stores and chefs and were available from the HTFG website: http://www.hawaiitropicalfruitgrowers.org/pages/recipes/recipes_new_markets.html. Over 43,000 recipes were printed and distributed as part of the project.

Any non-specialty crops included in the recipes were not funded by this project. Cash and in-kind contributions from the HTFG, retailers and chefs funded the non-specialty crops used in the recipes resulting from this project. Specialty crop funds were used to solely enhance the competitiveness of Hawaii specialty crops.

During the course of this project, 11 different fruits were introduced and offered to consumers at 14 different venues across the state. Fruits were served fresh, either diced or in recipes.
created by the chefs. Efforts were made to display the poster showing the variety of Hawaii’s ultra-exotic ethnic tropical fruits ([http://www.hawaiifruit.net/V2posterweb.gif](http://www.hawaiifruit.net/V2posterweb.gif)) which brought attention to other locally grown fruit that was for sale at the retail grocery venue of the activity and prompted numerous questions about the lesser known fruits shown. Due to one of the worst droughts in state history, some of the fruit was not available for the consumers and chefs to use as part of the sampling and chef demonstrations. The fruits not available were white sapote, rambutan and jaboticaba, however, recipes from these were distributed along with the fruits that were available for the project. The Hawaii ultra-exotic ethnic fruit utilized during the project were bilimbi, jackfruit, Surinam cherries, pummelo, calamonsie, tree tomatoes, chico, figs, Kona rangpur limes, mountain apples and star apples. The most popular fruit was jackfruit and pummelo.

**Goals and Outcomes**

The goal to conduct 14 taste tests was met:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE (2012)</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>CITY (ISLAND)</th>
<th>SPECIALTY CROP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 21</td>
<td>Whole Foods</td>
<td>Kahului (MAUI)</td>
<td>Tree Tomato (tamarillo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 19</td>
<td>Whole Foods</td>
<td>Kahala (OAHU)</td>
<td>Jackfruit and Surinam Cherry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 26</td>
<td>Harvest Market</td>
<td>Hanalei (KAUAI)</td>
<td>Calamonsie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 11</td>
<td>Whole Foods</td>
<td>Kailua (OAHU)</td>
<td>Chico (sapodilla)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 25</td>
<td>Choice Mart</td>
<td>Captain Cook, (HAWAII ISLAND)</td>
<td>Bilimbi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 8</td>
<td>Whole Foods</td>
<td>Kahului (MAUI)</td>
<td>Pummelo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>Whole Foods</td>
<td>Kailua (OAHU)</td>
<td>Jackfruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 16</td>
<td>Island Naturals</td>
<td>Hilo (HAWAII ISLAND)</td>
<td>Tree Tomato (tamarillo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 28</td>
<td>Natural Foods</td>
<td>Kilauea (KAUAI)</td>
<td>Chico (sapodilla)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 30</td>
<td>Island Naturals</td>
<td>Kona (HAWAII ISLAND)</td>
<td>Figs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 9</td>
<td>Whole Foods</td>
<td>Kahului (MAUI)</td>
<td>Bilimbi and Pummelo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>CITY (ISLAND)</th>
<th>SPECIALTY CROP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(2013)</td>
<td>Island Naturals</td>
<td>Kona (HAWAII ISLAND)</td>
<td>Kona Rangpurr limes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 14</td>
<td>Island Naturals</td>
<td>Kona (HAWAII ISLAND)</td>
<td>Kona Rangpurr limes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 24</td>
<td>Whole Foods</td>
<td>Kailua (OAHU)</td>
<td>Jackfruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 3</td>
<td>Whole Foods</td>
<td>Kahului (MAUI)</td>
<td>Mountain Apples, Star Apples</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A total of 10,200 samples were prepared and distributed to customers in 14 samplings. The samples were divided into 300 of each recipe and 300 of the raw fresh fruit. Over 100 membership forms for HTFG were distributed and 27 new members can be attributed to the taste testing events.

Each store location seemed to have different patterns for customer traffic. On Maui for example after trying tests on Sunday and at night, it was found that Saturday around lunchtime was the busiest. In Hilo and Kona Island Naturals, it was found that weekday lunch times were the best for maximizing sampling of fruit. At Oahu Kailua Whole Foods, Saturday and Sunday were fairly equal whereas in Kahala, Saturday was prime time for having an event. We also found after the first taste test that sampling fresh fruit was equally important and as desired as the chef recipes. This proved true throughout the project. On Kauai, HTFG members had a
display with about 60 species of fruit, which was a draw for additional consumers not to bypass the tasting table.

Photos and a description of the events:

April 21, 2012 -- Whole Foods, Kahului, Maui
Chef Ricky Sakoda from Merriman's Restaurant featured tree tomatoes. Other specialty crops featured: ulu (breadfruit) samples and Maui Gold fresh pineapple samples.

May 19, 2012 – Whole Foods, Kahala, Oahu
Kevin Haney of 12th Ave. Grill sampled jackfruit and fresh Surinam cherry

May 26, 2012 – Harvest Market, Hanalei, Kauai
Chef Miguel Magana of Tahiti Nui made Chimichurri sauce for three dishes with calamonsie.
August 11, 2012 – Whole Foods, Kailua, Oahu
Dabney Gough from Whole Foods filled in for Chef, cookbook author, food writer Wanda Adams with her Chico Banana butter recipe. In addition to samples of the recipe, Dabney and project manager Ken Love handed out 500 samples of fresh fruit. The store continued to sell the fruit while it was in season and expanded sales to Whole Foods Kahala on Oahu. Whole Foods Maui also reported selling the fruit although their season was shorter. A number of membership forms for Hawaii Tropical Fruit Growers (HTFG) were taken from the Oahu display.
August 25, 2012 – Choice Mart, Captain Cook, Hawaii Island
Chef Paul Heerlein & students from the University of Hawaii West Hawaii Center Culinary Institute of the Pacific participated in this tasting featuring Hot Sour Bilimbi Soup with Hamakua Mushrooms. Small amounts of bilimbi were packaged to encourage shoppers to try the fruit.

November 8, 2012 – Whole Foods, Kahului, Maui
Chef James Simpliciano prepared pummelo shrimp salad and prepared pummelo varieties as fresh fruit samples. Pummelo is a citrus grown in abundance on all Hawaiian Islands yet most markets shy away from selling it, Whole Foods agreed to start selling locally grown pummelo based on this program. Two visitors remarked that they had this tree but it was always sour and that they had never thought to use it in recipes or how to work to grow the fruit to become sweeter.

Shoppers listened to Chef James describe dishes as well as try them. HTFG members watch as Chef James is filmed.
November 10, 2012 – Whole Foods, Kailua, Oahu
Chef John Memering, Cactus Restaurant prepared jackfruit flan – this event was one of the most popular sponsored by this project. Jackfruit flan proved to be extremely popular as did the fresh fruit. Shoppers continued to visit the sampling table throughout the event because they had received phone calls from friends who had been at the store earlier and were told to make sure they get to the store to try jackfruit. Jackfruit was new for the chef and through this event, Chef Memering plans to include jackfruit in his menus.

November 16, 2012 – Island Naturals, Hilo, Hawaii Island
Chef Rob Love, Mauna Kea Resort, provided tree tomato samples to visitors who were able to try this fruit for the first time. The unusual raw food recipe was a big hit as were the fresh fruit. The large crowd bought the tree tomatoes the store had in stock but because a number of the Hilo chapter fruit grower members came, they were able to sell additional fruit to the store before the end of the event. The store has asked for additional events to be held there. More than 250 samples were given out.
November 28, 2012 — Natural Foods, Kilauea, Kauai
Chef Michael Simpson and the Kauai Farm Bureau Farmers Market partnered in this event, which enabled HTFG members to participate with a tasting at the attached shopping center in addition to the sampling events within the store and at the farmers market. We learned from this event that there is a great potential for offering tastes and displays of fresh fruit at farmers markets. As the HTFG just offered tastes of various fruits and was not selling, we could refer would be buyers to the other farmers market vendors, which in turn reported brisk sales that were much better than usual. Fruits on display and being offered by fruit grower members included, jackfruit, rambutan, longon and pummelo. Pummelo was also being featured inside the grocery store and at another location in the shopping center where Chef Simpson demonstrated how to make a pummelo salad and how to candy the rind. HTFG had three new members sign up based on this event.

November 30, 2012 — Island Naturals, Kona, Hawaii Island
Chef Rob Love, Mauna Kea Resort prepared lunchtime demonstrations and sampling on the west side of the island that proved to be as successful and the event on the east side. Figs are a natural draw in Kona and the chef’s Pineapple Wrapped Figs with Goat Cheese incorporated
Maui Gold Pineapple as well as local goat cheese. With all demos, the project has tried to use 100 percent locally grown foods. The chefs and their properties like Mauna Kea Resort deserve special mention as partners in these demonstrations and taste tests. At this event people drove more than 30 miles to learn about figs, coming in from Kohala and Waimea. Publicity for the events has created the additional need for more agriculture information. Approximately 20 percent of the shoppers were there to learn about growing and selling figs. HTFG signed two new members at this event.

December 9, 2012 – Whole Foods, Kahala, Oahu

Chef Sato along with two culinary students from Kapiolani Community College, created dishes with bilimbi and pummelo for this Sunday Event. Although not as busy as Saturday, the Sunday shopper was able to spend more time communicating with the chef and HTFG members. Shoppers remarked that they were at other parts of the mall but remembered seeing publicity on the tasting and decided to come by Whole Foods to try the recipes. Phone calls weeks after the event evidenced that the bilimbi pesto was a hit with those that sampled.

Photos and descriptions for the three 2013 events are posted on the HTFG website; press releases and publicity can be found on the website.
Additional photos of the taste test samplings and chef demonstrations can be seen at the HTFG website: http://www.hawaiitropicalfruitgrowers.org/. The project is posted on the website: http://hawaiifruit.net/index-new-marketsHDOA.html.

The goal to increase sales of the various ultra-exotic ethnic specialty crops featured in the retail promotions was met.

Since not all fruit were tested on each island, the project manager found increases of particular fruit on some islands but not others. The project manager concluded these episodic results indicate a need for more education and taste test samplings with both raw fruit and chef created recipes. For example, there were increased sales on Kauai for pummelo, calamonsie, and jackfruit but not for Surinam cherry or bilimbi. Kauai farmers’ market sales of calamonsie have improved since the taste test.

On Maui, an increase in pummelo and jackfruit sales at Whole Foods was reported but not for Surinam cherry or tree tomato. The store also added jackfruit value-added products such as dried chips. Whole Foods Maui has repeated purchases from local HTFG members since the samplings and demonstrations were conducted.

Hilo Island Naturals reports an increase for tree tomatoes but only a slight increase for jackfruit.

Kona Island Naturals sales of Kona Rangpur lime has increased and reported continued demand for this specialty crop. Demand for figs has increased and store staff felt sales would have increased, however, figs have been unavailable due to the drought. Choice Mart reports a continued increase in purchase and sales of all local fruit, although this location decided against offering pummelo or jackfruit, which have been very popular on other islands. The project manager is working with them to change the perception that this fruit will not sell as it is grown in the area of the store.

Kailua Oahu Whole Foods has increased sales of locally grown fruit and establish a regular purchasing routine with a HTFG member for jackfruit, chico and pummelo, for which demand has increased after the tasting events.

