



Hawaii Taro

National
Agricultural
Statistics
Service

February 2, 2009

Taro production increases 10 percent

Hawaii's taro production is estimated at 4.4 million pounds in 2008, up 10 percent from 2007's estimate of 4.0 million pounds. The farm price increased 5 percent to an average of 62.0 cents per pound, while the value of sales increased 16 percent from 2007 to \$2.7 million.

The year began dry, but quickly turned very wet in February. Heavy rains saturate parts of the State by early February. Much of the year was a mixture of dry weather and occasional periods of heavy rains brought on by weather disturbances. Pests also continued to pose a problem for taro growers. There were reports of apple snail (*Pomacea canaliculata*) infestations and associated losses varied from light to heavy. Taro Pocket Rot (TPR), a disease that forms pockets of rotting tissue in the corm, also continued to result in some losses.

Taro for processing totaled 4.3 million pounds in 2008, up 10 percent from 2007. The bulk of all processed taro, and taro in general, is made into poi. Other processed uses for taro include a traditional Hawaiian dessert called *Kulolo* (a mixture of taro and coconut cream and/or shredded coconut meat) and chips.

Kauai County remained the State's largest producer of taro with 78 percent of the State's total. Production for Kauai during 2008 was 3.4 million pounds, up 22 percent from 2007.

■

Monthly Taro for Poi Millings

Monthly Taro for Poi Millings, State of Hawaii, 5-year average, 2007 and 2008

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
	<i>1,000 pounds</i>												
5-year average ¹	365	347	359	318	325	329	368	390	387	422	399	431	4,440
2007	337	320	301	266	282	277	322	327	337	417	342	372	3,900
2008 ²	330	290	320	335	320	320	425	445	380	378	377	380	4,300
<u>Percent Changes:</u>	<i>Percent</i>												
2008/5-year	90	84	89	105	98	97	115	114	98	90	94	88	97
2008/2007	98	91	106	126	113	116	132	136	113	91	110	102	110

¹ Years: 2003-2007

² Revised

Hawaii Taro Statistics

TARO: Number of farms, acreage, marketing, price, and value, by counties, 2004-2008

Year	Farms	Acreage in crop ^{1/}			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											
2004	130	360	10	370	100	5,100	5,200	54.0	53.8	54.0	2,808
2005	110	350	10	360	100	4,200	4,300	54.0	54.0	54.0	2,322
2006	105	360	20	380	100	4,400	4,500	56.8	65.5	57.0	2,565
2007	105	355	25	380	100	3,900	4,000	59.2	50.5	59.0	2,360
2008	105	370	20	390	100	4,300	4,400	62.0	61.5	62.0	2,728
Counties:											
Hawaii											
2004	30	50	10	60	100	400	500	60.0	53.1	57.5	288
2005	30	40	10	50	60	240	300	57.6	50.0	56.1	168
2006	25	55	10	65	70	220	290	61.0	65.5	62.1	180
2007	25	50	10	60	70	220	290	62.0	52.4	59.7	173
2008	25	45	5	50	30	160	190	65.0	65.0	65.0	124
Honolulu/Maui ^{2/}											
2004	35	75	*	75	*	800	800	55.1	^{3/}	55.1	441
2005	30	75	*	75	40	860	900	56.6	60.0	56.8	511
2006	35	80	10	90	30	880	910	62.5	65.5	62.6	570
2007	35	55	15	70	30	880	910	63.4	46.0	61.9	563
2008	35	75	10	85	50	740	790	70.5	60.0	69.8	552
Kauai											
2004	65	235	*	235	*	3,900	3,900	53.3	^{3/}	53.3	2,079
2005	50	235	*	235	*	3,100	3,100	53.0	^{3/}	53.0	1,643
2006	45	225	*	225	*	3,300	3,300	55.0	^{3/}	55.0	1,815
2007	45	250	*	250	*	2,800	2,800	58.0	^{3/}	58.0	1,624
2008	45	250	5	255	20	3,400	3,420	60.0	^{3/}	60.0	2,052

^{1/} Survey conducted in November of each year. Does not include acreage used primarily for leaf production. ^{2/} County of Honolulu combined with Maui to avoid disclosure of individual operations. ^{3/} Not shown separately, but accounted for in State average. *=Less than 5,000 pounds or 5 acres.