
Symposium looks at saving, restoring seed

By Big Island Weekly

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Seed is the foundation of a thriving local agricultural economy and is essential to the development of Hawai'i's food production, future sustainability, and self-reliance. Hawai'i currently imports nearly 90 percent of its food and 99 percent of its seed, creating a vulnerable and dependent agricultural economy in the state.

Restoring and revitalizing the local seed industry is the goal of the Hua Ka Hua-Restore Our Seed Symposium on April 17 and 18 at the Outrigger Keauhou Beach Resort in Kona. Farmers, gardeners, and seed experts from around the state and Mainland will share ways to grow, select, and save high quality seeds for both home and market during the symposium.

The symposium includes a seed swap sponsored by Regeneration Botanical Garden of Kaua'i, and information booths are available for a nominal fee to conference participants.

A free public lecture will precede the symposium from 5:30-7 p.m. Friday, April 16, at the resort. "The Story of Seed: Wild, Domesticated, Bred, and Engineered-Where Did We Begin and Where Might We Go?" will be presented by Dillon and Morton.

Symposium planners are surveying potential participants about their interest and knowledge of seed growing and saving. The survey initially elicited 106 statewide responses. Visit <http://kohalacenter.org/seedsymposium/assessment.html> by March 1 to participate in the survey.

Registration is \$100 by March 15; \$150 after March 15 (cost includes buffet lunch for both days). To register, go to <http://www.kohalacenter.org/seedsymposium/registration.html>. The Outrigger Keauhou Beach Resort is offering a special symposium room rate.

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