Kahala Oahu Whole Foods has also increased jackfruit sales although not as dramatically as Maui or the Kailua stores. They are waiting for new crops of Surinam cherry and bilimbi, which proved to be of interest to customers at that store.
An aggregate sales report is shown below for the retail locations that submitted feedback:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruit</th>
<th>Pre-project sales</th>
<th>Total Post project store sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tree Tomato</td>
<td>Farmers market only</td>
<td>75 lbs***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackfruit</td>
<td>Farmers market only</td>
<td>300 lbs****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surinam Cherry</td>
<td>Farmers market only</td>
<td>15 lbs*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pummelo</td>
<td>Farmers market only</td>
<td>120 lbs**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilimbi</td>
<td>Farmers market only</td>
<td>10 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calamonsie</td>
<td>10 lbs</td>
<td>25 lbs**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chico</td>
<td>Farmers market only</td>
<td>30 lbs**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kona Rangpur Lime</td>
<td>Farmers market only</td>
<td>100 lbs***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Apples</td>
<td>Farmers market only</td>
<td>50 lbs**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Apples</td>
<td>50 lbs</td>
<td>250 lbs****</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* ordered 1 time / ** ordered 2 times / *** ordered 3 times / **** ordered 4 times

Sales occurred during project period

The range of sales prices for the participating retail locations is shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialty Crop</th>
<th>Price range</th>
<th>Estimated sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tree Tomato</td>
<td>$50 cents each to $3.00</td>
<td>$37.50 - $225.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackfruit</td>
<td>$10.95 lb</td>
<td>$3285.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surinam Cherry</td>
<td>$4.50 lb</td>
<td>$67.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pummelo</td>
<td>$2.00 each to $.75lb</td>
<td>$80.00 - $90.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilimbi</td>
<td>$2.00 lb</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calamonsie</td>
<td>$2.00 to $4.95</td>
<td>$30.00 - $74.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chico</td>
<td>$.50 each to $4.50</td>
<td>$15.00 - $148.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kona Rangpur Lime</td>
<td>3 for $1.00 to $.75lb</td>
<td>$75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Apples</td>
<td>4.95 lb</td>
<td>$247.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Apples</td>
<td>4.95 lb</td>
<td>$990.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The goal of the project was to increase the number of grocery stores that offered ultra exotic tropical fruits for consumer purchase. In cases where the fruits were previously not offered for sale, and when purchased by the consumers, these sales would reflect an increase of 100 percent. In the above aggregate sales report, eight fruits – tree tomato, jackfruit, Surinam cherry, Pummelo, Bilimbi, Chico, Kona Rangpur lime, and mountain apple – prior to this project, were sold at Farmers Markets only and as a result of the project, are now sold seasonally and with regularity. The project was successful in introducing these fruits to grocery stores in all counties with 875 pounds reported sold during the first 12 month project period generating an estimated $5,000 in sales. After the first year growers polled by HTFG reported an average increase in sales of 135 pounds of exotic fruit, four times per year at the average price of $4.00 per pound at 10 locations. This equals $21,600 during the second year. Third year results are expected to be higher. The goal to achieve $25,000 in sales annually, with 30 and 40 percent increases in years two and three were nearly met. The project staff decided this was due to the drought that decreased the amount of fruit available.
However, growers and HTFG members are pleased with the results in general and very pleased that sales of pummelo and jackfruit were greater than anticipated. Early reports for 2014 show increased demands for Surinam cherry, jackfruit and abiu. One grower reported monthly abiu sales of over 200 pounds at $2.50 per pound while in the past year, sales were limited to an average of 30 pounds per month.

Whole Foods (Oahu and Maui), Choice Mart and Island Naturals (Hawaii Island) and Kauai Living Foods, report that previously unsold fruit such as chico, jackfruit, pummelo, Surinam cherry, jaboticaba and abiu are now sold with regularity.

The recipes created and distributed continue to inform consumers of additional uses for the exotic tropical fruit that stores had not previously sold. [http://www.hawaiifruit.net/fruitdata/fruitdata_1of4.html](http://www.hawaiifruit.net/fruitdata/fruitdata_1of4.html) will display the recipes that show nutritional information as well as a picture of the fruit to help consumers identify the fruit which might not be familiar to them.

The goal to increase sales of the ultra-exotic ethnic Hawaii specialty crops by increasing knowledge of buyers, both retail and wholesale was met.

Many produce department personnel were not familiar with some of the unusual fruit promoted through this project and asked the project manager to offer a seminar for three of the stores, which was performed in late 2012. In addition the store was able to use signage from [http://www.hawaiifruit.net/fruitdata/fruitdata_1of4.html](http://www.hawaiifruit.net/fruitdata/fruitdata_1of4.html) which included project fruit as well as 100 additional species. Other stores have printed this information and use it when introducing the consumers to the unusual fruit being sold. These efforts have increased consumer and producer department personnel awareness of unusual tropical fruit. It has enabled HTFG members and other growers to sell fruit that had not been in the markets before as well as additional quantities of other exotic tropical fruit like Jaboticaba.
Beneficiaries

This project has been a win-win for growers, merchants and consumers and HTFG members.

This project helped to solidify HTFG as a statewide organization where as previously, it was thought of as centric to Hawaii Island. HTFG benefited with 27 new members based on the actions at the events. Some signed on because of being able to sell their crops at the markets after finding out the stores would sell tree tomatoes and pummelos.

Stores continue to benefit from the project by being able to sell the unusual fruit that they had not sold before. Whole Foods’ three locations continue to sell the fruit and has requested and received a training session for the produce departments at different stores to learn in depth about the various fruit sold as well as other tropical fruit not part of the project.

Approximately 20 growers supplied close to 1000 pounds of fruit during the course of the project. Half of this was purchased by stores at a rate of $2.00 to $7.50 per pound. After the project, eight growers report continuing sales, especially of pummelo and jackfruit. This is expected to increase tenfold within the next year as other fruit come into season and project recipes are available along with fruit data sheets. The project manager will continue to monitor growth and look for additional opportunities to sample raw fruit at the stores involved.

HTFG’s over 450 members and affiliates that received project materials benefited from this project. Members have been given reports on the project as well as the key contacts at stores and wholesalers willing to supply stores and chefs.

The American Culinary Federation Kona Kohala Chefs association members have also been made aware of the program and project recipes shared with chef members. This has helped HTFG to gather additional fruit recipes for future promotions.

Lessons Learned

There were many lessons learned from this project both in terms of farmer chef grocery relations but more importantly in terms of each groups’ understanding of timing/seasonality. The biggest challenge faced by the project manager was to coordinate each of the 14 taste tests where schedules needed to coincide with the specialty crop growing cycles.

Growers learned the need to better understand that chefs have to plan ahead and learned to stock items for advertised retail campaigns. In short, growers learned that they need to know their crops better and be able to more accurately predict when actual harvest time is, not just randomly guess or start marketing when a crop is ripe and the shelf life is short.

Chefs learned that using ultra-exotic ethnic fruits in recipes gives them a competitive edge with consumers interested in new and unusual dishes. Chefs also learned to work with growers and how difficult it is for a grower to predict supply due to potential irregular weather patterns. The more chefs become familiar with the unusual exotic fruit and the different varieties of tastes they provide, they communicate an increased demand to the growers that plant more trees to meet the demand. This is one of the project successes.
Grocery stores learned they need to better understand the quality of the fruit they promote. Not all stores display fruit properly. Some fruit which, should be in a chill section, was not. This indicated better education was needed at the retail level. The project created reference materials for the fruits for each of their customers.

There were a number of post-harvest and packaging lessons learned by growers in order to extend shelf life. Some sensitive fruit needed to be picked and packed in the field. Surinam Cherry and Jaboticaba if packaged in no more than double layers in clamshells and placed in a cooler in the field. Fruit would then have a shelf life of 8 to 14 days as opposed to 3 to 6 days when the fruit is not chilled immediately after picking.

The project manager has learned that there is a need to sample fresh fruit along with sampling the fruit as used in a recipe. In some cases as with jackfruit at both Oahu Whole Foods Markets, there was more of a desire to sample the fresh fruit than there was the chef created recipes. That convinced the stores to continue to sell that particular fruit. On Kauai, the HTFG Chapter decided to offer tastes of six other fresh fruit at Kauai Living Foods Store. This was extremely successful and the chapter will pursue funding to continue this on Kauai. HTFG as a whole will pursue funding to continue to offer consumers samples of the best and most unusual fruit Hawaii has to offer.

Another important lesson came when we could not get enough fruit on a particular island and had to import from other areas of Hawaii. Jackfruit, Surinam cherry and tree tomatoes are good examples of this. We found each island had strengths and weaknesses in terms of the species of trees. HTFG officers on each island are now aware of this and can recommend additional jackfruit and Surinam trees on Oahu. Jackfruit and tree tomatoes on Maui as well as figs in Hilo are also needed. Kona is well diversified but can always use more of most fruit.

Gathering data from Whole Foods and other markets was much easier than anticipated. Working with Whole Foods is recommended because they regularly tracks sales data of local produce and are open to sharing this information. Growers, both members and non-members, simply report increased sales.

Lesson learned for future campaigns are to have more massive displays in stores and educate consumers on the large numbers of varieties found in the state in order to gauge what they would like to try once the store made it available. http://www.hawaiifruit.net/V2posterweb.gif shows some of the fruit available to work with. HTFG chapters will continue to report to the project manager so that data might be used in future projects.

**Contact Person**

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Maui Flower Growers’ Association’s 24-Month Marketing Campaign for Enhanced Competitiveness of Hawaii’s Cut-Flower Industry

Final Report

Project Summary
The value of crop sales for Hawaii’s “Flowers and nursery products” as reported by the National Agricultural Statistics Service was $108.7 million in 2007 and has shown steady decrease with the published value of crop sales for 2011 reported as $69.6 million, which is a decline of 40 percent in five years. The Maui Flower Growers’ Association (MFGA) attributes this decline to foreign competition, however, another reason for the decline is due to increased inspection of Hawaii agricultural imports into California, which is the largest market for Maui flower shipments. When inspections in California find insects, dead or alive, this threatens the growers’ self-inspection practice and increases the risk that they could lose the agriculture inspection stamp for North America. In order to protect their ability to self-inspect and then affix the agriculture inspection stamp for North America, MFGA members stopped shipping to California, which was their largest market for sales.

To lessen dependence on the California market, MFGA members decided to focus on generating sales from other regional US markets. This project was a marketing campaign that utilized the materials created by the SCBGP FY 2010 project to introduce the Maui Flower brand to the northwest and southwest regions of the US. The overall purpose of this project was to increase sales and awareness of the MFGA. The association is primarily made up of cut flower producers. The specific purpose of this project was to support MFGA’s key marketing goal to build a reputation of excellence and sustained interest for Maui-grown flowers which created increased demand and then increased sales for the Maui Flower brand and the MFGA members.

The project increased brand identification and awareness of Maui’s Floriculture Industry in the US market.

Project Approach
The following activities were performed to increase consumer awareness of the Maui Flower Brand in the US market from January 1, 2012 – December 31, 2013:

- Expand the MFGA 2010 campaign to include new print and Internet promotional ads and new collateral materials.
- Develop new promotional and collateral material highlighting Maui’s Floriculture Industry.

Provide website & Internet commerce training for MFGA members in order to increase their Internet presence and improve their competitive edge.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved

1. Ad Development/Expansion: Expanding upon the ad series developed from SCBGP, FY 2010 funding, MFGA worked with Gilbert and Associates to develop two new MFGA ads which were
published four times in popular publications with the largest readership in the Seattle, Portland, Phoenix and Denver markets. The first ad utilized photos from the SCBGP, FY 2010 ad series and included a call to action to “Deck the Halls with Maui Flowers.” This ad ran in the December 2012 issues of Seattle Magazine and Portland Monthly Magazine. The second ad featured a model holding a big arrangement of Maui flowers with the tag line, “Aloha, Freshly Delivered.” This ad ran in the December 2013 issues of 5280 (Denver) and Phoenix Magazine. The goal of this advertising campaign was to increase awareness of Maui grown flowers in the under tapped markets of the Northwest, Rocky Mountain and the Southwest regions in order to help MFGA members’ lessen their dependency on the California market.

