



Agribusiness Development Corporation

Ag Notes

JULY 2020 NEWSLETTER

ADC farmers on Kauai

For many years, Kalani'umi Martin's family grew taro in the Kekaha area of Kauai when he had thoughts of expanding the family's farming business.

"I wanted to get into the tropical fruit business," said the 42-year-old Native Hawaiian farmer, who notes the microclimate of the west side of Kauai creates optimal conditions to raise that type of local crop.

"Kekaha is the best place to grow mango," Martin said. "Flat land, endless sunshine makes it ideal to grow mangoes and other tropical fruit out here."

Since leasing five acres of land on Kauai from the State Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) four years ago, Martin has raised his mango orchard, along with other tropical fruit of avocado, guava and lilikoi.

"Kekaha has ideal growing conditions, it has the potential to be the breadbasket of Kauai," said ADC executive director James Nakatani.

Martin has already created a high-density mango tree orchard on his leased parcel. Most mango farms grow approximately 50 trees per acre, but Martin maximizes usage of the land by raising 600 trees per acre using a fairly new planting and pruning technique from India.

"It's turned out fairly well so far," he said.

With the recent economic impacts of COVID-19, he hopes there's a

"greater appreciation" by the public and consumers of what local farmers produce. There has also been his recent share of challenges at his farming operations; some of it COVID-19 related, others dealing with Mother Nature.

"We had huge rains in March, where we lost 30 avocado trees," Martin said. "Hopefully, I can move forward next year with the next harvest."

He's considering a business venture in creating processed soda and other drinks using the cultivated mango as beverage syrup. And he wants to expand the acreage of his planting operation.

Martin, who's lived most of his life on Kauai, added: "To be able to farm in the place I live and love is all I can ask for. Kekaha is a beautiful place to be."

To learn more about ADC and our work in the community, go to our website at www.hdoa.hawaii.gov/adc.

Right: Martin and Mike Faye inspect white pirie mango trees



Above: Ripening rapozo mango on Kalaniumi Martin's farm on Agribusiness Development Corp. property in Kekaha.



Above: Field of keitt mango trees

ADC Continues to Restore Whitmore Farmland

This summer, ADC continues its work in removing abandoned vehicles left on-site in its ongoing effort to restore the 230-acre parcel Whitmore property for operational use. These and several security improvements have been made in response to complaints by adjacent neighbors regarding on-site criminal activity and vandalism.

A tow company was hired in early June and since has already removed over 100 abandoned vehicles from the area. Before the vehicles were hauled away, the owner of each vehicle needed to be identified and notified as required by law.

In the coming months, efforts will be made to clear brush, trash, and other debris from the area to prepare it for agricultural production. If you observe any suspicious activity on our property, please call 911 or contact ADC Property Manager Lyle Roe by contacting him at (808) 622-6696 or lyle.t.roe@hawaii.gov.

Thank you for your understanding with the ongoing situation as ADC works to continue making the site safer and care for our aina.

Right: Tow company Highway Response was recently contracted to clear away abandoned vehicles on ADC property in Whitmore. Since June 11 crews have so far removed over 100 vehicles from the area.



Please Continue to Support Our Local Farmers!

Our local farmers have been greatly affected by the recent COVID-19 pandemic that has impacted restaurants and other businesses that utilize their products.

Please continue to buy their produce and other locally-raised items at your local grocery store, area farmer's market and even online!

Left: Lettuce grown indoors at Mari's Gardens in Mililani