

The Independent Voice

Newsletter of the Kona Coffee Farmers Association

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Message from President Bondera

Aloha Kona Coffee Community Members:

As outgoing President of KCFA, the main issues at hand are to both reflect on what we have done so far, and more-so to see where we are now and how we can best move forward! Essentially we must work together since together we (Kona coffee farmers) make up a small community. Our group must strive toward the vital component of our effort, which is to put INTEGRITY before and above financial return, and our ethical integrity can and should drive all of our decisions on our own farms, within KCFA, and in my opinion in all aspects of life!

That said, in the past year we have been able to work with the HDOA, with CTAHR, with Kamehameha Schools, with legislative members, as well as with many individuals at the ground level towards our mission of both promoting and protecting Kona coffee and the realities of Kona coffee farmers. At the national (American Origin Products Association) and international (oriGIn) levels the Kona coffee and KCFA names are getting

the attention they deserve and we should maintain those efforts since the world is a small place as many of us are aware.

As is clear from a pest problem such as CBB, political borders do not leave one farm unaffected while another suffers, and it is vital that we all work together to maintain the QUALITY of our geographically indicated product – Kona coffee – and try as we may to keep the quality and integrity of reaching that quality to the highest standards.

Let us all continue to work together and recognize the importance of supporting the range of views and understanding that if we are not in an area that we must show appreciation for what is accomplished even if we would have done it differently. None of us can do it all, and we each can instead volunteer where we are the most affective...

My efforts will continue to retain the integrity of the Kona coffee name, and thereby support that recognition worldwide, starting right here at home on my families' organic farm in Honaunau...

Sincerely,

Colehour Bondera

Coffee Origin Disclosure Bill Introduced

On January 19, at KCFA's request Kona's State Senator Josh Green introduced the Coffee Origin

Disclosure Bill as Senate Bill No. 2097. The bill was assigned to the Senate Commerce & Consumer Protection Committee. Although urged to give an early hearing to the bill in emails from many KCFA members, the committee chair, Senator Rosalyn Baker of Maui, has stated that she will not hold a hearing. We continue to urge her to change that position and encourage KCFA members to send emails doing the same. The following is an outline of points in support of the bill drafted by KCFA member David Case who has been meeting with legislators in Honolulu about the need for origin disclosure:

SB 2097 (COFFEE ORIGIN DISCLOSURE)

(KCFA Briefing Points)

- 1—CONSUMER PROTECTION & LABELING
 - a—Requiring labels to tell consumers what is in the package is the most basic of the elements of consumer protection and fair marketing.
 - b—Most victims of the deception of 10% Blends are tourists. It should be a concern to the tourist industry and to the state as a whole if tourists come to believe they are being conned and deceived in Hawaii—contrary to the aloha spirit. The common reaction of visitors when given an explanation of what a “Kona Coffee Blend” is: “Does the State of Hawaii really allow them to do that?”
 - c—Hawaii is the only region anywhere in the world that by law authorizes the use of the name of

Coffee Origin Bill, cont.

one of its specialty agriculture products with only 10% genuine content.

2— COMMERCE AND HAWAII'S "ORIGIN" COFFEES

a—HAWAII'S "ORIGIN" COFFEES

QUESTION: What is the economic significance of Kona and other Hawaiian specialty "origin" coffees?

ANSWER: Kona coffee is the livelihood for hundreds of family farms on The Big Island. Other specialty coffees are of growing economic significance on Maui and Oahu. These are small businesses that are vital to Hawaii's economy. Coffee is a labor-intensive crop. Annual labor costs alone on a 5 to 10 acre farm can run \$25,000 to \$50,000. This is money paid to local workers that stays in Hawaii and is multiplied many times supporting suppliers of other goods and services. Coffee also requires lots of other resources like fertilizer and other agricultural products. Kona coffee (and other origin coffees) are premium crops and are not economic to grow on small farms unless they fetch premium prices. Lumping "origin" coffee with generic "blend" coffee eliminates the significance of origin coffee.

Maintaining the integrity of all origin coffee is essential to maintaining Hawaii's small farm economy.

b---JAMAICA BLUE MOUNTAIN COFFEE:

QUESTION: JBM Coffee generally sells for 25-35% more than 100% Kona in specialty coffee shops. Why? JMB acreage is comparable to Kona's—and our coffee is of equal or better quality.

ANSWER: Jamaica protects the JBM name with truth labeling requirements and enforcement. Hawaii does not, and in fact allows the "Kona Coffee" market to be flooded with faux Kona (i.e., 10% in Hawaii and no enforcement or protection at all by Hawaii on the Mainland).

c—THE REAL EFFECT OF "BLENDS":

QUESTION: Won't farmers lose sales to blenders if consumers see "Contains: 90% Panamanian Coffee, 10% Kona Coffee" on the label and stop buying blends?

ANSWER: No, if just 2 out of 10 consumers who previously bought 10% Kona blends (most of whom believed they were buying "Kona coffee") read the disclosure and switch to real 100% Kona, at least DOUBLE the amount of Kona sold. (If 100 tourists bought 1 lb each of 10% "Kona Blend" they would buy only 10 lbs of Kona coffee. If just 20 of those tourists bought a pound of 100% Kona instead, sales of Kona to the same 100 people would double to 20 lbs). And that would be true even if the other 80 decided to spend their money on pineapples instead of coffee.

3-- **CONCLUSION SB 2097's labeling requirements protect the coffee consumer and promote Hawaii's small farm coffee economy.**

KFCA elects officers for 2012

Following Coffee EXPO, KFCA held its annual meeting and elected the following officers to serve during 2012:

President Cecelia Smith
Vice President Mary Lou Moss
Secretary Tom Butler
Treasurer Christy Carrico

Other Board members are Colehour Bondera, Bruce Corker, Paul Uster, Clare Wilson, and Louise Hanna.

