

# The Independent Voice

**Newsletter of the Kona Coffee Farmers Association**

**March 2012**

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**EDITOR: Clare Wilson**

## Message from President...

Welcome to the 2012 Kona Coffee Farmers Association year. Following six very successful years, the new Board of Directors is looking forward to continued achievements. We take our job as the voice of the Kona Coffee farmer seriously and to that end, we will persevere. It is an exciting and busy time with the State Legislature in session hearing many Bills that affect Kona coffee farmers. All of us need to participate in the legislative process to help protect the Kona coffee name and reputation.

Of particular importance as we get into the coffee season is the recent release of the CBB management video. This video which originated within and was initially funded by KCFA is making its mark and will no doubt increase our Education promise to coffee farmers. Yay!

Social Events is busy planning for our Kona Coffee Blossom Banquet scheduled for April 28<sup>th</sup>. Membership has lots of new ideas for this year and of course our Geographic Identity Committee has much to continue to do. Finally, the KCFA website is having a real make-over to be accomplished by May. After 5 years, the site has

found its true needs and will re-organize to be up to date and highly functional.

Your Board of Directors for 2012 are:

Cecelia B Smith - President

Mary Lou Moss - Vice President and Fundraising/Social Events Chair)

Thomas Butler- Secretary

Christy Carrico- Treasurer (Finance Chair)

And Board Members: Bruce Corker (Legislative Chair), Clare Wilson (PR Chair), Colehour Bondera (Geographic Identity Chair), Louise Hanna (Membership Chair) and Paul Uster (Education/Grants Chair).

A big MAHALO to all the Board and Committee Chairs who serve unselfishly and give of their free time as KCFA volunteers, so that all of our over 300 KCFA members will have their voices heard, especially as farming Kona coffee becomes more complicated due to the CBB invasion.

**To our General Membership:** If you want to contribute to any of the various KCFA activities, you are heartily encouraged to do so by contacting the various Chairs. We are stronger when we all hang together, as the voice of the Kona Coffee Farmer.

Aloha, Cea (Cecelia B Smith)



Coffee berry borer on coffee bean

## CBB IPM Video Released

**Video Links Corrected from earlier version of Newsletter**

KCFA was instrumental in the production of the Farmer-to-Farmer video about Integrated Beetle [www.youtube.com/KonaCoffeeFarmers](http://www.youtube.com/KonaCoffeeFarmers) and will be out soon on DVD.

The beetle has spread at an alarming rate, reaching nearly every farm within a year of its official identification. Some untreated farms have reported bean damage of 80%. Kona has a uniquely dense coffee farm structure, where the beetle crosses boundaries with ease. Cooperation and education within the community is imperative to reduce everyone's losses.

One of the key challenges has been disseminating accurate information for basic pest management. KCFA has led the way in this regard, hosting multiple workshops and working with the Department of Ag to get Botanigard legalized. This ten-minute video is the next step. It demonstrates the three main aspects of integrated CBB management: (1) Sanitation and Gleaning—removing cherries from the orchard in a timely manner; (2) Spraying the fungus—the only legal, effective pesticide for CBB; and (3) Trapping—helping identify trouble spots. Techniques for coffee mills are also highlighted.

This video is groundbreaking community collaboration in a time of crisis. The Kohala Center and Kamehameha Schools were also involved as funders. Kamehameha Schools, landowner of 70% of Kona

coffee farms, brought in noted videographer Gary Sprinkle to film the video and will be mailing DVDs to all their agricultural tenants. Andrea Kawabata of CTAHR was also involved. The video is available in both English and Spanish versions and KCFA will have copies available for pickup at events. Be sure to share the link with your neighbors and watch the video with your workers and harvesting crews.

## Pruning for CBB Management Reminder

As you prune, remember to remove all mature or raisin cherry from your verticals. Just one bean can host 100 beetle and serves as a vector for next year's infestation.

## Fungus Recommendations Updated

Based on conversations with Colombian farmers, KCFA has updated our recommendations for *Beauveria bassiana* spraying. Spraying every 60 days, year round, along with proper sanitation has kept the pest in check at an under 5% loss rate on many South American farms. Farms with bad borders may need to spray "hot spots" more frequently. Download the latest IPM sheet from the KCFA website.

