

THE INDEPENDENT VOICE

Newsletter of the Kona Coffee Farmers Association

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Starbucks is Pono

Starbucks has the courage to do the right thing. Like most coffee retailers, Starbucks sells a blend of Kona mixed with other coffees. But when the KCFA explained what using the legally allowed name “Kona Blend” on a 90% foreign coffee is doing to Kona’s reputation, Starbucks listened! They have renamed their popular blend “Kopelani” and are phasing out packaging that says “Kona Blend”.

Kopelani, which means heavenly coffee, is described as a “blend of African, Latin American and 10% of the finest hand-selected Kona coffee beans”. Well done, Starbucks, the Kona coffee farmers thank you!

There is nothing wrong with blending coffee but it is definitely deceiving to put the name Kona on a bag of 90% foreign coffee.

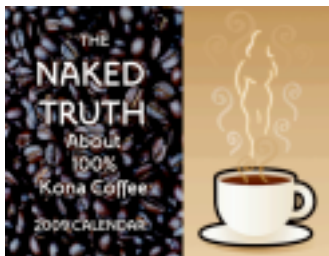
Now let’s see – our home-grown blenders continue to abuse the Kona name and fool the customer. Can they have the courage to do the right thing? Or will they continue to hide behind the law while they make big bucks off the farmers hard work.

Workshops

Processing Techniques for Small Farms held on July 5th was a great success, attended by 42 people. Ken Sheppard is planning a workshop on Defects in Green Beans, What Causes Them and How to Avoid Them. Watch this space for more on this and our other events.

The Naked Truth Makes News.....

Our provocative calendar is proving to be a huge success – the 1000 copies disappeared in three weeks, and the second order is now being distributed. Better get yours now before shipping costs get any higher! You can buy online at www.konacoffeefarmers.org, or at these fine stores:



We thank all of these stores for supporting 100% Kona Coffee

Lavender Moon, Art Farm, Coffee & Epicuria, Chefs Supply, Kona Coast Office Supply, Borders, Patels, Bong Brothers, Higashi Store, Anuenue Gardens, Eden, Copy Post Plus, Mona Gram, Surfin Ass, Orchids and Antiques, Sunrise Nursery, Kona Roasters, Bad Ass, Hula Bean, Choice Mart, Nasturtium Cafe, Kailua Candy Company, Kona Stories.

Calendar Ladies Hit the Parade and win the Judges’ Special Award!



Our famous Naked Truth Calendar ladies rode the Coffee Shack in the 13th annual Kailua-Kona Independence Day Parade, but with clothes on. The announcers had a lot of fun with this, and the audience loved it too. Miss July drove the truck, with Miss February, Miss June, Miss August, Miss October, and Miss November all there to wave to the crowds. A large crowd of spectators welcomed the 58 colorful entries at the parade with its theme, "Celebrate Independence!" And to top it all, the very independent KCFA ladies won the Judges’ Special Award. We will proudly display our plaque.

African Beans in Hawaii?!

Yes, unfortunately it’s true. At the recent CoffeeFest tradeshow on opening day there was an exhibitor who had many sample trays of green coffee laid out for people to examine and take away. The green beans included not just South American, but also African coffee from Kenya, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and others. The exhibitor said that these were not fumigated - he carried them in his suitcase.

African coffees are not allowed into Hawaii even fumigated, as their pests and diseases cannot be eradicated with current fumigation protocols. The exhibitor had ignored the warnings on the plane's Agriculture Form.

We are disappointed that it took a KCFA member to report this. The green coffee was the main display in a prominent booth and clearly labeled by country. The KCFA had written to all the relevant authorities to request provisions to prevent this type of alarming breach. The HDoA even had a booth just a few yards away and yet apparently no-one from HDoA looked around the show hall to check for illegal imports.

Hopefully the swift action taken by our member Ken Sheppard, and by Jim Wayman, President of the HCA and co-sponsor of Coffee Fest, has prevented any catastrophic problems. Jim secured the green beans in ziplocks to turn these over to the HDoA representative, Jeri Kahana when she returned to the HDoA booth, to have the beans burnt.

Perhaps it is time for Agricultural Inspections to scan INCOMING luggage from flights, instead of just outgoing, to help stop this type of danger?



But on a lighter note – it was fun and educational to be a part of Coffee Fest, with our new booth, and talk to the vendors from around the country and overseas. Our booth was well attended, and our volunteers were able to spread the 100% message a little further

Buy Local....

The concept of buying local is simply to buy food (or any good or service) produced, grown, or raised as close to your home as possible. You will be helping preserve the environment, and strengthening your community by investing your food

dollar close to home. The Farmers' Market at Keahou every Saturday is excellent, and a new one will be starting up soon on Sundays at the Amy Greenwell Ethnobotanical Gardens.

Buy Local applies to our coffee too... Why buy the blend of foreign stuff when there is good American coffee right here, Kona coffee. Melanie, Colehour and Bruce, down at the Keauhou Farmers market, have got the message right!



Letter to the Editor

Editor:

In the article "How Many Bags?" it says that in *Growing Coffee in Hawaii*, a yield of 164 bags/acre of Kona typica is indicated in the Hawaii State Coffee Trial. As noted, that was a variety and location trial, CTAHR does not use this number for a typical yield as implied. The article failed to mention that under the section "Yields" in the same UH CTAHR publication, it states that a yield of 100 bags of cherry can be produced under typical Kona conditions. By the way, I know many Kona coffee farmers who reach, or exceed, this yield.

While the section using the HASS numbers is interesting, and shows a trend over the years, it should be noted that the statistics include all reporting harvested farms, regardless of age or condition or even whether the whole crop was harvested. This would account for the much lower yields listed than are expected on a well managed coffee farm in Kona.

Regarding the letter to the editor about twig borer, as I have announced several times, UH CTAHR is doing, and has done, research on this insect. We are currently in the middle of a project looking for natural predators of the insect (unfortunately not promising so far), and surveying damage and population levels at various elevations and locations. The black twig borer is certainly causing damage and crop loss, and I have seen it kill entire verticals in sections of individual farms. Still, some of the damage observed could be due to other factors such as overbearing dieback, insufficient fertilizer, insufficient rainfall, and nematodes. In addition, these factors and others which stress the tree, cause the tree to be more attractive to the twig borer.

Dialog was also mentioned; honest, positive, and constructive dialog is certainly something which we need more of.

Virginia Easton Smith, Extension Agent, University of Hawaii at Manoa

Join or Renew Today!

The KCFA was founded to protect and promote 100% Kona coffee, and to support and provide an independent voice to the farmers who grow Kona coffee. We are a member-driven organization and encourage member input. Regular membership is \$25, Associate (non-farmer) membership is \$20. This gains you free entrance to our workshops, so is a great deal.

Find information and join online at www.konacoffeefarmers.org