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**FIVE-COURSE FOOD SUSTAINABILITY**

By: Catherine Tarleton, writer

Sam Choy’s Kai Lanai host 2014 Hawai‘i Island Ranchers Dinner

Where does food sustainability start? For Kamehameha Schools Land Assets Division (LAD) on Hawai‘i island, it begins with the ‘āina, and those rich resources stewarded by farmers and ranchers for generations. Bringing the concept full circle brings food to the table, and into the restaurant kitchens of some of Hawai‘i’s best chefs — to create and sustain demand for delicious, locally grown products that in turn support the food producers who cultivate Kamehameha Schools’ lands.

At the inaugural Hawai‘i Island Ranchers Dinner, February 28 at Sam Choy’s Kai Lanai, diners savored the concept of sustainability along with their succulent grass-fed island beef, fresh greens, local chocolate and Kona Coffee. Hosted by Chef Sam Choy and prepared by Executive Chef Scott Hiraishi, who developed the concept, the five-course, plated dinner with wine pairings showcased creative preparations of local foods — most from within 50 miles of the restaurant, which itself sits on KS land in Keauhou.

The lively, sold-out event was attended by 180 guests, who enjoyed the interaction with farmers, ranchers, restaurateurs, chefs, visitor industry representatives, media guest, Kamehameha Schools’ representatives and others, for a broader perspective on the interwoven partnerships required for true sustainability. After a year’s worth of tenderloin slice on individual hot stones, beef tongue, oxtail soup, guava sorbet, slow braised ribs and more, the pièce de résistance was a dessert of chocolate macaron “cow pie,” complete with edible flowers and whimsical “flies.” Each guest also received a custom “agriculture bag” to take home, which included a sampling of ingredients used in the menu, recipes, snacks and more.

“It is through partnerships that we have found the most success,” said Hiraishi. “We are passionate about showcasing local products and giving our diners the best ‘farm to table’ experience possible. In my tenure as an Executive Chef, I have grown a new respect for passionate about showcasing local products and giving our diners the best ‘farm to table’ experience possible. In my tenure as an Executive Chef, I have grown a new respect for ranchers and farmers. That is the inspiration for the Ranchers Dinner, to translate in my cooking the same care that they put into the growing of their products.”

Hiraishi’s creative menu featured these food producers: Hawai‘i Lowline Cattle Company, Kula Foods, Hawai‘i Beef Producers, Kona Moringa, Sunshower Farms, Hamakua Mushrooms, Living Aquaponics Farm, Hawaii Farms, Hawaiian Ulu Company, Tropical Dreams Ice Cream, Original Hawaiian Chocolate and UCC Ueshima Coffee Company, with beverages from Onaka Cowboy Coffee, Mauna Kea Tea and Young’s Market Company. Major sponsors included Kamehameha Schools, Big Island Visitors Bureau, State of Hawai‘i Department of Agriculture.

The 2014 Hawai‘i Island Ranchers Dinner was a collaborative project of Kamehameha Schools, The Hawai‘i State Department of Agriculture and Sam Choy’s Kai Lanai. Future “farm to table” events are in the planning stages — stay tuned!
Featured Farm: Hawaii Lowline Cattle Company

By: Jessika Garcia

“Lowline beef is superior in quality, with excellent taste, texture and tenderness,” says Rick Sakata, co-owner of HLCC. Chef Vann of Hiuli Sue’s at Mauna Lani and The Fish & The Hog Market Café testifies to that by saying, “I find Hawaii Lowline beef to be dense in beef flavour, tender and very buttery because the marbling is so good.”

Hawaii Lowline’s beef is sold in whole locally to restaurants. Chefs are invited out to the field to hand pick their animals.

“I like the idea of using the entire carcass as it pays respect to the animal and helps the rancher,” said Chef Fred DeAngelo of Ola Turtle Bay and The Grove in Kailua. “My intention is for our guests to enjoy beef raised in Hawai‘i. I’m all for our grass-fed ranchers who feed their animals the way nature intended.”