## HDOA Quarantine Now Permanent

On January 30, the Board of Agriculture voted in Honolulu to make the quarantine on interisland shipment of Kona and Ka'u coffee permanent. KCFA was there to testify to the inadequacies of the Quarantine Rule. While we supported the need to limit the spread of CBB, KCFA testified as to how the rules were unclear, and

favor large shippers of coffee. Organic or small producers have a higher barrier of entry into the state market. At this time, the primary method of quarantine treatment is Fumigation at Kona Trans, which is not feasible for small shipments of coffee. The alternative, Heat Treatment (or par-roasting) method has the potential to alter cup flavors as chemical changes begin to occur in the bean. The third method, Freeze Treatment, has recently been approved. But freezing must be done in the presence of HDOA. The Plant Quarantine Branch (PQB) will not accept treatment on the farm. Freezing can be done in the PQB's airport office if there is space available in the HDOA freezer. Contact them at 326-1077 if you wish to ship interisland.

## Processors Estimated CBB Losses

Jim Wayman testified to the Board of Ag on the insect damage seen by large processors this past season. Hawaii Coffee Company lost \$0.5 million due to failure of Kona green to meet Prime grade. He estimated the green coffee loss at \$6 million region-wide, and a roasted value loss of \$18 million. He noted that their conversion rates of cherry used to be 5.5 lbs cherry for 1 lb certifiable green, which dropped to 7.8 lbs cherry in 2011.

Another large processor noted to a KCFA member that he had not seen Extra Fancy pass grade from October 2011 onward. Coincidentally, the large Processors are now pushing for the removal of the green certification system. This can only be to the detriment of Kona's quality and reputation.

## Huge Savings on CBB Products

KCFA negotiated reduced prices on *Beauveria bassiana* products and a spreader that members need to fight CBB infestation. Because KCFA represents about 300 farms, we are able to get better than retail prices. A chart at the end of the newsletter gives the prices for all available products.

These prices are available only to current (*paid thru 2012*) KCFA members. Order now on the KCFA web site to get these prices.

Go to:

<http://www.konacoffeefarmers.org> and Login to your member account, go to the Store and order the products you will need for the season.

Re-orders in April and later may be higher due to shipping costs. As long as the storage temperature does not stay above 85-degrees F., fungal spores will remain active for 12 months, according to BioWorks, the major distributor. Figure how much spray you need for your farm for the season and buy it now. You may wish to get together with friends to split larger quantities to save money.

To follow the CBB guidelines, developed by Suzanne Shriner, Bob Smith and the CBB Taskforce, you need 7 ounces of Mycotrol-O<sup>1</sup> or Botanigard per acre, per spray. You need 3 ounces of Ecospreader per acre, per spray.

If you have 5 acres of coffee trees, that's 35 ounces of *Beauveria bassiana* and 15 ounces of spreader per spray. Guidelines are to spray bi-monthly or more often if CBB infestation is heavy (15% or more cherry loss, but you be the judge). To spray bi-monthly from March 2012 to February 2013 is 6 sprays. The total *Beauveria bassiana* product for 6 sprays of 5 acres is 210

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<sup>1</sup> Mycotrol-O is approved for organic farms. The spores are exactly the same as those in Botanigard, but it has a vegetable oil base that is approved for organic use.

ounces or 3.28 gallons. Rounding up is 3 gallons, 1 quart of Beauveria bassiana product. The total spreader needed for 6 sprays is 1.4 gallons. *chart for the calculations of the amount of products and approximate cost for 6 sprays per season , based on number of trees:*

PRODUCT	MEMBER S PRICE	LOCAL RETAIL	SAVING S
Mycotrol-O quart (organic)	\$73.65	\$86.46	17.4%
Botanigard-ES quart	\$55.00	\$72.00	30.9%
Botanigard-ES gallon	\$198.50	\$247.00	24.4%
Ecospreader gallon	\$99.75	\$186.96	87.4%