Mahalo to outgoing President Colehour for his excellent guidance during 2011. Welcome to new Board members Cecelia Smith and Louise Hanna!

Letters

From Bob and Cea Smith

Thank you dear Christine Sheppard for being our stalwart Independent Voice Editor. Your sharp mind and wit along with your devotion to The

Cause has helped the KCFA go so much further that it would otherwise. You will be sorely missed! Mahalo nui loa, Christine.

Bob and Cea Smith

(I'm sure I speak for all of us in agreeing completely with Bob and Cea's letter – Christine is a treasure)

From Page Trygstad

Aloha Fellow Members,

To the point, KCFA represents the interests of small Kona coffee farmers. The problem is that the board members cannot do all of the work alone. I understand that we are all small business owners and farmers. Those are seven day a week jobs. That said, KCFA needs the time and support of all farmer members to accomplish its and your goals. By attending a board meeting you have the opportunity to share your experience, strength and hope. By attending CTHAR, HDOA meetings, the annual KCFA meeting you can learn and share knowledge with others. By taking two hours of time out of your busy routine to set up chairs and tables for the annual meeting, including travel time, you further the KCFA efforts to represent us all.

We, as members, all have things that we would like to see improved in the Kona coffee industry. The board members cannot do all the work alone. KCFA needs greater member participation, thinking, ideas, and effort.

There is an origin and labeling bill before the legislature introduced by Senator Green at the request of KCFA but it is not likely to even get a public hearing because of the processors/blenders influence and political cash, both of which we do not have. There is a proposed bill to charge an "inspection fee" on all imported green beans brought into

Cupping Cont.

explained how to evaluate and record observations on a simple scoring sheet. Then the participants got down to tasting. There were at least 2 flights per workshop, and participants learned the nuances of sniffing, slurping, spitting, and note-taking. Sherri stepped participants through a discussion on each (blinded) coffee the participants had brought. There was a lot of interaction and discussion of each coffee. The process made cupping un-mysterious, and it was a lot of fun. All went home more knowledgeable, and with a gentle little caffeine buzz.

KCFA says many mahalos to Sherri for generously donating her time, to the Patersons' and their great staff at Hula Daddy for the use of their facility and the hours of work they put in being facilitators, and to Bargreen Ellingson Foodservice Supply for providing a generous discount on the cupping bowls.

5th Annual Coffee EXPO



EXPO Vendor- Emmerich Grosch

This was the best EXPO ever thanks to Mary Lou Moss and Paul Uster, event chairs and all of the 27 other volunteers. The caliber of attendees was far above previous years including many people from outside the KCFA family, demonstrating the high interest in the various subjects presented. The interest in the EXPO indicates that our visibility and contribution to the coffee industry on our island continue to grow.

Presentations included Colehour Bondera welcoming attendees and providing a summary of the past year, Cupping for Quality with Sherri Johns, Bruce Corker speaking on the proposed origin disclosure bill, Andrea Kawabata providing the current status on CBB, Suzanne Shriner, Andrea Kawabata, and Bob Smith discussing the best methods of mitigating the CBB problem and finally a sneak preview of an excellent video prepared by Suzanne and Andrea on "Controlling the Coffee Berry Borer".

There were 30 vendors and service agencies providing information and displaying equipment and supplies. The many attendees kept these vendors busy. Thanks to all of them for taking the time to spend the day with us.

Free Video "Controlling the Coffee Berry Borer"

Detailed information on the best practices for controlling CBB is presented in an excellent video produced by Suzanne Shriner and Andrea Kawabata with enormous support from Kamehameha Schools. To get this important, educational video to as many Kona coffee farmers as possible, KCFA will be receiving 350 to hand out, Kamehameha Schools will be mailing copies to every coffee leaseholder and Greenwell Farms has committed to mailing out 300 copies to cherry farmers. We plan to blanket everybody with disks like AOL did in the early 90s. A Spanish version will be available to help educate the farm workers and managers. The video will also be available on YouTube.

EXPO Mahalo

A huge Mahalo to all the volunteers who made the EXPO such an impressive success!
Mary Lou Moss & Paul Uster
Event Chairs

Volunteers Mahalo cont.

Andrea Kawabata
Bob Kraus
Bob Smith
Brooks Wakefield
Bruce Corker
Carol Weaver
Cea Smith
Chuck Moss
Clare Wilson
Colehour Bondera
Craig Smith
Fran McClure
Karen Kemp
Kathy Gedeon
Kathy Wood
Lilly Kong
Louise Hanna
Maria de Silva
Mary Lake
Michelle Joven
Ray Anders
Ron Lake
Sherri Johns
Susan Dursin
Suzanne Shriner
Tom Butler
Tony Ambut

Logo Merchandise Expo Specials through February

The following items are available at the EXPO price through February. Order on our Website

www.konacoffeefarmers.org

KCFA ball caps, regularly \$18, special for \$15.

We have all sizes available in the GET REAL long sleeved men's shirt. Regularly \$25, special \$20
Map shirts, all sizes available for both men & women – regularly \$18 for men & \$16 for women, all priced at \$15

Limited quantities available for the brown short sleeved shirt in both men & women sizes.

The Coffee label shirts supply has been restocked so all sizes are available for \$65.

EXPO shirts – 5th Annual Expo – small, medium & xl sizes available \$13 each. Nice shirts, nice quality.

Editor- Clare Wilson