

Featured Farmers: Milton Agader and Aquilino Medrano

Twin Bridge, Waialua, O'ahu

Area under production: 300 acres, with 1 acre organic and we plan to further expand organic production

Years farming in Hawaii: 1994-2000, part time after leaving sugar and working full time with Dole's diversified operation. 10 years full time.

Crops: asparagus, tomatoes, beans, peppers, okra, beans, lettuce, etc. Our organic crops are tomatoes and beans. Corn, sunflowers, and potatoes are contract grown. Asparagus production was initiated with a WSARE grant project with HARC.

Fertility management practices: commercial, synthetic, and OMRI listed pesticides; composting (20-30 tons) and cover crops (sunflower, oats, sunnhemp).

Pest Management: scouting, traps, commercial, synthetic and OMRI listed pesticides, compost and cover crops.



Milton & Lavina Agader



What Sustainability Means to You: Keeping 18 employees full time. Crop diversity, value adding, stewardship of the land, using only inputs needed and avoiding excess applications, financial security. Land tenure is a big issue. The State should trade or purchase land to provide long term leases at affordable rates.

How did the next generation successfully integrate into the family farm? My son has maintained interest by always having the farm here to come back to. Land tenure is a concern, whether he will have anything to come back to after his military service. Our lease is currently year to year.

How do you price your products? We look at the going rate, at the competition, talk to wholesalers, and negotiate with produce folks.

How do you promote your products? Through farm visits by buyers and by engaging customers at farmer markets (Waialua and Haleiwa). We are also frequently approached by media such as TV and Honolulu magazine.

How do you adapt your production to meet the needs of clients? Through our personal interaction with consumers at farmers markets and our willingness to try any suggestion from buyers.

Where do you market your products? At open markets, to wholesalers, to Whole Foods, and to restaurants. The bulk of our sales go to wholesalers and to Whole Foods.

How many growers do you work with? 18 employees and we intend to expand.

What does the future look like for your farm? Strong. We maintain 300 acres and have opportunities to diversify crops and to include value adding through a year to year lease at a Certified kitchen.

Mahalo nui loa to Milton Agader for this interview.

Photos: Hawaii Dept. of Agriculture and Milton Agader

HOT TIP from Twin Bridge

Diversify to survive. We are continuously looking for opportunities to diversify. It's hard to survive being one dimensional, especially employing 18 full time employees.



Potato Plots

