



A 'TASTE'-Y FIRST FOR FOOD MANUFACTURING LOVERS

BY KYLE GALDEIRA

"It's one thing to create a business, but to succeed and have a second generation take over, I think the success rate is less than 10 percent... When you involve the third generation taking over, the success rate falls to about 2 percent. For companies to be around that long is amazing."

—BYRON GOO

In what can be best described as the "Academy Awards" of the state's food manufacturing industry, the Hawaii Food Manufacturers Association (HFMA) presents the first-ever Taste Awards to honor many of the outstanding companies that call the Islands home.

Co-sponsored by the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, the awards will recognize individuals, companies and products that have demonstrated exceptional performance, innovation and contribution to the manufacturing industry and to the community.

The Taste Awards gala reception will be held from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 14, at the newly renovated Pomaika'i Ballrooms at Dole Cannery. The event will feature a "Battle of the Chefs" during which celebrity chefs will create signature dishes from locally manufactured products. Event attendees will be treated to several unique dishes preceding a formal dinner reception, which will be followed by the highly

anticipated awards ceremony. Numerous locally produced food and beverage selections will be showcased throughout the evening's festivities.

"In order to get to the point at which we are in the industry, people have given their blood, sweat and tears to grow their businesses and gain that success," says Byron Goo, president of the HFMA board of directors. "What Taste is about is providing a platform to tell the stories about our members and what went into creating their businesses or new products. We have several members this year celebrating a 50th-or-greater anniversary, and the odds of that are really stacked against them."

Goo explains that the following nominees across multiple categories are celebrating more than 50 years in business: HFM Foodservice, formerly Hawaii Flour Mills (50 years); Hawaiian Host Chocolates (54 years); Hawaiian Sun (62 years), Aloha Tofu (64 years); Aloha Shoyu (68 years); Hawaii Candy (81 years); and Maui Soda & Ice Works, dba Roselani Ice

Cream (126 years).

"It's one thing to create a business, but to succeed and have a second generation take over, I think the success rate is less than 10 percent," Goo explains. "When you involve the third generation taking over, the success rate falls to about 2 percent. For companies to be around that long is amazing and we have a lot of those legacy members."

Awards will be presented in nine categories, including: Governor's Lifetime Achievement Award — HFMA's most prestigious award given to a company or individual based on leadership and inspiration, lasting contributions and distinguished service performed while working in the industry; INNOVATE Hawaii's Manufacturer of the Year, Large-Company and Small-Company categories; Startup Manufacturer of the Year for companies less than 3 years old; Product of the Year; Advocate of the Year; Supplier of the Year; Community Service Award; and the In-

novative Marketing Award.

"We believe food manufacturing will be one of our state's key economic drivers for decades to come," says Richard Lim, director of the State of Hawaii's Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism. "Hawaii's food manufacturers will invest millions of dollars over the coming years into their businesses. So we want to both congratulate and thank HFMA, its members and this year's finalists for their contributions to our state's economy."



SATURDAY, JUNE 14,
POMAIIKA'I BALLROOMS,
DOLE CANNERY
6:30 - 9:30 P.M.



Schools. "We're studying options and possible partnerships with entities like the HFMA to determine how we can make a greater contribution to the industry that support the creation of a more sustainable Hawaii."

According to Goo, Kamehameha Schools utilized data from cluster analysis studies to determine that food manufacturing "is No. 1 as far

as growth and sustainability. If that study wasn't done, then the whole concept of community building ... would have never happened."

The efforts of local businesses, including food manufacturers, and Kamehameha Schools mesh at the revamped "Our Kaka'ako" development amidst one of the state's booming urban cores. Salt at Our Kaka'ako is designed with green

According to data compiled by the state's Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism, the food industry represents the largest manufacturing sector that utilizes local products and generates more than \$900 million in revenue annually for Hawaii's economy.

space and open-air concepts and will offer a diverse mix of local retailers and restaurateurs — an ideal launching pad for current and prospective HFMA members.

"Kaka'ako definitely is and will continue to be a hub for innovation in the food industry," Quintiliani says. "We also are looking at our landholdings in Kapalama, where there is space for manufacturing facilities to be located in close prox-

imity to distributors, retailers and restaurants. This location is a natural focal point for the co-location of different aspects of the food industry.

"Partnerships in this industry can only promote our economy, make it sustainable and reduce our dependency on imported food."

As a means of recognizing the aforementioned local businesses and their cohorts, the HFMA is presenting the inaugural Taste

Awards this week (see accompanying story on this page) to honor outstanding companies within the local industry. Co-sponsored by the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, the awards will recognize individuals, companies and products that have demonstrated exceptional performance, innovation and contribution to the manufacturing industry and the community.

"We've never had any kind of mechanism to honor the best of the best and explain what people are doing on an everyday basis while giving them recognition," says Goo of the event.

Tickets and sponsorships for the Taste Awards are still available via www.FoodsOfHawaii.com or by calling 422-4362. Proceeds from the event will benefit the Kapiolani Community College Culinary Arts Program.