

Greetings, from the Board of your Hawaii Avocado Association.

Dec. 2017

At our most recent meeting new officers were seated and a number of topics which could affect you, the grower were discussed and actions taken.

First, changes to the Board.

After years of relentless effort on behalf of the industry Tom Benton has retired from the office of President. Richard Huelskamp along with Tom Benton and Bruce Corker, with the late Senator Dan Inouye and his staff, finalized, and delivered a new protocol for mainland export of Sharwil avocado. Well done! Thank you Tom for all of your work over the years.

John App is our new President, Bruce Corker V.P., June Van Leynseele, Treasurer, Brooks Wakefield, Secretary, Doug Bong and Bill Wakefield are board members.

Last season, after a twenty-year pause Sharwil avocado were shipped to several mainland markets. Reception of the fruit was very positive and buyers are ready for a lot more. Two challenges lay ahead: A fruit fly free USDA certified packing facility and volume. We need a lot more cases of fruit! We shipped approximately 18,000 lbs. at \$1.45 and sold the #2s locally for \$1.15. Not bad.

A vented, screened shipping box prototype has been submitted for approval and everyone, USDA, packers, growers, like it a lot. It's fruit fly resistant and breathable. Let's keep the momentum going. If you would like to ship to the mainland next year please get in touch with the HAA. You may call Bill Wakefield at 329-9729.

Other News:

Andrea Kawabata and the good folks at UH are working on a genetic profile for Sharwil, which is essential for verifying the authenticity of fruit and scion wood grafting stock. Please save the following dates for UH CTAHR and Western Extension Risk Management Education sponsored avocado grafting workshops. There will be two sessions taught by Ty McDonald and assisted by Dr. Alyssa Cho, Andrea Kawabata, and Dr. Stuart Nakamoto on Wednesday, March 28 and Thursday, March 29, 2018. Registration and additional workshop details will be forthcoming. Also, there will be an upcoming workshop at the Extension Service, record-keeping for the export program.

HAA urges all farmers to be on the look out for Little Red Fire Ants! Notify the Department of Ag. if you think you have the ant. Tango is an effective treatment. This is a very serious threat to all fruit growers. Inspect all nursery stock and amendments carefully! Put out the peanut butter sticks.

Finally, it's time to join or renew your membership, see accompanying form. Producers/shippers \$25, supporting members \$10.

We look forward to hearing from you and have a Happy New Year!

With aloha, Doug Bong, board member iizonly2@hotmail.com