

## ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

*Creating palatable,  
exportable, affordable  
products from taro*

# Adding Value to Taro



**P**erhaps we can think of poi as the first “value-added” product from taro. Today, people are searching for other value-added products that can be made from the staple. If taro is to contribute significantly to the state’s economy, food producers and researchers must find ways to use it that will be palatable, exportable, and affordable. Alvin Huang, associate researcher in CTAHR’s Department of Human Nutrition, Food and Animal Science, devotes much of his time to the search and to examination of taro’s nutritional and chemical properties. Already, Huang has assisted in the development of the Maui Taro Burger, a product that is selling well in California and can be purchased locally at Zippy’s and Nieman Marcus. Soon to be on the market is

Taro Dream, a taro-banana puree that appears to be highly digestible. Honolulu Poi Company, working in cooperation with Huang, sells “Taro Pan,” a wheat roll filled with sweetened poi. Down the road, Huang and his CTAHR students are exploring the possibility of taro yogurt, taro fries, and taro-based sauce. Cooperation between CTAHR and Hawaii food producers should lead to the creation not only of many more value-added products from taro but also broader, more lucrative markets for the growers.