Number of Trees	Botanigard-ES	Spreader	Approx. Cost
650	3 quarts	2 quarts	\$215
1300	1 gallon + 1 quart	1 gallon	\$353
1950	1 gallon + 3 quarts	1 gallon + 1 quart	\$490
2600	2 gallons + 1 quart	1 gallon + 3 quarts	\$630
3250	3 gallons	2 gallons	\$800
3900	3 gallons + 2 quarts	2 gallons + 2quarts	\$960

For more information on CBB treatments, consult the KCFA web site and the videos on YouTube: [www.youtube.com/KonaCoffeeFarmers](http://www.youtube.com/KonaCoffeeFarmers) Buy now and save!

## Legislative Update

**HB1827**—After testimony in opposition from dozens of KCFA members, this ill-conceived and poorly drafted bill was “deferred” by the House Agriculture Committee on February 3 and died in committee. This bill, among other things, would have authorized entry on to farms without notice or a warrant; authorized the destruction of coffee trees with CBB; and authorized the imposition of a lien on the farm property to recover the costs of destroying the coffee. Many thanks go to all of you who sent testimony requesting the defeat of this bill.

**HB280**—This bill would abolish the statutory system of HDOA inspection and certification of green coffee that has protected the “Kona” reputation for more than a decade. This inspection and certification system was put in place after the Kona Kai coffee counterfeiting scandal of the mid-1990s. If you would like a reminder of the dangers created by a system of “voluntary” certification that are demonstrated by the Kona Kai scandal, use the following link to read the 2001 article entitled “We Was Robbed!” by Donald Schoenholt (president of Gillies Coffee Co. in New York City and a KCFA member) -- <http://www.teaandcoffee.net/0401/spacial2.htm> The Kona Kai scandal was an embarrassment to the entire State of Hawaii—and especially to the Kona region. “Voluntary” certification is an invitation to counterfeiting and fraud.

HB280 has been sponsored and supported by the Honolulu 10% Blenders and their processor allies. To see who they are—go the Hawaii State Legislature website, enter “HB280” in the box at the top of the page for “Bill Status/Measure Status”, and then on the page for HB280 click on the links to the testimony. Unfortunately, HB280 has already passed two House committees and will likely be considered next by the Senate Agriculture Committee. This is a very bad bill for the integrity of Kona coffee. Please call or email Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Clarence Nishihara (808-586-6970 / [sennishihara@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:sennishihara@Capitol.hawaii.gov)) and urge him to kill HB280.

**SPECIAL THANKS**—KCFA Legislative Committee member David Case spent almost 3 weeks in Honolulu in late January and early February during which time he met with legislators and representatives of the Abercrombie Administration—and give testimony on coffee related measures before

Legislative committees and the Board of Agriculture. David put in yeoman’s work and did a superb job on behalf of the KCFA. Mahalo, David

## Save the Date and Save Your Money!!

The **Kona Coffee Cherry Blossom Banquet** is coming on Saturday, April 28th at the King Kamehameha Hotel. The auction items are coming in and are very exciting. We will be keeping an updated listing of the fabulous auction items again this year on our website. Check it out. Adding more every week!

If any of you have an item that you would like to donate to our silent or live auction, please get in touch with Mary Lou Moss @ 896-4175/329-4035 or [Marylou@cuppakona.com](mailto:Marylou@cuppakona.com). Also, consider asking your customers if they would like to donate to our organization. KCFA has one fundraiser each year and the money goes for educational purposes. We would like to buy a projector & screen (like the kind Paul Uster loaned us for the EXPO)

## A Note from the Membership Committee

**All Members who have not paid their 2012 Annual Dues, will be dropped from the KCFA email List on April 1, 2012.** Your KCFA Annual Dues give you all the possible current news on Kona Coffee and is the voice of the Kona Coffee Farmer. If you agree, then renew today! Thank you. For Member “username” and “password” info, email: [info@KonaCoffeeFarmers.org](mailto:info@KonaCoffeeFarmers.org) with subject: *Member Info* ☺

