

ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

The Taste: CTAHR Celebrates Eight Delicious Years

From the searing steaks to the sizzling Kona weather, the 2003 Taste of the Hawaiian Range was a hot ticket. A capacity crowd gathered at the Hapuna Beach Prince Hotel to enjoy Hawai'i's finest forage-fed meats and the Big Island's freshest produce expertly prepared by talented island chefs, including three winners of the prestigious James Beard Award. CTAHR's annual celebration of Hawai'i agriculture and cuisine warmed the hearts and stomachs of hundreds of Big Island residents and welcomed visitors from throughout the islands, the mainland, and Japan.

The Taste, a brainchild of CTAHR's Glen Fukumoto, Michael DuPonte, Burt Smith (now retired), and Milton Yamasaki, began in 1996 as a companion event to the Cooperative Extension Service's Mealani Forage Field Day. From its humble beginnings at Kahilu Town Hall in Waimea, the Taste has grown to become one of Hawai'i's premier food shows. The Taste moved in 2003 to the Kohala coast, where 34 chefs, 28 vendors and exhibitors, and 1,700 well-fed participants gathered to share Hawai'i's diverse and delicious harvest. The event's success reflected the generosity of the many people and organizations who volunteered and donated their time, goods, and skills.

The setting was new, but the event remained true to its field day roots, promoting the islands' meats, including beef, pork, mutton, lamb, chicken, goat, bison, and elk. Hawai'i meats benefit both producers and consumers. By finishing cattle locally, ranchers are able to earn added profits and maintain open space for people and wildlife. By eating locally grown animal products, consumers support Hawai'i agriculture and lessen our dependence on imported food.

Whether you're feeling nostalgia for the 2003 Taste of the Hawaiian Range or regretting having missed it, we hope to see you—and your appetite—next year.

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Photos: Glen Fukumoto

Attendees mingle with busy food preparers at the 2003 Taste of the Hawaiian Range, held at the Hapuna Beach Prince Hotel on the Big Island's Kohala coast.