



Hawaii Agricultural Statistics Service  
National Agricultural Statistics Service  
Hawaii Department of Agriculture

# Hawaii Taro

Donald A. Martin, State Agricultural Statistician

March 22, 2002

## Production and farm revenue decrease

Hawaii taro production is estimated at 6.4 million pounds for 2001, down 9 percent from 2000. The combined farm price for poi and Chinese taro averaged 53 cents per pound in 2001, unchanged for the fourth consecutive year. Farm revenues totaled \$3.4 million, down 9 percent from 2000.

### Processed taro experiences first decline in four years

Taro for processing totaled 6.2 million pounds in 2001, down 9 percent from 2000 and the first decline in four years. A variety of factors led to the decline in production during 2001. Apple snails remained a serious problem in some areas. Taro Pocket Rot disease also continued to hamper yields, although the overall level of losses appeared to have decreased from previous years. Additional factors that limited production in certain areas were Phytophthora leaf blight and reduced water levels due to prolonged periods of dry weather.

*Continued on next page...*

### Taro varieties ..... page 2

*Special summary of harvested acreage by variety.*

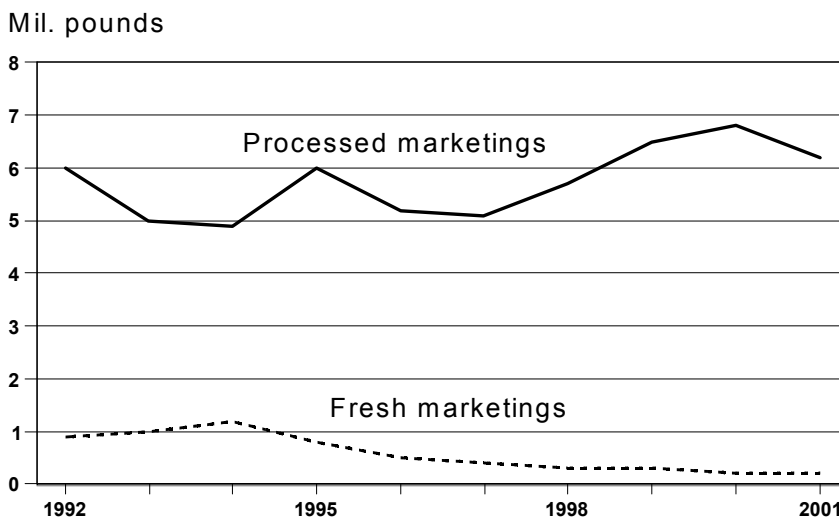
### Statistics ..... page 3

*Number of farms, acreage, marketings, price, and value by county, 1992-2001.*

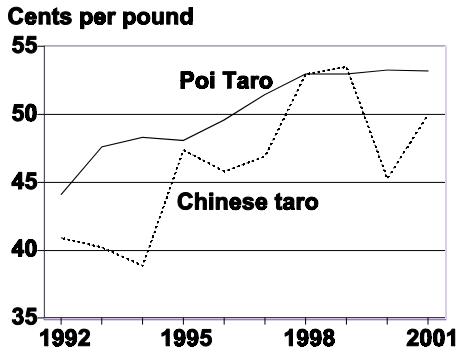
### Monthly taro for poi millings ..... page 4

*Monthly totals for 2001 and 2000.*

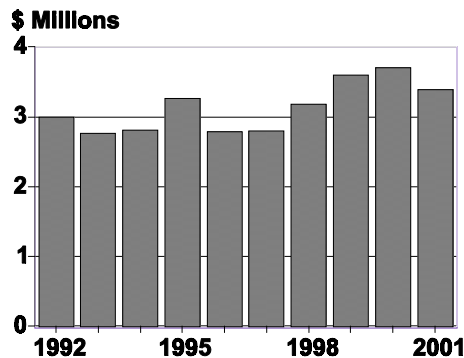
### Hawaii Taro Marketings State of Hawaii, 1991-2000



### Hawaii Taro Farm Prices



### Hawaii Taro Farm Revenues



Total acreage in poi taro is estimated at 420 acres in 2001, down 2 percent from 2000. All the reduction in acreage occurred on the Big Island which saw poi taro acreage fall from 80 acres in 2000 to 70 acres in 2001. Farm prices for poi taro averaged 53.2 cents per pound in 2001, down slightly from the record high 53.3 cents per pound average of 2000.

