

KAUAI BUSINESS REPORT

Kauai Business Report
Kauai Publishing Company
 P.O. Box 231
 Lihue, Kauai, HI 96766-0231

PRESORTED STANDARD
 U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
 LIHUE, HI
 PERMIT NO. 58

December 2005 • Volume 11 Issue 12



Jon Letman / Kauai Business Report

Dr. Brian Natrass and **Mary Altomare** of *Sustainability Partners, Inc.* talk with **Jody Kjeldsen**, Executive Director of the *Poipu Beach Resort Association*, after their presentation at the *Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort & Spa*.

Kauai at the crossroads

An evening with Dr. Brian Natrass

Jon Letman

SPECIAL TO KAUAI BUSINESS REPORT

What does a Canadian ski resort with 7,000-foot-high peaks have in common with Kauai? Quite a lot, according to Dr. Brian Natrass, a managing partner with Sustainability Partners, Inc., a British Columbia-Washington State-based consultancy.

Speaking recently at the Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort & Spa, Dr. Natrass told a standing-room-only crowd that Kauai, like Whistler-Blackcomb mountain resort 75 miles north of Vancouver, with its visitor-based economy and fragile environment, has a vested interest in adopting sustainable business and community practices.

Natrass and his wife, Mary Altomare, have written three books on sustainability and consulted for

See **Crossroads**, Page 10

Bringing a fresh Christmas and a crispy New Year

Jon Letman

SPECIAL TO KAUAI BUSINESS REPORT

A year-end grocery list on Kauai has never been quite like one on the mainland. Sure, there's the turkey and ham, the cranberries and yams, walnuts, pumpkin pie and sparkling cider. But other foods that celebrate the end of one year and start of the next reflect Hawaii's Asian heritage.

Consumers in Hawaii, long used to calling spinach *horenso* and eggplant *nasu*, have mostly grown up eating Japanese foods like *namasu*, *mochi* and *maki zushi* and during December they are able to choose from numerous other foods less common in most of the country.

Asian root vegetables like *hasu* (lotus), *gobo* (burdock) and *daikon* (literally "large root") radish are regularly stocked in produce sections across Kauai, but in the final days of the year, other more obscure vegetables such as *araimo* or *dasheen* (a form of small Japanese taro) and *mizuna*, a mild leafy green vegetable, are imported and used for Japanese New Year's foods like *ozoni* soup, *nishime* and intricately prepared dishes called *oseichi ryori*.

From the corporately owned Safeway in Kapa'a to smaller grocery stores like Sueoka's in Koloa and Kojima's in Kapa'a to Big Save Markets all over the island, the majority of New Year's produce is delivered by Esaki's Produce based in Kapa'a.

As the largest produce supplier on Kauai, and fourth largest in the state, the 82-year-old Esaki's, which started as a farm in Moloa'a, today supplies most food retailers as well as the major



Dennis Fujimoto / Kauai Business Report

Earl Kashiwagi of *Esaki's Produce* shows off some *hasu*, or lotus root, that is one of the delicacies used in the preparation of New Year foods. In the background, the staff of *Esaki's* show off more produce items that are sought after during the New Year celebrations.

hotels on Kauai with perishable goods delivered daily by air freight.

Esaki's general manager Earl Kashiwagi recently explained where some year-end favorites come from.

"During the holidays we bring in everything from nuts to soup," Kashiwagi said. "We bring over lau lau, roast

pork and fresh kau yuk buns (like a rolled manapua) direct from Chinatown in Honolulu as well as holiday nuts — pecans, walnuts, almonds and daily produce."

Kashiwagi explained that gobo, the crisp, crunchy brown root of the burdock, is also a popular item. See **NEW YEAR**, Page 27



New book
 Dee Kawahara presents copies of a new book by his wife Dawn published here on Kauai.

Page 2



ACS: Quit smoking
 The Great American Smokeout is part of the American Cancer Society's anti-smoking efforts.

Page 16



Office opens
 H&R Block is expanding its officenetwork including a new office in Kapa'a.

Page 3



Gallery shots
 Wade Lord, Kukui Grove Center manager, gives away goodies at the center's recent parade.

Page 14