

The Hawaiian Range Tastes Good!

Necessity is the mother of invention, it is said. The truth of that old saw is amply demonstrated in the Mealani Forage Field Day and Taste of the Hawaiian Range food show. An invention of CTAHR's Big Island extension specialist Burt Smith, extension agents Glen Fukumoto and Mike DuPonte, and research farm manager Milton Yamasaki, the event grew out of the necessity to convince *consumers* that range-fed beef can be tasty and to convince *producers* that there is a Hawaii market for their range-fed beef. Both goals have been met with rousing success. From 300 attendees at its start in 1996, the festival rapidly grew to 1500, one of the hottest tickets on the Big Island. Chefs now clamor to be featured. Beef producers on the Big Island have seen their markets grow, not only in supermarkets, but also in public schools and military commissaries. A major coup occurred this summer when Gaspar Tatarian, an Argentinian chef from New York, was so impressed with Hawaiian beef that he featured it in his restaurant. His highly discriminating Argentine clientele pronounced the Hawaii product *ono* (well, the Spanish equivalent), on a par with Argentine beef—the ultimate compliment. Without the vision and efforts of CTAHR's team serving Hawaii's beef cattle industry, the quality and value of Hawaiian beef would still be an unprofitable secret.



A Big Island livestock producer shows his wares.

Without CTAHR's vision and efforts, the quality and value of Hawaiian beef would still be an unprofitable secret.



Event goers were treated to a ranch-size array of "island fresh," locally produced products.