### Chinese taro acreage continues to decline

Statewide acreage in Chinese taro declined to 20 acres, down 50 percent from 2000 and the lowest total in 17 years. A steady decline in Chinese taro acreage started in 1996 due to persistent problems with taro root aphids, dry weather, and relatively low prices. At its peak in 1992, Chinese taro accounted for 45 percent of all taro plantings. In 2001, Chinese taro acreage accounted for 5 percent of all taro acreage.

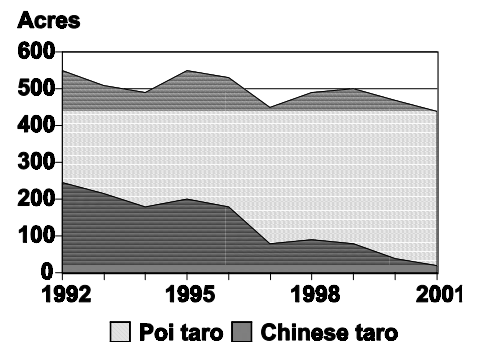
The average farm price for Chinese taro is estimated at 50.0 cents per pound in 2001, up 10 percent from

2000 but still below farm prices levels of 1998 and 1999.

### Total farm value of taro declines

The farm value of all taro marketings totaled \$3.4 million in 2001, down 9 percent from last year's record high of \$3.7 million. Most of the decline in farm revenues can be attributed to the decline in taro for poi production during 2000.

### Hawaii Taro Harvested Acreage



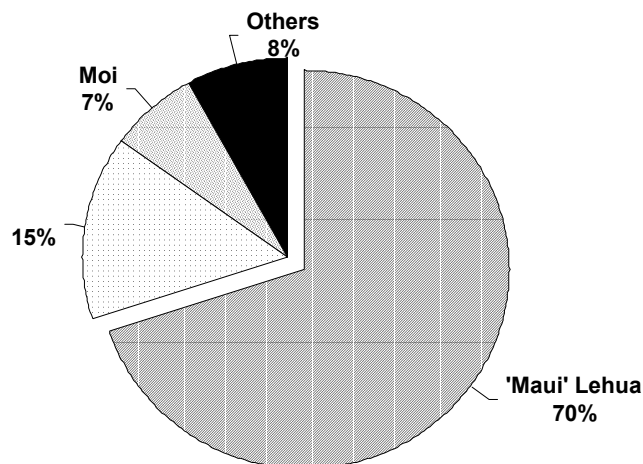
## Poi Taro Farmers Prefer 'Maui' Lehua Variety

Results from a Hawaii Agricultural Statistics Service survey revealed that 'Maui' Lehua was the most popular variety for poi taro growers. In 2001, 'Maui' Lehua accounted for 70 percent of all the poi taro that was harvested in the State. A distant second was the *Lehua Maoli* variety with 15 percent and third was *Moi* with 7 percent. All other varieties combined to account for the remaining 8 percent.

On an island basis, 'Maui' Lehua was the variety of choice for growers on Kauai and the Big Island. Maui wetland taro for poi growers, on the other hand, harvested nearly equal amounts of 'Maui' Lehua, *Lehua Maoli*, and *Moi*. Oahu growers were contrary to the rest of the State as they harvested more *Lehua Maoli* than 'Maui' Lehua during 2001.

*Bun Long*, almost exclusively grown under dryland conditions, was the primary variety of taro grown for fresh corm sales, chip making, and for leaf sales.

