

From: Fern Gavelek Communications, 808-329-0833

Contact: Chris Manfredi, Hawaii Coffee Association, cmanfredi@kaufarmandranch.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HCA CROWNS CHAMPIONS OF HAWAIIAN COFFEE

99 COFFEE ENTRIES VIE IN CUPPING

LIHUE, HAWAI'I—Two Champions of Hawaiian Coffee were crowned in Commercial and Creative divisions during the annual Hawaii Coffee Association's (HCA) 18th Conference and 5th Cupping Competition at the Kauai Beach Resort on Saturday, July 20.

Big Island Coffee Roasters of the Big Isle's Hawai'i District was awarded the top spot in the Creative category with a score of 86.939. 'Creative' entries are those that had less than 300 pounds of the winning coffee available for purchase. The Creative category encourages farmers to experiment with new varieties and cultivation or processing methods without having to produce a commercial-level quantity of coffee.

Mountain Thunder Coffee from Hawai'i Island's Kona District received top honors in the Commercial category scoring 85.51. These entries had at least 300 pounds of the winning coffee available for purchase as of the time of entry. A full listing of all entries that received a score of 80.0 or greater is being provided on the HCA website at hawaiicoffeeassociation.com.

The coffees were 'cupped' and scored from a pool of 99 premium Hawaiian coffees from eight statewide districts: Hamakua, Hawai'i, Ka'u, Kaua'i, Kona, Maui, Moloka'i and O'ahu. Coffee cupping is a combination of art and science where coffees are evaluated and scored based on subtle characteristics including flavor, aroma, "mouth-feel," acidity, sweetness and aftertaste.

Entries were critiqued by a judging panel of esteemed coffee industry professionals using standardized blind procedures, as defined by the Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA). Judges assigned a single numerical score to each coffee (scores provided with release).

The SCAA defines "Specialty Coffee" as a coffee that has a cupping score of 80.0 or greater. Awards were given for up to the top three eligible entries from each district, and the top 10 eligible coffees in each of the Commercial and Creative categories received awards.

Judges for this year's cupping panel were SCAA President Paul Thornton of Coffee Bean International, SCAA Vice President Shawn Hamilton of Java City Roasters and Warren Muller of Inter-American Coffee.

The scores of entries are going up, according to David Gridley, HCA cupping competition chair. "Nearly 80 percent of the 99 entries achieved a cupping score of 80.0 or greater," said Gridley. "At our first cupping five years ago, we had 55 to 60 percent of entries scoring 80.0 or more."

"Constant improvement and moving forward were reoccurring themes of our 5th Annual

Cupping Competition,” noted HCA President Greg Stille. “Growers are continually improving farming and processing practices that contribute to the production of high-quality coffee.”

The conference also featured an industry trade show, numerous informational speakers, growers’ reports, a hands-on cupping workshop, a silent auction and a tour of Kauai Coffee Company’s farms and facilities.

The Hawaii Coffee Association’s mission is to represent all sectors of the Hawai’i coffee industry, including growers, millers, wholesalers, roasters and retailers. HCA’s primary objective is to increase awareness and consumption of Hawaiian coffees. A major component of HCA’s work is the continuing education of members and consumers. This annual conference continues to grow each year and is gaining increased international attention.

For more info, visit Hawaii Coffee Association’s website at www.hawaiicoffeeassociation.com.