2: Flower Farm to Coffee Table Video: MFGA hired Gilbert and Associates and Silver Shark Productions to create the MFGA promotional video which illustrates the Maui-grown flower “farm to coffee table” journey. The three-minute film features a Hana Maui flower farm and a Kula Maui flower farm, and illustrates the flower’s progression as it grows, gets picked, processed, shipped and delivered. The video also includes a two-minute introductory photo slideshow showing the variety of diverse Maui grown flowers set to Hawaiian music to allow for a break between video loops. The video was posted on MFGA’s website (http://www.mauiflower.com/), in MFGA’s E-Newsletters, streamlined on YouTube and on MFGA’s Facebook page. The video was also played at MFGA public events and at the Maui Visitors Bureau’s sales missions across the US. The goal of creating the video was to increase consumer interest in Maui’s Floriculture Industry and in the Maui Flower brand.

3. New MFGA Rack Cards: MFGA transformed three of the ads developed with SCBGP, FY 2010 funding into beautiful new MFGA rack cards. MFGA worked with Gilbert and Associates to design and print 30,000 4 x 9 rack cards. The Pink, Gold and Green ad images were utilized on the face of the card, and information about MFGA was on the back. MFGA distributed the cards at promotional events in public rack card displays and at the Maui airport. To date, 5,000 of the cards have been handed out to interested consumers. This distribution will continue to take place throughout 2014 and beyond.

4. Maui Grown Flower Map: MGFA worked with graphic designer to create a map showing the flower growing in regions on Maui, the general location of MFGA members’ farms, who offers farm tours, and directions on where and how to purchase Maui-grown flowers. MFGA will distribute the maps to MFGA members, at promotional events, government offices, tourism liaisons and concierges to distribute to interested guests. The flower map was designed to direct consumers to MFGA’s website and to Maui’s flower growers’ farms and businesses.

5. Training Classes: MFGA hired Webmaster and University of Hawaii Maui Campus Vitec teacher Ben Howard to provide 4 training workshops to MFGA members to help improve MFGA’s members’ web presence and e-commerce capability.

Class 1: “Get the Word Out: Social Networking and Email Campaigns,” was held Friday, October 12, 2012 from 4-7 p.m. in Kahului, and Saturday October 13 from 8:30 – 12:30 p.m. in Hana. The class focused on Internet marketing techniques for new and repeat customers and
the strategies and tools needed to conduct effective social media campaigns. Six members attended the Kahului class and six members attended the Hana class.

Class 2: “Website Tune Up,” was held Friday, March 15, 2013 from 4-7 p.m. in Kahului, and Saturday, March 23, 2013 from 8:30 – 12:30 p.m. in Hana. In this class, Ben Howard examined participant’s websites and discussed ways to improve them in order to generate more sales. Seven members attended the Kahului class and six members attended the Hana class.

Short-Term and Long-Term Outcomes Achieved
The short-term outcome of SCBGP, FY 2011 is that these promotional efforts introduced new consumers to Maui flowers. The ads, video, rack cards and map served as direct links to drive traffic to the MFGA website. The website has information about MFGA and its members, and provides a convenient way to order Maui flowers from our members through the MFGA Gift Box Program. This promotional material generated new flower sales for the MFGA members. These members have the opportunity to turn these clients into future customers by giving them excellent customer service and providing them with exotic Maui flowers.

The long-term outcome of these promotional efforts has been to create a Maui Flower brand awareness of Maui-Grown flowers and recognition of Maui growers as providers of quality, American grown flowers which are in demand.

These outcomes are illustrated in the statistics. MFGA utilizes Google Analytics (GA), a service offered by Google, to generate detailed statistics about the visits to the MFGA website. The Google Analytics statistics from January 1, 2010 – December 31, 2011 (the 2 years prior) was used as the benchmark against which MFGA measured the results of the SCBGP-FB, FY 2011 program from January 1, 2012 – February 6, 2014.

- Website Traffic: The new ads increased traffic to the MFGA website from targeted demographics:
  - 34.32 percent increase of visitors from Seattle
  - 59.31 percent increase of visitors from Portland
  - 19.54 percent increase of visitors from Denver
  - 29.17 percent increase in visitors from Phoenix

- Visitor Type: Returning visitors to the website increased from 21.06 percent to 24.91 percent.

- Page Views: As a percentage of the total website;
  - Visits to the MFGA Homepage (http://www.mauiflower.com/flowers.php) increased 1,041.23 percent
  - Visits to the Farm Tours page (http://www.mauiflower.com/tours.php) increased 3,772.53 percent
  - Visits to the Flower Order page (http://www.mauiflower.com/order.php) increased 293.23 percent

- Gift Box Sales: A direct result of this consumer traffic to the MFGA website is the flower sales generated for MFGA members by the MFGA Gift Box program. Once at the MFGA website, consumers have the ease and ability to order Maui grown flower gift boxes
from the nine MFGA Gift Box participants. The number of gift boxes sold through the MFGA gift box program has increased 62 percent since 2011.
  - In 2011, the MFGA website sold 106 member gift boxes and generated $9,469.40 in MFGA member sales.
  - In 2012, the MFGA website sold 155 member gift boxes and generated $11,101.00 in MFGA member sales.
  - In 2013, the MFGA website sold 183 member gift boxes and generated $15,186.00 in MFGA member sales.
- Email Database: The MFGA opt-in email database increased from 1088 to 3882 over the two-year grant, which represents an increase of 257 percent!
- E-Newsletter: The MFGA E-Newsletter has maintained a 25 percent open rate. According to Constant Contact, this open rate is higher than the average 22 percent open rate for non-profit organizations.
- Social Media: Since this tracking began in May 2011, MFGA Facebook page “Likes” have increased from 70 to 279 over the two-year grant.
- Member Sales Survey: MFGA Executive Director surveyed MFGA members to see if their sales have increased 20 percent from 2010 - 2013. Currently MFGA has 31 members. Five of these members are new to MFGA and new to the flower business with no history of flower sales. Of the remaining 26, we received surveys back from 13 MFGA members. On average, MFGA members’ flowers sales increased 27 percent from 2010 to 2013.

These statistics illustrate that the projects implemented from SCBGP, FY 2011 funding have created positive long-term outcomes for Maui’s Floriculture Industry and MFGA members.

**Beneficiaries**

Direct beneficiaries were the 31 members of the Maui Flower Growers’ Association who were provided with marketing materials and a Maui Flower brand campaign through this project and whose members reported an average sales increase of 27 percent from 2010 to 2013. Maui’s Floriculture Industry is an integral element of Maui’s economy and community, cultivating a diversity of jobs, generating tax revenues, and producing a variety of crops for local and export markets. Indirect beneficiaries of the project activities were the flower shippers, warehouses, printers, airlines, truckers, horticulture suppliers and flower shops across the state.

**Lessons Learned**

One lesson learned was that while we believe we made good strides in raising awareness of Maui grown flowers in underserved markets, developing brand awareness takes constant and consistent delivery of the Maui Flower brand message to your targeted audience. Unfortunately, this requires much more financial investment and creative approach than a few ads in a few publications provides. Overall, we realize that the best way to sell consumers on Maui flowers is to get the flowers in their hands. The most effective advertising was, over the course of the project, attending popular trade shows where consumers could see and feel and smell the flowers first hand. The same result is obtained when consumers actually visit a flower farm. The new map is helping direct more consumers to MFGA members’ farms so they can
take their tours and meet the growers. This gives MFGA members the opportunity to sell their flowers and establish long-term customers.

Another effective part of this program was the MFGA E-Newsletters which had a very successful “Enter to Win a Maui Gift Box” contest. This generated thousands of emails for our newsletter. With each E-Newsletter sent, MFGA witnessed an increase in sales following the blast, and on average, 50 new contest entries. MFGA also learned there is a fine line between engaging these consumers and “bugging” them too much so they opt-out of your E-Newsletter.

MFGA also learned that while the Pink, Green, Gold and Red” ads developed from FY 2010 funding were gorgeous they didn’t fully illustrate the Maui flower product. MFGA used this funding to create a different ad which used a model lovingly holding a big bouquet of Maui flowers with the tag line “Aloha, Freshly Delivered.” This ad clearly showed the unique variety of Maui grown flowers.

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Value-Added Small Farm Enterprises for Hawai‘i: Publication and Workshops

Final Report

Project Summary

Due to the high cost of labor, land, and materials in Hawaii, it is difficult for farmers to compete with imported generic food products. Estimates are that Hawaii imports 85 percent of its food, a high number that leaves Hawaii vulnerable to economic and environmental disruptions in the food supply. An important way for small farm enterprises to sustain economic viability is to grow, harvest, process, package, and sell in ways that add value to products. When planned and executed well, the time, effort, and resources put into adding value can increase profits along with revenue.

This project comes at a time when interest in local food by the general public and institutions is steadily rising throughout Hawaii. The educational publication and workshops produced by this project addressed the need for sustainable solutions for family farms to reach profitability through improved and expanded value-added practices throughout all aspects of their production and business operations.

Project Approach

Working with a team of Hawaii experts, a 58-page guide to value-added strategies and products for family farm enterprises was produced, illustrated with 69 photographs and numerous illustrations and tables. Unique in its perspective of adding value to a wide range of farm enterprise practices, the guide entitled “Adding Value to Locally Grown Crops in Hawaii: A Guide for Small Farm Enterprise Innovation” covers adding value at all phases of production, including crop selection, pre- and post-harvest treatments, product development, processing, packaging, labeling, branding, and marketing. Resources for further research are included for each topic.

In addition to the originally planned content of the guide, the University of Hawaii Agribusiness Incubator Program provided funds to include interviews of 12 outstanding Hawaii value-added entrepreneurs. The interviews highlight some of the most innovative and successful strategies for turning local crops into value-added products and are meant to inspire the reader while sharing lessons learned by successful entrepreneurs.

“Adding Value to Locally Grown Crops in Hawaii” was published as a pdf document available for free download from www.valueadded.info. The guide had over 2,000 views May–August 2013 from the project web site at. A total of 1,200 hard copies were sent to government offices and farmers markets on Hawaii Island, Oahu, Maui, Kauai, Molokai, and Lanai for public distribution. By their request, 50 hard copies were sent to the Hawaii State Library to be included in the collections of all Hawaii library branches.

Representative comments received from workshop participants on the guide include:

I have a greater appreciation for people that are successful at carrying out their business plans. Growing things is work but taking things to market is further work.—A.S., Kona, Hawaii Island
Great information about the market potential and cultural differences of Japan; made me want to research potential of selling to Japan. Also a good point about starting small, if worrying too much about perfection then production often lacks as a result.—R.B., Kahului, Maui

It's helped me decide which crops I will be able to put more time into as well as which crops to downsize and replace with more marketable product.—D.A., Hilo, Hawaii Island

It helped to underscore some of the most important concepts, and gave me a reference to return to repeatedly over time. I found it extremely clear and useful overall.—M.G., Kona, Hawaii Island

Reading the Guide, our level of understanding changed: we were well-informed of what to be cautious about, and where not to make mistakes that have already been made & where to put our energy for maximum good effects. The Guide is so thorough that it gave us clear questions to ask ourselves as we move into deciding what businesses to establish.—Anon., Kahului, Maui

A series of four value-added workshops based on the guide were initially planned on three islands—due to high demand, six workshops were held on four islands with a total of 175 participants and seven trainers. The six half-day workshops entitled, “Value-Added Innovation for Hawaii Growers: Making the Family Farm Profitable,” were presented free of charge during March 2013. Workshop topics included adding value in selecting crops and varieties, developing market niches, ensuring optimal crop quality, processing a range of marketable products, packaging and labeling for increased sales, developing a valuable brand identity, certifications (organic, etc.), customer service, pricing, and market development. Attendees rated the workshop an average score of 8.8 for meeting their expectations (with 10 = “exceeded expectations”) and an average score of 8.9 for addressing their interests (with 10 = “very much”). The most common suggestion for improvement in the workshop was to have it run longer with more time for networking and building collaborations.