Distribution of Taro for Poi Harvested Acreage by Variety State of Hawaii, 2001



# TARO: Number of farms, acreage, marketings, price, and value, by islands, 1992-2001

Year	Farms	Acreage in crop <sup>1</sup>			Marketings			Farm price			Value of sales
		Poi taro	Chinese taro	Total	Fresh	Processed	Total	Poi taro	Chinese taro	All	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Acres</i>			<i>1,000 pounds</i>			<i>Cents per pound</i>			<i>\$1,000</i>
STATE											
1992	175	305	245	550	900	6,000	6,900	44.1	40.9	43.5	3,002
1993	190	295	215	510	1,000	5,000	6,000	47.6	40.2	46.0	2,760
1994	180	310	180	490	1,200	4,900	6,100	48.3	38.9	46.0	2,806
1995	190	350	200	550	800	6,000	6,800	48.1	47.4	48.0	3,264
1996	180	350	180	530	500	5,200	5,700	49.6	45.8	49.0	2,793
1997	160	370	80	450	400	5,100	5,500	51.5	46.9	51.0	2,805
1998	180	400	90	490	300	5,700	6,000	53.0	53.0	53.0	3,180
1999	190	420	80	500	300	6,500	6,800	53.0	53.5	53.0	3,604
2000	185	430	40	470	200	6,800	7,000	53.3	45.3	53.0	3,710
2001	170	420	20	440	200	6,200	6,400	53.2	50.0	53.0	3,392
HAWAII											
1992	100	45	190	235	840	770	1,610	43.1	42.6	42.8	689
1993	110	45	180	225	960	830	1,790	44.9	40.3	41.8	748
1994	105	45	170	215	1,200	760	1,960	44.8	38.9	40.3	790
1995	109	65	190	255	790	610	1,400	46.2	47.2	46.9	657
1996	100	60	170	230	490	910	1,400	56.0	44.7	49.2	689
1997	85	80	70	150	390	910	1,300	60.0	46.1	53.7	698
1998	100	90	70	160	250	850	1,100	61.0	53.0	57.0	627
1999	100	100	80	180	200	900	1,100	61.0	53.2	57.5	632
2000	85	80	40	120	200	700	900	61.6	45.3	56.2	506
2001	60	70	20	90	150	650	800	60.4	48.9	51.5	443
KAUAI											
1992	50	200	<sup>2</sup>	200	*	4,250	4,250	44.0	<sup>3</sup>	44.0	1,870
1993	52	195	<sup>2</sup>	195	*	3,330	3,330	47.0	<sup>3</sup>	47.0	1,565
1994	50	200	<sup>2</sup>	200	*	3,160	3,160	47.9	<sup>3</sup>	47.9	1,514
1995	52	210	<sup>2</sup>	210	*	4,160	4,160	48.0	<sup>3</sup>	48.0	1,997
1996	54	210	5	215	*	3,200	3,200	48.0	<sup>3</sup>	48.0	1,536
1997	50	210	5	215	*	3,300	3,300	50.1	<sup>3</sup>	50.2	1,657
1998	55	230	5	235	*	3,800	3,800	52.0	<sup>3</sup>	52.0	1,976
1999	65	230	*	230	*	4,300	4,300	52.0	<sup>3</sup>	52.0	2,236
2000	70	250	*	250	*	4,800	4,800	52.5	<sup>3</sup>	52.5	2,520
2001	70	250	*	250	*	4,300	4,300	52.5	<sup>3</sup>	52.5	2,258
MAUI/MOLOKAI/OAHU <sup>4</sup>											
1992	25	60	55	115	60	980	1,040	45.3	30.7	42.6	443
1993	28	55	35	90	40	840	880	50.8	38.9	50.8	447
1994	25	65	10	75	*	980	980	51.3	40.0	51.2	502
1995	29	75	10	85	10	1,230	1,240	49.1	64.0	49.2	610
1996	26	80	5	85	10	1,090	1,100	51.1	61.2	51.6	568
1997	25	80	5	85	10	890	900	49.5	90.0	50.0	450
1998	25	80	15	95	50	1,050	1,100	52.4	53.5	52.5	577
1999	25	90	*	90	100	1,300	1,400	52.4	54.9	52.6	736
2000	30	100	*	100	*	1,300	1,300	52.6	<sup>3</sup>	52.6	684
2001	40	100	*	100	50	1,250	1,300	53.0	57.3	53.0	691

<sup>1</sup> Survey conducted in November of each year. Does not include acreage used primarily for leaf production. <sup>2</sup> Kauai combined with Maui, Molokai, and Oahu to avoid disclosure of individual operations. <sup>3</sup> Not shown separately but accounted for in State average. <sup>4</sup> Oahu combined with Maui and Molokai to avoid disclosure of individual operations. \* = Less than 5,000 pounds or 5 acres.

## Monthly Taro for Poi Millings

### Monthly Taro for Poi Millings, State of Hawaii, 5-year average, 2000, and 2001.

Year	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
	<i>1,000 Pounds</i>												
5-year average <sup>1</sup> .....	486	459	483	444	436	443	462	478	475	491	474	509	5,640
2000 .....	565	600	630	550	575	575	530	555	500	550	530	540	6,700
<b>2001</b> .....	<b>525</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>470</b>	6,000
<u>Percent changes:</u>	<i>Percent</i>												
2001/5-year .....	108	109	109	104	120	114	109	112	108	101	93	92	106
2001/2000 .....	93	83	83	84	91	88	95	96	103	90	83	87	90

<sup>1</sup> Years: 1996-2000.