HLCC beef can be enjoyed at D.K. Steak House, Sanssei Seafood Restaurant & Sushi Bar, Ola at Turtle Bay, The Grove in Kailua as well as at Huli Springs Country Farms’ Richard Ha and Toby Taniguchi of KTA Super Stores – home of the Mountain Apple brand, known for its Hawai‘i-sourced products.

In the know: The Grass is Greener

Hawaii’s grass fed beef has distinctive health benefits compared to the imported grain fed beef we get from feed lots on the mainland. The grass will be greener on both sides of the imported grain fed beef we get from feed lots on the mainland. The grass will be greener on both sides of the imported grain fed beef we get from feed lots on the mainland. The grass will be greener on both sides of the imported grain fed beef we get from feed lots on the mainland.

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“Making the decision was difficult, but I’m really happy with the three that ended up on top,” said Ed Kenney, chosen as a judge specifically for his proven commitment to serve locally-sourced food in his successful farm-to-table restaurant.

“What all three of these winners brought was the passion to push the boundaries. In this setting, they’ve been given the opportunities to test the waters and push a little bit further than they might not have been able to, otherwise,” he said.

Congratulations to:

• First Place $25,000: Holoholo General Store – Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) business producing vegetables in the cabbage family such as kale, broccoli raie and broccoli. Specialty fruit trees, mainly fig trees, will also be part of the 6-acre Pa‘ala‘a, O‘ahu farm.

• Second Place $15,000: Kaunāmano Farms – Organic and innovative farming with an inclusive, systems-based approach to agriculture. Located in Umauma, roughly 10 percent of the land will be dedicated to an on-farm food program for Berkshire pigs and Jidori chickens. Organic papaya, banana, avocado, breadfruit and seasonal vegetables will be grown to supplement their diet. Kaunāmano Farms will be nearly 100 percent sustainable.

• Third Place $10,000: Mapulehu Farms – Organic mango farm offering organic mango farms tours to teach the community about Hawaiian-based farming practices and traditional varieties native to Mapulehu, Moloka‘i. Coconut, banana, taro and sweet potato will also be added to the 43-acre mango orchard.

To receive Ka Mahi’ai newsletter electronically, please email us at land@ksbe.edu.
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Grass Fed Beef is

80% less fat
10x vitamin A
30% less cholesterol
4x vitamin E

Grass fed vs. Grain fed

Source: 2008 study by the Agricultural and Life Science department at the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

In an eight month collaborative effort, Kamehameha Schools and the Ke Ali’i Pauahi Foundation joined resources to create Mahi’ai Match-Up, Hawaii’s first agricultural business plan contest in which all winners receive seed money from Ke Ali’i Pauahi Foundation and five years of waived rent from Kamehameha Schools.

Literally translating to “Farmer Match-up”, Mahi’ai Match-Up – initiated in June 2013 – was intended to connect experienced farmers with some of the trust’s most fertile untamed lands helping Kamehameha achieve goal one in its Strategic Agricultural Plan of increasing food production for the local market.

“Before the contest, finding experienced farmers with a desire to grow food for Hawai’i was more difficult than you’d think,” said Ka’eo Duarte, Strategic Initiatives director for West Hawai’i. “We’re already looking forward to next year’s contest to help us find even more people interested in partnering with us.”

Designed to give preference to the most innovative, dependable business plans that incorporate organic practices, Mahi’ai Match-Up proved successful in producing three organic farming operations well positioned to grow food for local consumers.

Responsible for reviewing business plans were five judges representing a cross-section of Hawai’i’s agricultural, restaurant, retail and sustainable business communities. The panel included Kamehameha Schools’ former CEO Dee Jay Mailer, Ed Kenney of Town restaurant, Kyle Datta of Ulupono Initiative, Hamakua Springs Country Farms’ Richard Ha and Toby Taniguchi of KTA Super Stores – home of the Mountain Apple brand, known for its Hawai’i-sourced products.

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**USDA Livestock, Poultry & Grain Mkt News**

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