Representative participant comments on the workshop include:

My experiences so far were not unusual. My perceptions of where I am weak(er) or need more expertise or just to spend more time/energy, is correct. Second, was the encouragement, that there is a market for homegrown, homemade products, you don't have to go big and get in every store. So a validating experience.—J.L., Kalaheo, Kauai

The only way to make small production "profitable" is to sell the sizzle as much as the steak. By not competing with the "big boys" but develop a quality product that makes allows the consumer to feel that they received value is the key to success.—G.W., Hilo, Hawaii Island
1. To be profitable, focus on pricing products based on total cost. 
2. Understanding where the opportunities are for value-added products in Hawaii. 
3. Connecting with the various entities engaged in promoting and/or facilitating development/growth of agribusiness in Hawaii.—Anon, Pearl City, Oahu

Even small changes in an item lead to added value, doesn't need to be a major change. There is a pretty large community of people here working on creating sustainable businesses and that's pretty exciting.—A.G., Kona, Hawaii Island

At each workshop, the participants were shown the list of eligible crops that would be considered for the value-added project and shown the list of ineligible crops that were off limits for any discussion. All examples by presenters used eligible specialty crops. The project staff ensured the project funds were used to solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved

This project introduced concepts of adding value in a wide range of business practices and products to a wide audience, thereby presenting a broad context for improving the farm value of Hawaii products. The project publication and workshops were presented in order to teach growers a variety of new key concepts in adding value to products in small farm enterprises.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Actual accomplishments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48 page guide to value-added strategies</td>
<td>58 page guide published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,250 hard copies distributed</td>
<td>1,500 copies distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four workshops held throughout Hawai‘i; 160 participants</td>
<td>Six workshops held on Hawaii Island, O‘ahu, Maui and Kaua‘i; 175 participants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A follow-up evaluation three months after the workshop yielded these representative comments, indicating a clear influence on participants’ activities:

We got excited by the variety of products you discussed, went home and started digging and planting....motivated us to do more.

I know it would help my Farm Tours web store

I have decided to focus on the higher return items and focus on one item at a time.

A lot of planning is necessary.

Reminded me that we are standing on the shoulders of giants. Thankfully, Craig and Ken have shown the potential of diversified sustainable agroforestry in Hawaii. We need to plan for more streamlined methods of collaboration with all of the state’s many experts to help us grow our farm to its highest potential.

Nothing has changed. We need more guidance.

Increased prices a bit.

Going to concentrate on niche markets

We loved your presentation, and it has helped us to understand the holistic overview and our expansive options. We needed some practical insights and lots of examples. Thank you for giving us that, and lots of fun and laughs as well. Our business plan is still ongoing in research and coming close to completion.
I'm not farming or in business yet but am actively going down that path (farm class, considering crops). In this development I am conscious of making use of the crop beyond just selling it fresh.

Expanded thinking re. possible approaches to adding value

The workshop underscored the need for a business plan and Connecting with a commercial kitchen.

no changes yet but realized new options as a result of the sessions

My focus changed from consistent production at a small profit margin to focusing on other products that required less time to produce at a higher return. I was literally killing myself physically.

Too soon to tell

Starting market analysis

Attitude change. I CAN do it. Just gotta fight the bureaucracy.

Looking into value adding a wider range of our crops.

I was on the verge of deciding whether to go with a distributor, working more for the same amount of money but getting 'out there' more. I decided to back off and stay small for now.

It revealed a greater need for deeper thought and planning and preparation, packaging considerations, proper pricing and maybe what items that might be needed to be dropped because they are negative in sustainable terms. Modification to some farm procedures to consider.

As a county administrator I think it helped to clarify the range of places where value occurs and how to broaden the conversation on how to assist in that process.

It made me think more about authentic pricing at my farmer’s market stand.

Not much yet. We are a small time grower. Gentleman grower.

At the moment, I am at a standstill -- family issues have taken priority.

I've thought of additional items I can sell which take less of my time than I thought I'd need to put into them. So it led to some time saving changes.

It's enabled me to develop better quality crops. I've been planting more coffee and cacao and have ideas of marketing when the time comes.

The expected measureable outcome for project staff to design and implement a pre- and post-survey to determine increases in understanding of at least three new key concepts for value added small farm enterprises was not met. The pre- and post-surveys were distributed, and elicited feedback, however, the feedback received was poorly designed for evaluating increases in understanding. This was a lesson learned that has helped the project staff design pre- and post-surveys for quantification of key concept acquisition in future workshops. The questions in the surveys had qualitative narrative/prose responses, which were not quantifiable. Comparing pre- and post-survey responses in a quantitative way was not possible.

**Benefits**

The guide benefits producers throughout Hawaii, particularly small farm enterprises that are strongly motivated to improve their income and bottom line. During the first three months online, “Adding Value to Locally Grown Crops in Hawai‘i: A Guide for Small Farm Enterprise Innovation” received over 2,000 online views—this exposure to value-added concepts is
expected to benefit thousands more during the lifespan of the publication. The 175 workshop attendees came from a broad range of backgrounds: novice to expert growers, novice to expert processors, wholesalers/retailers, agricultural extension, and community organizers.

There are an estimated 6,800 small farms in Hawaii less than 50 acres in size and 3,900 farms with less than $10,000 in annual income (USDA NASS 2007 Census of Agriculture). All of these farms and associated wholesale, processor, and retail markets can benefit from the educational outputs of this project.

Lessons Learned

As readers increasingly prefer electronic documents, the high expense of distributing hard copies has perhaps become unnecessary. The workshops were well attended, perhaps in part due to the short time format (about 3 hours) and lack of a fee. Due to demand, six workshops were presented instead of the original four. Many attendees expressed an interest in longer workshops; suggestions of one or two day workshops were mentioned in evaluations by several attendees. Surprising to us, there was also substantial interest in networking and collaboration with other workshop attendees through an email or social networking group. The proprietary nature of developing business enterprises seems to be overshadowed by the drive to learn from and share with others.

Measurable Outcomes that rely on responses that require quantitative analyses such as determining percentage increases in understanding based on pre- and post-survey comparisons should either be designed with collaboration with statisticians or require quantitative responses with no option to provide narrative/prose responses, which would not be useful to tabulating survey results.

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Additional Information

Download the project publication at [http://agroforestry.net/pubs/Adding-Value-Hawaii-guide.pdf](http://agroforestry.net/pubs/Adding-Value-Hawaii-guide.pdf)

Ken Love, one of the workshop presenters, speaks to a full house at the project workshop held at the National Tropical Botanical Garden on Kaua‘i.
New Dracaena Varieties for the Hawaii export Foliage Industry

Project Summary
With a 26 percent decline in farm gate value for nursery plants from 2007 through 2009, the Hawaii nursery industry began a revitalization effort to regain and increase market share. The Hawaii Export Nursery Association (HENA) members realized that increased consumer demand for nursery crops was triggered by the release of new or improved cultivars. The window to successfully market these new cultivars was limited to the time until a competitor is able to reproduce their own plant quantities, so the project was timely and intended to allow HENA to be the first to market the new varieties. This project identified five new varieties of Dracaena and propagated plantings through tissue culture methods, distributed the planting material to the nursery growers for best management evaluations and established field stock plantings to create source materials for export. HENA members, according to industry sources, was the first to market these new plants, which was as a result of this project.

Project Approach
The plan to introduce the new Dracaena varieties for the Hawaii Foliage Industry was to:

- Propagate planting material
- Obtain agreements from 10 cooperators that agree to participate in the field trials
- Seek the advice of industry specialists to determine when plantings are ready for distribution
- Monitor cooperators’ progress
- Market research to gather feedback on the five varieties
- Introduce to industry at the 2013 MIDPAC Conference
- Cooperators agreement to participate and provide information ends
- HENA continues to promote and provide growing guidelines statewide
- Share data and propagation issues and techniques for each variety

Propagate planting material
Early in 2012 the decision was made to contract C & T Products, a commercial tissue culture lab in Hilo, Hawaii, due to unexpected substantial expenses that would be incurred in order to create and maintain a tissue culture lab at the proposed location, Komohana Ag Complex in Hilo. A contract was set up to produce 12,000 plantlets for the five new varieties and a deposit was made. Five to ten pots of the new varieties of Dracaena were delivered to the lab for initiation of cultures, along with a copy of tissue culture protocol developed by Dr. John Griffis, who was previously a Specialist at the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR). On-site training on micropropagation of the first Dracaena was provided by Dr. Kheng Cheah (current Specialist at UH-CTAHR) on initiation of cultures until tissue reached multiplication stage ready for production. Through an initial cutting release, cooperators were sought for the program.
Obtain agreements from 10 cooperators that agree to participate in the field trials
Material Transfer Agreements (MTA)s were obtained from each of the ten cooperators to ascertain their commitment to the program. Cooperator meetings were held to assist growers with any issues and to discuss future plans for their plants. The cooperators were located in different climates and growing areas of Hawaii Island and agreed to propagate the new varieties at their own expense, collect data and allow tours by project staff who would be able to bring visitors with them, to view the progress of the field trial. No growing instructions were provided and the cooperators agreed to provide information to the project staff regarding any issues that the new varieties brought to their attention. Most significant was that the cooperators agreed not to offer any plants for sale until the “premier” showing at a later date, which was the 2013 MIDPAC Conference. In exchange for their cooperation, the cooperators could take orders at the conference to defray the in-kind costs incurred for labor, supplies, bench space, and other costs over the trial period. After the premier showing, interested growers were able to purchase plantings, potted plants, of the variety that they wanted to propagate.

Seek the advice of industry specialists to determine when plantings are ready for distribution
Plantlet distributions were periodically held throughout 2012 and 2013 as the new tissue cultured materials were transplanted by Andrew Kawabata (CTAHR foliage extension agent) into soil and grown into liners, which were well acclimatized and matured to a size best suited for transplanting at the nurseries. Dr. Kawabata served as the intermediary prior to distribution to the cooperators and was tasked to determine when the transplants were ready to be distributed to the cooperators.

Monitor cooperators’ progress
Program staff visited the participating nurseries periodically to view and photograph the new varieties and ascertain progress made by the cooperators. These photographs are available on the HENA website in the folder titled, “New Dracaena Varieties for the Hawaii Export Foliage Industry”.

Assistance with issues such as leaf spotting, discoloration and lack of growth was provided during these visits by our CTAHR Foliage Extension Agent. Growers noticed gold flecking on some older leaves of the Waikiki, which led our Foliage Extension Agent to send samples for analysis. The ADSC disease analysis identified it as Coniothyrium, a fungal leaf spot that can be prevented with various fungicides. Growers were immediately notified of the prevention methods for this new variety. Leaf spotting on the Haka by three cooperators was confirmed by the ADSC as Helminthesporium leaf spot. Control with various fungicides was advised and utilized to treat the leaf spot.

The Ohé and Hawaiian Lotus were ascertained to be very slow growing plants that have taken over two years to show any marketable qualities. There are issues with the Ohé drooping once they reach a certain height. We are considering this plant may be better utilized as a landscape plant used with arbors and will pursue growth trials. Growers provided program coordinators with evaluation reports throughout the program to identify progress and address issues and problems that arose.
Data from the cooperators in 2012 showed they received a total of 4,140 cuttings. In 2013 and including mid-January 2014, cooperators received 9,966 cuttings, which totaled 14,106 cuttings distributed to the cooperators over approximately 18 months.

