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Hawaii Coffee Association

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**JULY 21, 2017 ~ HAWAII COFFEE ASSOCIATION HOSTS 22TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
AND 9TH ANNUAL STATEWIDE CUPPING COMPETITION**

Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii-USA

Coffee industry professionals from across the state assembled for the Hawaii Coffee Association's (HCA) 22th Annual Conference and 9th Annual Statewide Cupping Competition Thursday through Saturday at Maui Tropical Plantation located in Wailuku on the Valley Isle of Maui. This year the HCA combined its annual conference with the Maui Coffee Association's popular Seed to Cup Festival.

The cupping competition featured 107 entries in two categories - Creative and Commercial – assembled from origins located throughout the island chain including Hawaii Island's Kona, Ka'u, Hamakua, Hilo and Puna districts, Maui, Kauai, Molokai and Oahu.

When you get to the last cup we just said 'Wow' this is exiting'!" explained cupper Warren Muller of Walker Coffee Trading of Houston Texas. "The level of experimentation is such that we're now seeing coffees that you wouldn't expect from the Hawaiian Islands" shared fellow cupper Shawn Hamilton of Java City of Sacramento. Now in its 9th year of the competition, the cuppers agreed "The quality just keeps getting better and better. It's very good for Hawaii"

Workshops covered topics including coffee brewing, cupping, roasting and roaster maintenance, composting, processing for 'quality, differentiation, and competition', branding and packaging, specialized fermentation, and farm management & sensor technology with the use of drones. A fantastic historic timeline of the Hawaiian coffee industry over the past 30-plus years was presented by retiring University of Hawaii's CTAHR coffee research icon, Skip Bittenbender. Activities included a tour of O'o Farms in Kula.

A healthy schedule of presenters included a diverse assemblage of state and federal researchers and innovators from private industry.

Presenters from USDA, Hawaii Agricultural Research Center, Pacific Basin Agricultural Research Center and University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources as well as Synergistic Hawaii Agricultural Council offered updates and answered questions. TV and radio personality Howard Dicus took the stage to share his witty commentary.

Competing in the Creative division, the top-scoring coffee was produced by Olinda Organic Farm with their wet-ferment Red Catuai varietal with a score of 87.4. The top scoring coffee in the Commercial division was a wet ferment typica variety produced by Miranda's Farm of Ka'u with a score of 84.1.

District honors were awarded to Hamakua's Papaaloa Joe, Hawaii's Second Alarm Farm, Kauai Coffee Company, Hula Daddy Kona Coffee LLC, and Oahu's Hawaii Agricultural Research Center.

Visit hawaiicoffeeassoc.org for a full list of qualifying entries and scores.

HCA's Cupping Committee chair, David Gridley of Maui said, "94 coffees (88%) scored 80 and above. It's amazing how the coffees keep getting better and better. I congratulate all the coffee farmers of Hawai'i for their remarkable efforts."

The Association membership gathered to elect their new Board and Officers. The HCA's President is Chris Manfredi of Ka'u, Tom Greenwell (Vice President; Greenwell Farms), Adrian Guillen (Treasurer; Hawaiian Queen Coffee) and Donna Wooley (Secretary; Kona Coffee Council).

The new Board of Directors features broad representation spanning a variety of business disciplines including Big Island Coffee Roasters, Heavenly Hawaiian Farms, Hawaii Coffee Company, Royal Kona Visitors Center, Hawaii Coffee Growers Association, Hula Daddy Kona Coffee, Hawaii Agricultural Research Center, Kauai Coffee Company LLC, Daylight Mind Coffee Co., Maui Coffee Association and UCC-Hawaii.

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.

The Hawaii Coffee Association's mission is to represent all sectors of the Hawaii coffee industry, including growers, millers, wholesalers, roasters and retailers. The 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. Its annual conference has continued to grow, gaining international attention.

Learn more about the HCA at www.hawaiicoffeeassoc.org

Learn more about the Hawaii coffee industry at hawaiicoffeeindustry.com

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