



National Agricultural Statistics Service

Hawaii Agricultural Statistics
Hawaii Department of Agriculture

Hawaii Taro Millings

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May 4, 2004

Wet weather hampers taro production

The Hawaii Agricultural Statistics estimates poi millers utilized 1.2 million pounds of taro during the first quarter of 2004, down 17 percent from the previous quarter but 4 percent higher than a year ago. Taro for poi millings started 2004 with 390,000 pounds in January, down 22 percent from the previous month. Taro for poi millings decreased another 5 percent in February to 370,000 pounds before closing the first quarter with an increase to 420,000 pounds in March.

Weather conditions have played a major role in taro production so far this year. The National Weather Service has described the current wet season (October 2003-April 2004), or *ho'oilo*, as the most significant since the 1996-97 edition. Nearly the entire season has been characterized by wet weather. The unsettled weather that ended 2003 continued into 2004. Three cold fronts passed through the State during the first half of January bring

moderate to heavy showers in some areas. The ground, already saturated by previous showers, resulted in flash floods and ponding. A series of strong upper-level lows then brought additional showers, sometimes very heavy, at the end of the month. February was relatively dry until the end of the month when a Kona low produced a major winter storm that pelted the State with heavy showers, high surf, strong winds, and blizzard conditions at the higher elevations. The storm conditions extended into March and caused some streams to overflow. The quarter ended with three shear lines moving through the State, each producing another round of showers. With the ground saturated from weeks of wet weather, flooding was a common occurrence. ■

Monthly Taro for Poi Millings, State of Hawaii, 5-year average, 2003, and 2004.

Year	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
<i>1,000 Pounds</i>													
5-year average ¹	486	471	495	451	473	476	498	517	497	502	480	503	5,850
2003	404	362	365	326	306	317	386	395	413	469	456	501	4,700
2004	390	370	420										
<i>Percent</i>													
<u>Percent changes:</u>													
2004/5-year	80	78	85										
2004/2003	97	102	115										

¹ Years: 1999-2003.

Monthly Taro for Poi Millings
State of Hawaii
2003, 2004, and 5-year Averages