**Market research to gather feedback on the five varieties**

In 2012, as the plants were very immature, the decision was made to display the new variety posters and focus the survey questions on which plants exhibited the most appeal. This information would provide growers with an insight into which of the new varieties they should propagate more fully than those that didn’t receive a lot of interest. The shows we participated in were the PA Allied Nursery Trade Show (PANTS) in Oaks PA, the Plantscape Industry Alliance (PIA) Show in Las Vegas NV, the FarWest Expo in Portland OR, and the Produce Market Alliance (PMA) Show in Anaheim CA. Our program coordinators obtained 61 responses to our surveys at the PANTS show, 54 at the PIA show, 20 at the FarWest show, and 69 at the PMA Expo. Along with the mainland promotion and market studies of our five new varieties, HENA introduced our New Variety Program to 80 industry related guests at our 2012 Hawaii MIDPAC Horticultural Conference & Expo held at the ‘Imiloa Astronomy Center in Hilo, Hawaii. Surveys gave us an insight into the appeal of the different varieties.

In 2013 the new variety plants were previewed which gave new and repeat attendees the chance to view the plants themselves. Surveys given out gauged interest in the different varieties and potential future sales. The shows we participated in during 2013 were the PANTS Show in Philadelphia, PA, the PIA show in Las Vegas NV, and the Hawaii Island Landscape Association (HILA) Show in Waikoloa HI. HENA Administrator noted a distinct reduction in the number of attendees at the PANTS Show, due to the change in location to center city Philadelphia as well as a Teamsters’ strike that began the same day the show began. Only 22 buyers completed surveys which was a 65 percent reduction in attendee participation in the survey. However, over half the respondents expressed a serious interest in purchasing the Ruth Luka and Waikiki. The HENA representative at the 2013 PIA show compiled 13 completed surveys, an 85 percent reduction over 2012. However, out of those that responded all 13 expressed serious interest in purchasing the five new varieties and many stated they would attend the Hawaii MIDPAC Horticultural Conference & Expo in July.

The annual HENA Buyers’ Guides were created and produced in 2012 and 2013, wherein the five new varieties were added to the product list as they would be released to the marketplace before the 2014 guide was printed. Coordinators traveled to six trade shows in different sectors of the mainland market to gauge initial interest and marketability through surveys and one on one contact with buyers at the shows.

**Introduce to industry at the 2013 MIDPAC Conference, New varieties available for sale**

Further promotion and the premiere of the five new plants took place at the 2013 Hawaii MIDPAC Expo held at the Hapuna Beach Prince Resort in Waikoloa, also on the Big Island of Hawaii. With over 107 attendees that included interested buyers from Florida, Las Vegas, different areas of California and from Vancouver, British Columbia, we saw a 34 percent increase in attendance over our 2012 event.
The official release of the first new variety, the Ruth Luka, for pre-sale orders was announced at this 2013 Conference. Each of the five new varieties was highlighted through individual displays as well as being incorporated into the overall horticultural design that was comprised of member products. Mainland and local buyers, distributors, interiorscapers and other interested industry associates attended this event and provided their input regarding the marketability and potential sales of the new varieties to program staff. Two additional new varieties, Haka and Waikiki, were officially released to the market at the end of September 2013. The Ohé and the Hawaiian Lotus were released to the market at the end of 2013.

A product video was premiered to the audience during our 2013 MIDPAC conference. HENA cooperators used the product video and consider it a major marketing tool at mainland and local trade events, running the video continuously on a laptop computer. Our new video was also uploaded to our website, http://www.hena.org/, available for viewing from the HENA website in the folder titled, “New Dracaena Varieties for the Hawaii Export Foliage Industry”. The new varieties are shown at the five minute mark and runs for the next minute and twenty seconds. The video shows the mainland and local buyers the high quality and beauty of the new varieties.

Cooperators agreement to participate and provide information ends
The cooperators were able to sell the new varieties after the 2013 MIDPAC conference and reported sales and orders for 93 Ruth Luka, 51 Haka and 40 Waikiki, for a total of 184 plants being purchased by mainland buyers. Average pricing of the plants in mid-January 2014 ranged from $10-$25, dependent upon size and variety. The initial sales of three of the five new varieties far exceeded our expectations for our two year program. We are hopeful that with continued promotion and marketing, as well as sustained propagation and diligence by the growers, our new varieties will become staples similar to the other Dracaena varieties available in the Hawaii foliage industry.

HENA continues to promote and provide growing guidelines statewide
Project staff that worked the HENA booth at the Hawaii Island Landscape Association (HILA) Conference and Trade Show in mid-November 2013 displayed our five new varieties to the Hawaii landscape industry and received completed surveys from 13 interested landscape buyers.

In January 2014, the five new varieties were also displayed at the Tropical Plant Industry Exposition (TPIE) in Fort Lauderdale FL. Although our varieties were on display, interest was not what we expected as Florida nurseries import new varieties from Costa Rica and other countries. Reports show that our Ruth Luka is very similar to a new variety from Costa Rica, the Anita.

The HENA website announces the 2014 MIDPAC Conference and promotes the “New Dracaena Varieties as part of reason to attend the conference.

Share data and propagation issues and techniques for each variety
HENA is compiling the data gathered from the cooperators and will post on their website in the project folder. This information is currently available by contacting HENA and arranging a visit to a cooperators’ nursery.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved

HENA provided the cooperators with tissue cultured plantlets of the five new varieties. The ten growers grew out, propagated and evaluated each of the varieties for pest issues, diseases that arose, and growth measurements. They periodically reported on care and management such as watering, fertilizing, and pesticides and transfers to larger pot sizes. The project had anticipated an 80 percent increase in the number of cooperators but achieved only a 10 percent increase with one new grower coming into the program. The project also had a 10 percent decrease as one cooperater withdrew from the program halfway through the first year, citing the delayed time frame to bring the plants to the market and an unknown market reception once released the market. Out of the ten growers in the program, 100 percent received additional cultivars on a regular basis over the two year period.

The project goal to promote the five new varieties at four mainland shows was exceeded as the project staff promoted the new varieties at six mainland trade shows, four in 2012 and in 2013 which was a 50 percent increase in the number of trade shows slated for promotion. The goal to achieve a 50 percent increase in our new varieties over our buyers in 2011 that expressed initial interest was exceeded with a 190 percent increase to 204 interested buyers in 2012. We received surveys stating serious sales interest from an additional 48 buyers at the shows in 2013.

HENA also saw an upsurge of 8 percent in the number of distributors and other major buyers invited to attend the 2013 MIDPAC Conference during which HENA gained four new distributors in Alaska, California, Colorado and Nevada. The project anticipates further increases in the number of potential buyers at our 2014 MIDPAC Expo with the addition of contacts made from our 2013 mainland trade show visits.

The project’s greatest success over the two year program has been the sale of three of our new varieties, the Ruth Luka, the Haka and the Waikiki. Sales began in November 2013 with 34 Ruth Luka, 25 Haka and 11 Waikiki. Reports at the end of the program period, mid-January 2014, showed an increase of 200 percent, 103 Ruth Luka and 100 percent increase, 51 Haka and an astounding 450 percent increase, 60 Waikiki being sold. These results encourage us and our growers to continue in the propagation, development and promotion of the five new varieties that were able to be distributed to the industry through this project.

Beneficiaries

The 10 cooperators have benefited as they were given these plants to widen their product lines as well as creating potential for additional sales. All of HENA’s 117 foliage growers and members benefit because they have the opportunity to begin the propagation and sale of the new varieties.
The Hawaii foliage industry benefited by this project through the marketing and attention garnered by this project and will continue to benefit with the increase in market share for in the nursery plant specialty crop sector. HENA’s 40 distributors nationwide were able to increase their product lines as the new varieties became more familiar to end users. Interiorscapers and florists across the nation will now have cut and potted new varieties to use in their designs.

Lessons Learned

One lesson learned is to do all possible to obtain serious commitments from trial growers (cooperators) before a new variety program begins. Despite efforts to seek committed participants, a cooperator left the program after only a quarter of the program. The position was filled within two months but the new cooperator had a tough time catching up to the others in the program. Out of our ten cooperators, one is geared towards local (in state) sales only, one structured towards the landscape market, one who is waiting for larger size plants with character in order to begin selling, one is attempting to grow the new varieties as bonsai (which takes 3-5 years minimum for an initial debut to the market) and six are propagating and growing out the plants for sale with three out of those six actively selling three of the new varieties. A better screening of growers and their goals could facilitate the program moving forward with all cooperators at a more even pace.

The Ohé and Hawaiian Lotus were ascertained to be very slow growing plants that have taken over two years to show any marketable qualities. There are issues with the Ohé drooping once they reach a certain height. We are considering this plant may be better utilized as a landscape plant used with arbors and will pursue growth trials.

Another lesson learned was that if a project that involves field trial propagation does not restrict the propagative process with strict rules and guidelines, but instead allows the cooperators/participants to determine the final outcome, the project is enriched with different ideas on how to grow out, in this case, Dracaenas. Some cooperators chose to braid the plants and create art, some “starved” the plants in order to obtain a uniform color, others decided to conduct “bonsai” trials in an effort to create a unique product to introduce, some wanted short plants, others preferred tall plants, bushy plants, direct sun, greenhouse grow-outs, shade conditions. This data will be shared on the HENA website; photos are currently available on the website.

HENA appreciates the opportunity afforded through this project to begin the New Variety Program in earnest. HENA now has the knowledge on how better to anticipate issues that may arise (i.e., financial delays, slow growing cultivars, diseases, growers that wish to leave the program, etc.), which can help our program run more smoothly. Even though the project had a difficult start with the laboratory changes, the lesson learned was that privatizing the tissue culturing process should have been considered earlier to proceed as quickly as possible.

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Additional Information
Photos, brochures, and guides resulting from this project can be viewed on the HENA website in the folder, “New Dracaena Varieties for the Hawaii Export Foliage Industry”
http://www.hena.org/
Maximizing Hawaiian Flowers and Foliage Marketing Opportunities

Final Report

Project Summary

The Hawaii flower industry faces increasing competition from international producers where lower costs of production and delivery – lead to lower pricing that Hawaii cannot match. Hawaii’s higher costs for production and shipping makes evident that a sustainable industry cannot be based on low cost positioning. The Hawaii Tropical Flower Council (HTFC) decided to focus on the exotic -- variety, vibrant colors, beauty, shelf-life, availability – qualities of Hawaii floriculture and establish the “Hawaii Tropical Flower” brand. All of these competitive advantages are dependent on continued improvement of quality products and market recognition and awareness. The resulting campaign, “Maximizing Hawaiian Flowers and Foliage Marketing Opportunities” continues with this project to increase brand awareness and educate the HTFC members about the campaign for promotion to national and international retail sellers.

This project supports HTFC’s main objective of being “The Source” for information on the marketing, design, availability, handling, and storage of Hawaii’s incomparable tropical flowers. The overall goal is to build a reputation of excellence globally for the “Hawaii Tropical Flower” brand – which in turn will create demand for the world’s best and increase sales and revenue for our member producers and for the State of Hawaii.


Project Approach

This segment, begun in February 2011, supported the comprehensive Hawaii Brand Platform and Tropical Agriculture Industry marketing implementation program put into action in 2005. This project developed Outreach Education; Promotions intended to Maximize Hawaiian Flowers and Foliage Marketing Opportunities and return-on-investment and included:

- Partnerships with Hitomi Gilliam, American Institute of Floral Designers (AIFD) and Teleflora,
- Digital Media Upgrades Toward a Comprehensive Outreach and Web-based Direct to Consumer Distribution System,
- Research and Planning and Participation in the 2012 International Philadelphia Flower Show (PIFS), themed “Hawaii, Islands of Aloha”
- AIFD Symposium 2012
- Hawaii Tourism Partner Outreach Promotions
- Launch of a Digital NeoTropica Guide, News Letter, and How to Videos,
- Industry Education and Promotion of Tropical Agriculture -Tropical Trends 2011 and 2012 Hawaii Tropical Flower Marketing Conferences.
Goals and Outcomes Achieved

Partner with International Designers to Provide Hawaii Industry Producers with Design Instruction, Color Trend and Usage Awareness

HTFC Internationally recognized Celebrity Designers conducted workshops at the 2011 and 2012 HTFC Color Trends Conference held annually in Hilo, Hawaii for local designers and producers to encourage greater use by local market for their flower needs. The workshops provided Hawaii flower producers and designers with state of the art color trend and usage information allowing producers to focus their research and development, production and individual producer promotions on trend setting colors and styles. The workshop was attended by 67 statewide producers and designers.

