

VOLCANO ISLAND HONEY COMPANY

A Taste of the Magic of Hawaii®

This is our 13th Annual Newsletter - November 2007

Recently, as I was spreading some of our honey on toast, I suddenly thought with amazement how many people in different parts of the world have experienced this wonderful honey that I myself enjoy so much. We are deeply grateful for all the support we have received from our loyal customers for these many years.

Family: Turning 65 has brought with it the predictable examination of my life with the questions “Who am I?” and “What am I doing?” Shaina, my youngest, has just announced that her son Hayden and her daughter Sierra will soon have another sibling playmate. Kristin, my oldest, is considering a teaching position in Amsterdam. Her boys Kulan and Hokua may be ready for an adventure. Candice and I hope to step back a bit from the day to day operations of the business, focus more on our personal growth and slow down.

Staff: This year we have welcomed Andrea Dean as our Business Manager, Leilani Gibson and Kerri Ambrosio as Administrative Assistants, and Donelle Wiles-Rodriguez as an apprentice beekeeper. The rest of our team is still here- Beekeepers: Jerry, Nicole, Stbon and the Production Team: Sunee, Doris, Kimberly and Lisa.

Company: Our continuing deep commitment to a “triple bottom line” (social, environmental, financial) business model has prompted us to work with a professional facilitator to help us deepen in these areas. To save paper, we are now sending our newsletter by email (please send your email address to continue receiving our newsletter and notice of holiday specials.) For the first time, we are offering a new product, Kagoshima First Flush- Japanese green tea, an award-winning tea that we can recommend as having the high quality that you have come to expect from us. We have expanded our farm visit schedule and hope to welcome more of you on tours of our farm.

Bees: Bee colonies around the world are in crisis due to Colony Collapse Disorder and the Varroa mite. Varroa has devastated feral and commercial bees on the U.S. mainland, Europe and Asia and was found for the first time on Oahu in April. The Big Island is still free of these diseases. We are constantly improving our beekeeping and intend that our organic, healthy methods will protect our bees.

Puako Forest: The threat of the proposed golf course (that has not yet broken ground), was trumped last week by a devastating fire that burned about 50% of the forest. We expect this will significantly affect production for next year. With the landowner open to an offer to purchase, we are actively seeking a “conservation buyer” – a person or group that can benefit from large tax benefits while proactively protecting the environment by preserving this unique, irreplaceable forest. Once the forest is protected by a conservation easement we can implement our forest stewardship plan. We'd love to hear from you if you know someone who might be interested in being a conservation buyer. With the disappearance of bee colonies, it is imperative to protect this important bee habitat.

Honey: After our 2006 production was down by 10,000 pounds, our hopes were high for this year, but our production was 9,000 pounds short of our goal to be able to adequately supply our customer base. With such high quality beekeeping techniques, and strong, healthy colonies of bees, it makes us wonder if we are seeing the effects of global climate change.

May this Holiday Season bring peace in your heart, in your family and in the world.

Aloha,

Richard


Richard Spiegel and Ohana (Family)
Beekeepers & Gatherers of Fine Honey



For this year's Holiday Special, new products and ordering deadlines please see the Order Form on the reverse side.

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