HTFC attended as Gold Sponsor of the AIFD Symposium in San Francisco, July 2011 and participated in demonstrations, displays, and design workshops. Hitomi Gilliam conducted a floral design workshop using only Hawaii tropical flowers showcasing the use of color and unique arrangements as a training piece for design trends and techniques. The estimated 600 attendees to the symposium were trained on how to be a trendsetter with the Hawaii Tropical Flower brand. In addition, there was a timed competition using only Hawaii tropical flowers and designers used the flowers for display “pods” and wedding bouquets samples to create dramatic designs.

SCBGP funds were not used to pay for the HTFC sponsorship. AIFD sponsorship was paid for by in-kind donations of flowers from Hawaii growers that were used during the symposium and by contributions from individual industry representatives. Sponsorship also included participation by expert designers, familiar with Hawaii tropical flowers, who would demonstrate how to use Hawaii tropical flowers to maximize the quality, color and varieties. Sponsorship provided an opportunity for Hawaii to be the focus of the designer demonstrations and for the participants to experience working with the flowers and appreciate the “Hawaii Tropical Flower” brand. Sponsorship in the form of flower donations allowed HTFC to educate participants on the care and handling of the flowers which adds to the designers’ confidence to use the flowers for their orders.

HTFC participated in Color Trend Summit in Vancouver, Canada, in December 2011, where 75 industry color leaders and trend setting designers including representatives from Pantone, a corporation headquartered in New Jersey and considered to be the authority on color and color trends met to forecast the “hot” colors for 2012. HTFC provided Hawaii tropical flowers for the designers and three members attended to promote the variety, vibrant colors, beauty, shelf-life, availability – which are the Hawaii Tropical Flower brand.

HTFC researched, assisted in design and development and attended the 2012 PIFS that was attended by over 250,000 flower enthusiasts over a 10 day period. As a part of this program, HTFC celebrity designers provided workshops, demonstrations, displays and book signing for the NeoTropica Guide book. The photos below shows a wedding scene, wave and lava flow created with Hawaii flowers.
Celebrity Designers also attended and supported HTFC in 14 additional major industry events. These designers used and promoted Hawaii product in all of their displays and demonstrations and promoted the printed and now digital NeoTopica Guide as a reference and Hawaii as the source for unique and high quality products. Some of the trends can be found via: http://issuu.com/ifdfloraltrends2011/docs/ifd-floral-trends-ecast-2012_member-electronic_

**Digital Media Upgrades Toward a Comprehensive Outreach and Web-based Direct to Consumer Distribution System**

Upgrades were completed allowing for the [http://www.hawaiisflowers.com/](http://www.hawaiisflowers.com/) website to be able to conduct direct sales and offer videos and more complex features to the website visitors.

To maximize benefits HTFC built and launched a new state-of-the-art website that has membership development capability including click through and featured member promotions and can host the latest digital and media features.


The 2012 PIFS was a celebration of Hawaii’s flowers and culture. HTFC recognized the potential to promote the Hawaii Tropical Flower brand and took the lead role in the pursuit of maximizing benefits to Hawaii’s floricultural sector at the 181-year old, 10 acre show that is conducted over a 10 day period and attracts more than 250,000 global visitors.

The PIFS marketing program was aimed at end user market penetration and increased awareness of direct to consumer web-based sales availability/capability. Direct to customer sales provides higher value and returns for producers. It also allows for longer distance shipments and sales and supports the quality product management.

In March of 2011, HTFC organized 7 representatives to travel from Hawai’i to the 2011 PIFS *Springtime in Paris* Exhibit to determine potential benefits and outreach promotional opportunities for HTFC and the Hawai’i Brand for the 2012 show. The team was very impressed with the show, its attendance, and press coverage. Several opportunities were identified for
participation that included 40 booth spaces (10 for each of the four Counties of Hawaii) to present a “Hawaii Market Place”.

With this in mind, HTFC agreed to take the lead in organizing this effort and those producers/suppliers interested in participating and being represented. Through the County of Hawaii’s, R & D proposal HTFC successfully sought $75,000 in additional matching support for Hawaii’s Island’s representation/inclusion in this Market Place and the 2012 Philadelphia International Flower Show. With HTFC support, equal amounts were raised on Oahu, Kauai, and Maui in support of the project. A special focus for the Hawaiian Village was on travel experiences and commodities/products available online or by mail order that could increase future product sales and travel to Hawaii’s Island.

HTFC further coordinated the presentation of the 10 Hawaii Island booth spaces representing The Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau, five individual businesses, the selection of more than 70 products for the “General Store” representing more than 40 businesses; provided for the booth fees; and organized necessary transportation to send selected participants to manage the “Hawaii Market Place” booth on-site at the 2012 PIFS event, from March 3 to March 11, 2012.

Signage, banners, and printed collateral materials were prepared to ensure maximization of outreach and branding opportunities. County funds requested were matched by other funding support and industry wide in-kind contributions.

The major costs of participation including booth space fees, set-up costs, and travel supported to ensure the booths were well manned and managed over the duration of the show. Transportation/shipping of goods for sale at the booths was matched by heavily discounted rates from FED EX.

In addition to these County of Hawaii’s supported booths, as a Statewide organization, HTFC also helped to coordinate and support the three other Counties of Maui, Kaua’i, and Oahu to provide 10 booths each representing their agricultural products and tourism industries.

Direct sales of product from Hawaii Island were over $250,000 to a diverse number of businesses and products. Without detailed data it can be estimated that over $300,000 in sales for the state of Hawaii and mostly in agriculture related products.

**AIFD Symposium 2012**

HTFC was a Gold Sponsor at the Symposium, July 12 – 16, 2012 in Miami, Florida. The ability to be foremost in exposure and in the limelight for the Hawaii Tropical Flower brand was a great opportunity for the Hawaii brand and demonstrated Hawaii’s ability to be an industry leader and innovator. This followed Silver Sponsorship in 2010, Gold Sponsorship in 2011 and again in 2012 which showed Hawaii’s commitment to the international industry and built stronger relationships with international trend setting designers and to the global flower industry. The
Hawaii’s Flowers website (www.hawaiisflowers.com) and newsletter/video demonstrations were featured at the symposiums. The “NEOTROPICA Hawaii Tropical Flower + Plant Guide” was featured and sold at the symposium.

HTFC provided product for prominent displays in the lobby areas of the hosting hotel, for designer presentations, including product for Hitomi Gilliam’s presentations that showcase Hawaii Tropical Flowers. Hitomi’s presentation included the introduction of four new designers, who will continue to be “friends of Hawaii” and promote the use of Hawaiian Tropical Flowers and Foliage.

**Hawaii Tourism Partner Outreach Promotions**

In addition to these more traditional marketing approaches, HTFC has launched a promotional campaign in partnership with Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) and Hawaiian music festival producers to provide Hawaii tropical floral products and designers to the HTA and Hawaii Visitor and Convention Bureau at their mainland outreach “blitzes” in Chicago, Seattle, San Francisco, New York, and other locations and at four Hawaiian music festivals including: Merrie Monarch Hula Festival, E Hula Mau Hula Festival in Long Beach, Seattle Slack Key Festival, and the Southern California Slack Key Festival in Redondo Beach. Audiences at these events range from 8,000 to 20,000 in attendance.

SCBGP funds were not used for the music festival or for outreach activities at the festival. The partnership was in the form of flowers donated as décor for the stage and the designer time to arrange the Hawaii tropical flowers in exchange for the HTFC website "Share the Aloha with Hawaii's Flowers" and the for the HawaiisFlowers.com website to be included on fliers, produced by the HTA, that were distributed to attendees as part of the promotion of Hawaii tropical flowers and part of the HTFC outreach through HTA events. The intent was to conduct outreach to a consumer group that, by their attendance at a Hawaiian music or hula event, would likely be interested in the Hawaii Tropical Flower brand.

SCBGP funds were not used for entertainment. These events are well-established and funded entirely by the presenting organizations. The events are an opportunity for HTFC to market the Hawaiian leis that are worn by the talent and have the audience notice the beauty of the flower displays designed by experts showcasing the Hawaii Tropical Flower brand.

This Hawaii grown tropical floral branding program was aimed at end user market penetration and an increased “Hawaii Tropical Flower” brand awareness with end users. HTFC took advantage of these already scheduled and funded event opportunities to make contact with end consumers. These progressive Hawaii brand association opportunities acquaint retail buyers with the advantages and ease of direct web-based purchases. It is also intended to expand smaller box direct to retailer shipments. These smaller retail and direct to consumer web-based sales support industry need to expand higher-value small box sales.

This program includes advertising in event collateral, programs, and internet websites,
marketing, and newsletters to outreach through association with music and visitor industry channels the end user. It also includes providing large floral displays at four, mainland events to decorate the stages and increase the Hawaii branding association through the music. Fliers promoting the hawaiisflowers.com website are distributed to attendees at these events. Celebrity performers and MC emphasize this association through sponsorship mention and by bringing attention to the beauty of the displays and thanking HTFC and hawaiisflowers.com for their support for Hawaiian music and dance. In addition, stage arrangements were raffled off as end of show door prizes.

This approach is intended to bring about synergistic “Hawaii” brand-marketing opportunities that strengthen the Hawaii linkage worldwide by integrating sound and dance into the visual, smell, and touch senses with customers. This approach also provides a greater “sense of place” and deepens relationship marketing and outreach association with the visitor and music industries and promoted the Hawaii Tropical Flower brand.

Launch of a Digital NeoTropica Guide, News Letter, and How to Videos,

The Digital NeoTropica Guide has been developed and is now accessible at http://www.hawaiisflowers.com/. This digital guide will facilitate reference and selection for consumers and industry professionals, particularly the younger users who demand online access and use digital formats in their businesses.

HTFC developed six editions of a digital Newsletter containing product usage and “How To” video demonstrations and linkage launched in May 2011. Sign up is available at our new website: http://www.hawaiisflowers.com/. The newsletter is used as an educational tool as well as for constant contact with customers, promotions and direct contact expansion, and development of categorized mailing lists.

HTFC produced and edited six celebrity designer educational “How To” videos released quarterly with the HTFC newsletter. Videos feature trend setting arrangement techniques and a selection (based on seasonal availability and “Featured Member” crops) of tropical flowers that can be easily shipped in a small box directly to the customer. The customer can follow the videos to make each arrangement. This helps to familiarize customers with techniques and make them more comfortable with using tropical flowers. It also helps to create interest with younger market consumers who have a preference for, expect, value, and use the internet and video in their shopping educational processes. In turn increases direct to customer small box shipments. It also strengthens the linkage of HTFC and Hawaii’s Flowers with International Design Celebrities and helps establish HTFC and Hawaii Tropical Flowers as the trendsetters in the market. The videos add value -colorful interactive content to the newsletter and website and provide a greater incentive for customers to continue to follow HTFC. Videos are linked to featured member profiles and “buy here” click through on the hawaiisflowers.com website.
Industry Education and Promotion of Tropical Agriculture -Tropical Trends 2011 and 2012 Hawaii Tropical Flower Marketing Conferences.

- **Hawaii Tropical Trends Conference Planning for 2011 and 2012**

HTFC took a new approach with the Hawaii Tropical Trends Conference. In 2011 and 2012, HTFC presented its second and third annual Statewide conference, design show and competition and networking opportunity to develop a premier tropical floral gathering held in Hilo, Hawaii. These Conferences were a must attend event for those in the floral industry. This annual conference is unique in the floral industry because it is held in Hawaii, highlights Hawaii Tropical Flowers and brings together industry-wide professionals, for training and educational programs and offers exhibits and events for the general public. It also encourages cross marketing and branding opportunities with the Hawaii visitor industry.

Using the farm to chef model, the 2010 conference strengthened the links between the floral and plant industries to Hawaii’s the visitor industry, regional cuisine, music industry, and the Hawaii brand in the international market place. In 2011, further opportunities were presented for Hawaii Tropical Flower brand promotion partnerships and marketing. This was done through panels of representation and discussions. Social media presentations and e-marketing strategies and linkage presented for members and other attendees. The musical outreach component of HTFC’s marketing program was integrated into the program to build the connection with and share the value of this relationship with members. Hawaiian music was interwoven throughout the conference to strengthen the link between Hawaii’s floral, music and visitor industries. A Tropical Trends design competition was sponsored to attract worldwide floral designers to share the latest trends in floral design. In 2012, HTFC brought even more distinguished speakers and industry trendsetters to develop our brand and marketing capabilities.

- **Trade Shows**

By participating in various other industry trade shows, HTFC continued to build its presence in the mind of the industry and customers who attend. It also allows cross-brand promotion and marketing to increase exposure and awareness of Hawaiian Floral and Foliage products for use in weddings and special events. Product placement and linkage to [www.hawaiisflowers.com](http://www.hawaiisflowers.com), inclusion in YouTube broadcasts, listing in press releases, product placement and coverage in live lectures, workshops and other education related projects, promotional use of high-resolution images showcasing Hawaii floral and foliage product. Shows were selected through member interest and commitment identified and in support of grower and partner designer matching support throughout the year. Event promotions and educational outreach opportunities included the following calendar of events and activities where HTFC and the Hawaii Tropical Flower brand were recognized and featured in 2012 by partner designers at:
March 17-18  Hands-on Workshops - Arrangements: Everyday & Sympathy - Personal Flowers: To Wear or Carry  Houston, TX
March 24-25  Hands-on Workshops - Arrangements: Everyday & Sympathy - Personal Flowers: To Wear or Carry  Philadelphia, PA
April 13-15  Southern Conference "Diversity"  Peabody Hotel  Orlando, Fla.
April 24  Connection: The Photography Experience  Location  Phoenix, AZ
April 21  Connection: The Body Flower Experience  Location  Portland, OR
July 10  2012 AIFD Professional Floral Design Evaluation Session (PFDE)  Miami, FL
July 12-16  2012 National Symposium  Miami, FL
July 16  2012 Foundation Workshop  Miami, FL
September 8  Connection: The Body Flower Experience  Location  Orlando, FL
September 15  Connection: The Bouquet Experience  Location  Oklahoma City, OK
September 29  Connection: The Body Flower Experience  Location  Milwaukee, WI

This project contained both short-term and longer-term expected measurable outcomes. In order to assess progress toward these goals, project managers collected data at the conclusion of each of the conferences, workshops and as well as approximately six weeks after the conclusion of the 2012 PIFS.

**Short-Term Outcomes**
Membership has reported increased interest in their products and an increase in visitors from national and international origins and that more are industry professionals – designers, media, and event planners.
Following the HTFC participation, the PIFS received nine international awards for excellence for the 2012 presentation, “Hawaii: Islands of Aloha,” at ceremonies held September 21, 2012, in Denver, Colorado including a Bronze award for Best New Promotion for the HTFC organized and presented Hawaii Village.

**Long-Term Outcomes:**
These include an increase in the number of regional specialty crop producers, increased member participation and an increase in the quality of product offerings and sustainability for the Hawaii Tropical Flower brand in the market place. Project managers have not been able to assess the true impact of the project on these variables. However, an attempt to assess the project resulted in 87 percent of the 200 HTFC members queried responding that their participation in the project has encouraged them to expand their online sales and support the quality branding message as well as a raised level of understanding of HTFC program value and efforts to be an industry leader and trend setter.
Beneficiaries

Direct beneficiaries of the project activities were producers and representative designers, the collaborative “Hawaii Tropical Flower” brand producers, marketing professionals and those attendees who participated in some or all of the various activities of the project. Attendance numbers for each of the events are listed below:

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<tr>
<th>Major Activities and Events</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
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<td>AIFD</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011 Design Trends Workshop</td>
<td>November 2011</td>
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<td>PIFS</td>
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<td>HTFC 2012 Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012 Design Trends Workshop &amp; Competition</td>
<td>October 2012</td>
<td>32</td>
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</table>

Lessons Learned

Offering free booth space was a debated issue but proved to be a valuable incentive with many rewards. The incentive of free booth space at the Philadelphia International Flower Show allowed many vendors to attend, sell and promote their products and their online availability. Attending vendors have reported continued sales and contact form East Coast areas. As well the partnering and collaboration of several Hawaii Brand industries (Ag, Tourism, Music and Arts) allowed for market penetration and recognition for the Brand. It also allowed for a bolder more prominent presence at the events. These Brand partnerships also helped to attract participants to the workshops and conference. Additionally, the myriad presenters at the conferences helped to facilitate more group discussion that helped to unite the otherwise hesitant participants. Evaluation data indicated that participants’ knowledge of the subject matter and their social connection to like-minded individuals increased as a direct result of the project. For the PIFS, HTFC undertook one of the largest and most inclusive collaborations of Hawaii Brand partners ever organized. The size and length of the PIFS was also a never attempted undertaking. In an effort to evaluate and plan for future large scale and collaborative events such as the PIFS, HTFC held a debriefing meeting. All product vendors and booth participants were invited to attend.

Positive impacts were identified by the participants:

- National and International exposure for the State, Businesses, Products, Floriculture was unprecedented form a single show
- Collaborative efforts from such a diverse representation was unprecedented
- Response form attendees was overwhelmingly positive and a desire to come to Hawaii or return to Hawaii was unanimous from both mainlanders and people who were originally from Hawaii’i now living on the Mainland
• Attendees could really connect with what Hawaii is like, from the visitor bureau information to the products to the people who were working in the booths
• What sharing Aloha is about was demonstrated through the giveaways as well as the attitude of the Hawaii participants
• Potential for future business for distributed fliers, information, and products
• It was a good adventure for Hawaii’s people who attended to get a look at what another destination was like and particularly the Philadelphia area
• A lot of experience was gained from going to the show and from the scope of the show. The PIFS is one of the largest and longest shows in the world.
• County support made it possible for businesses to participate and reduced the risk of such an extensive event.
• One vendor makes products from invasive species and noted that 3,200 lbs. of invasive species plant materials was shipped out of Hawaii and sold to make money
• Future contacts and future business prospects and opportunities were plentiful. Several businesses have already received sales and contact from attendees to repurchase or to wholesale products in their stores
• Business partnerships were developed such as baskets filled with products from other vendors
• Working as a group helped offset costs of FedEx shipping, Airfares, and other costs that would make it prohibitive for a small business to participate
• Hawaii Brand attracted an all-time high attendance of 150-250,000 people and our Market Place helped to present a better experience that helped to exceed expectation for these attendees
• Overall, the participants support going back to PIFS in future years in both Design Studio and Visitor Booth capacity. If this happened most vendors would consider participating in a booth on the inside.
• Generated ideas for a major show being developed in Hawaii and particularly on Big Island

The following Concerns, Challenges, and Issues were also identified

• Participation rules need to be set, clearly stated and then followed to ensure no issues arise from last minute entries
• Follow up on signage ahead of time to be sure participation is clearly promoted to attendees
• Negotiate PR and other requirements early on and clear to both sides
• Be sure we are a feature and not just a sideline
• Location is near main entrance and not side entrance as was the case in PIFS Bus & Train entrance
• Sales Team should have training in product features or be given clear information on products in advance so they can present/discuss product features correctly and with confidence
• Consider sampling of any food products may be worth the extra price of booth costs
• Clearly identify Bank sponsorship and location – change was hard to get and close bank was unwilling to give change
• Cash register and book keeping needs to be more clearly managed for more detailed accounting system and accurate record keeping
• Inventory needs to be managed each day of event and prices adjusted to be sure products are sold. Return shipping is costly and products can age or be damaged.
• Negotiate for discount freight on inbound and any products or display items that have to be brought back
• Staffing needs to be clearly set up and schedules set in advance to reduce long shifts and fatigue. Students should not be used as staffing on long day periods. Need to adhere to 8 hour maximum shifts and bring in enough staff to cover booth shifts
Visitor Bureau giveaway needs to be cleared in advance so name lists can be used. Consider computer data entry method such as used by the Ireland booth on inside.

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Hawaii Food Hub, a Web Database Resource

Final Report

Project Summary
This project was designed to enhance the competitiveness of Hawaii specialty crops and food security in Hawaii by providing practical support to new and emerging farmers, as well as individuals and groups exploring the viability of food growing businesses. The project was web-based and produced a listing of specialty crops with descriptions, along with listings of farms, farmers markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) businesses to provide a resource for the new and emerging farmers to use as a networking tool or as a reference.

Although there are many significant challenges facing agriculture today the overarching issue is the aging farmer. Compounding the situation is the lack of young agricultural entrepreneurs entering the field. The average age of a farmer in Hawaii today is 59 years-old. The prediction is that Hawaii has roughly a five to 10-year window to replace the food producing leaders that can be expected to leave or reduce their farming businesses. Older farmers are already downsizing and the rate of food production loss could be exponential as the pace of attrition starts to increase. This project addressed this issue by providing a resource to connect the next generation of Hawaii farmers.

Project Approach

Hawaii Food Hub (HFH), a Web Database Resource
The project manager changed the Hawaii Food Hub name to the Hawaii Food Map (HFM) to create a brand identity that would be unique from the other web-based resource sites with “hub” as part of their name. The website can be viewed at: http://shegrowsfood.com/hawaii-food-map/.

The database resource listings were completed in time for the April 17, 2014 launch. The FOODS listing includes over a hundred Specialty Crops found in Hawaii today. The website lists the crop and added descriptions, preparation, cooking tips and storing guidelines, which the project manager found was absent from other food hub sites. Storing of the crop helped decrease waste and increase the value of produce for the farmer and consumer. A listing of farms that sell these specialty crops was listed alongside the products. Providing this detailed information of specialty crops not regularly available at mainstream supermarkets educated the buyers and consumers about the variety of crops offered in Hawaii and intended to help the new farmers make decisions on what to grow to establish a niche market. The website included a listing of FARMS along with FARMERS MARKETS and CSAs on Oahu and neighbor islands that feature only 100 percent local products. The listings for specialty crop items, farms, CSAs and farmers markets will continue to grow, additions will be made on a quarterly basis. We are seeking additional funds to continue to grow this resource base.

To complement the HFM listings and to avoid wasting funds by duplicating information found on resource sites that focus on neighbor island producers, HFM is providing links to these sites.
The project staff have collaborated with the neighbor island site managers, which helped to extend the HFM reach.

**Hawaii Food Map media launch**

To announce HFM going live the project staff coordinated a media launch, which included a Special Events Dinner put on by the Leeward Community College Culinary Arts Program (LCC) that was funded by the LCC program. Specialty crop funds not used to promote non-specialty crops and were used to solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. The majority of the produce featured in this dinner were off-grade specialty crops. Students learned that utilizing off-grade produce helps farmers get a return on products they normally take as a loss. They also learned that appearance made no difference in quality in terms of taste and texture.

The launch was featured in the Honolulu Star Advertiser (published on 4/17/13) that promoted the HFM with the title “What’s Growing Where? Food map aims to connect buyers with the growers of local produce”. Project staff sent out a She Grows Food “Evine” (e-newsletter) to 495 subscribers announcing HFM going live. Information was posted on the HFM launch on the She Grows Food Facebook page with 363 friends. This integrated media and event approach resulted in 663 site visits on the day of the launch.

The project staff also participated in events to help bring more awareness to HFM and to educate consumers about off-grade products. HFM/Huli Hui flyers were handed out at the following events:

- 4/19/13 – LCC Culinary Arts Program Special Events dinner
- 5/4/13 – LCC’s annual “L’ulu” Fundraising Event
- 6/5/13 – Whole Food Market, Kahala in association with the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools

The HFM launch generated responses from farms, farmers markets and CSA programs who requested to be included in the database. These listings will continue to grow from contacts that were made since the launch. One of the contacts came from Sust’aina-ble Molokai (SM) where the project staff suggested potential funding sources to create an HFM specific to Molokai and SM secured a grant to develop a Molokai Food Hub – a web-based resource for Molokai consumers and farmers that is planned to be available on their website in the spring of 2014 ([http://sustainablémolokai.org/16-2/](http://sustainablémolokai.org/16-2/)).

The project staff received feedback from the young and new immigrant farmers that as a result of HFH, were asked to participate in new farmers markets and CSA programs. Some of these farmers include: Wally’s Farm, Kako’o ‘Oïwi, and Homestead Poi.

**Huli hui Communications system**

The project conducted “Huli Hui” call to action projects to further test the viability of the HFM system. Huli Hui is an email blast to a network of chefs and consumers notifying them about surplus products that need to go to market.
An example of a Huli Hui email blast:
“Ho Farms needs our help. Shin Ho says they have a bumper crop of 600 lbs. Roma tomatoes that they need to move by next Friday, December 9. She can sell for $1.25 a pound. Pick up points can be farmers markets. If you absolutely cannot get away, delivery might be possible. You can contact her directly at ________.”

Emails like the above sent in January 2012 resulted in Ho Farms selling 1000 pounds of tomatoes that would likely have resulted in waste. Sold to:
He’eia Pier – 10#
Pig & the Lady – 60#
Apt. 3 – 50#
Prima – 50#
Jay Parasco – 30#
Slow Food KCC/GreenWheel Food Hub – 800#

The response/results were positive and the project staff continued to work on improving and enhancing the system. However, the Huli Hui experienced a hurdle when trying to move beyond the test partners. Picking-up products from farms and delivering them to smaller independent buyers proved to be too costly and time consuming for the long term viability of the system. It was not feasible for the vast majority of farmers to deliver surplus or off-grade products to individual buyers. The current model is based on selling Grade-A products to produce brokers with distribution systems. The Chefs and Farmers Coalition Portal the project staff had planned to coordinate would not be effective without a distribution system in place.

In an effort to address the farm pick-up and delivery issue, a new Huli Hui pilot project was tested. The project enlisted the help of Oahu Fresh (OF), who markets and distributes Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) packages to different locations on Oahu. OF recently started delivering CSA packages to Kailua and Kaimuki, where there are concentrations of freestanding restaurants that feature locally grown products. OF has a refrigerated van with additional capacity so it made good business sense to optimize these CSA deliveries. By adding the distribution of surplus, off-grade (value-grade) and Grade-A specialty crops to these independent restaurants an additional revenue source was created for these deliveries. These smaller restaurants are generally underserved by larger food distributors because of the lack of volume and the smaller restaurants would not be in competition with the farmers’ Grade-A customers and created new markets for them. The project produced a new business model that could move more specialty crop products, specifically surplus and off-grade produce and fill a demand.

On January 6, 2014, the project staff held a meeting at Town restaurant to discuss this pilot project with targeted chef/owners of restaurants from Kailua and Kaimuki. Also invited were two farmers who brought examples of off-grade specialty crops, allowing the chefs to get a clear understanding of the unnecessary waste that was currently taking place. Present at the meeting where chefs: Ed Kenney (Town), Lee Ann Wong (representing Chef Kevin Hanney of 12th Avenue Grill, Salt and Koko Head Cafe), John Memering (Cactus), Lindsey Ozawa and Kevin Lee (Prima and V-Lounge). Farmers attending were Shin Ho (Ho Farms) and Mel Matsuda
(Kahuku Farms). Matt Johnson and Mellissa Zeman (O‘ahu Fresh), Kasho Ho (GreenWheel Food Hub) and Lisa Asagi and Dan Nakasone (Hawaii Food Hub) also attended this meeting. The chefs agreed to participate in the pilot project and the communicating would be done by texting. Eight days after the meeting, the first Huli Hui text came from Ho Farms, who had a surplus of baby Roma tomatoes. OF was able to move the surplus tomatoes to the participating chefs and Mark Noguchi of Pili Group, who was part of the original Huli Hui email thread, also purchased the surplus tomatoes.

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Pick-up from farms is still problematic due to time and cost considerations. Ho Farms delivers their larger accounts, which includes the OF location in Kaka‘ako. Kahuku Farms relies on their brokers to pick-up and delivery, as do the majority of farmers. This system needs time to grow and establish more restaurant accounts along with value-added processing businesses to justify picking-up produce from farms such as Kahuku Farms on the North Shore. Currently Kahuku Farms has roughly 400# to 800# of off-grade Apple Bananas per week going to waste because of very minor appearance issues. Selling price of these off-grade bananas does not justify payroll for delivery.

Huli Hui partner Chef Ed Kenney recently purchased property in Kaimuki where he plans to add another restaurant, a butcher shop and a small value-added processing facility. He will focus on local products for all these operations. Another Huli Hui partner, Chef Kevin Hanney, who recently moved his 12th Avenue Grill to a larger location, also has plans for a small value-added facility for his Koko Head brand products. Both these value-added facilities are slated to start by the end of 2014. Facilities like these are ideal for moving surplus or off-grade products. They both have strong brands, a market to move products and the flexibility to support a Huli Hui system. Once these facilities are in operation, the potential for OF to add a pick-up service could be economically viable. If this Huli Hui system proves to be successful, it could be a template for other CSA providers to grow their business and would help them to move specialty crops that normally go to waste.
Role of Project Partners
Lisa Asagi took on the vast majority of work, which included the research, composing information and photography for the database resource. Lisa also participated in all the outreach events along with writing the e-newsletters to promote HFM. Lisa also managed the design of the website with HFM’s web developer, Mascot Theory, created all content including photography of produce, inputted of all the information and photos. Mascot Theory’s role included web design, database design, along with design and release of HFH promotional e-newsletters. Mascot Theory also designed a promotional flyer for outreach events. Lisa Asagi also leads the development of collaborative distribution projects with GreenWheel Food Hub and Pacific Gateway Farms. Dan Nakasone helped to coordinate media outreach and events coordination and participation. Dan also coordinated participation of chefs and farmers in Huli Hui projects.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved
The Hawaii Food Map (HFM) was created. HFM is a Web Database Resource for the She Grows Food (SGF) website http://shegrowsfood.com/ to take advantage of its established following. SGF has 495 subscribers and they are generally strong supporters of locally grown products and the farms that produce them. Several of the subscribers are writers for media, which could help extend HFM’s reach.

The Huli Hui system involved partnerships with chefs who are ardent supporters of “locally grown” and are highly respected in the community. The chefs were high-visibility “messengers” and raised the value of fresh and value-added off-grade and surplus specialty crops.

HFM will extend beyond the project period and will continue to grow. Contacts established at launch like the upcoming Molokai Food Hub will be an outcome of the project and will enhance HFM. This kind of collaboration is critical for economic development in the form of local food production on Molokai.

The initial response to HFM going live came in the form of people submitting a Business Survey to be included on the HFM. There were over 20 surveys sent in by email and in person. Those who qualified were added to the already substantial HFM listings. Other responses from the launch came through personal contact, such as the farmers (see Project Approach) who obtained new business as a result of HFM. It is difficult to track all the “connections” that were made due to HFM. Attempts to gather sales information from farmers and end users has also been difficult. The project staff acknowledge that this difficulty was underestimated.

One of the highlights of this project has been the latest Huli Hui project in collaboration with OF and the participating chefs. The scale was relatively small but the response from the chefs was immediate. Identifying “texting” as the best means of communication with our chef partners resulted in positive feedback. The project showed potential to move product in a relatively short timeframe. This new Huli Hui business model still needs time to develop and sustained management to achieve its full potential.
The expected measureable outcome to grow demand for locally grown produce and thereby increasing food production for producers listed in the resource database by at least 10 percent by 2014 was not met. The inability of the survey model used to determine the measurable outcome of increasing food production by 10 percent and link this increase to the project was a challenge the project managers could not overcome and was one of the lessons learned from this project. The use of texting as the preferred means of communicating added to the project managers’ inability to meet the goal because sales resulting from texting was not measurable and the impact of texting was not anticipated. Farmers and producers should be provided simple logs to track sales/increased production they can attribute to the project and project staff should collect the logs weekly or follow up in a timely manner either in person or via phone or email with the farmers and producers participating in the database to regularly collect sales information that can be credited to a resource such as the Hawaii Food Map. The HFM continues to be a resource to locate locally produced fruits and vegetables, however, HFM did not encourage feedback from the users to report sales transactions. Farmers and producers indicate revealing their buyers is not a good business practice.

**Beneficiaries**

The primary beneficiaries of the HFM are the 78 farmers, 30 farmers’ markets and the 22 CSA programs who are listed in the database. The project listed only farmers’ markets and CSA programs that featured 100 percent local. These numbers will grow once we add Molokai’s database. Many farmers were grateful for the opportunity to have an online presence; a majority did not have a website of their own. Some were also worried about the possibility of ag theft so we did not list addresses, but instead listed where people would be able to contact them and purchase produce – such as farmers markets and CSAs. Farm addresses of farms were listed if they were shown on the websites of the farms.

OF (CSA providers) and the chefs and farmers who participated in the Huli Hui are also beneficiaries of the latest pilot project. All parties realized a financial return and the waste of perfectly good food was avoided.

General consumers and buyers for the food service industry also benefited from the listing and descriptions of the specialty crops which provided a reference guide available to the public. Project staff received feedback directly and indirectly that indicated strong interest from local citizens on the topic of food waste. Many considered this particular problem in modern habits as one that we could easily address as a community and on an individual level in our daily lives. Project staff are working on this interest as a possible rallying point for Huli Hui efforts once the system has expanded. The project can generate public support for a Huli Hui system once there is a vehicle for people to support it through direct action.

The positive feedback from the general public and chefs also indicated how much of the grading system of produce has been determined not by consumers but by large commodity producers (who have packaging, shipping and shelf-live concerns) and retailers. When informed in an engaging way about the importance of a no-waste food system, the project will benefit Hawaii’s people to be motivated into shifting food buying habits.
Lessons Learned

Project staff discovered that the vast majority of new farmers that are taking up agricultural leases and producing food at a commercial scale are immigrant families, primarily South East Asians. The majority of young farmers in agriculture today are generally the second generation of these immigrant families. HFM -Web Database Resource was designed for the English speaking community. This made it difficult for immigrant farmers without an English speaking family member to access the internet. Outreach was conducted to many of these farmers to include them in the HFM. To find solutions that will help new immigrant farmers who don’t speak English and do not currently have access to direct marketing opportunities, the project staff is developing distribution projects with GreenWheel Food Hub and Pacific Gateway Farms(PGF). The Pacific Gateway is a non-profit created to help immigrant families establish themselves in Hawaii. They have secured farmland leases in Kunia and are helping SE Asian families establish farms as a means of livelihood. Currently PGF is incubating 10 family farming efforts.

The inability of the survey model used to determine the measurable outcome of increasing food production by 10 percent and link this increase to the project was one of the lessons learned from this project. Farmers and producers should be provided simple logs to track sales they can attribute to the project and project staff should collect the logs weekly or follow up in a timely manner either in person or via phone or email with the farmers and producers participating in the database to regularly collect sales information that can be credited to a resource such as the Hawaii Food Map.

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