

VOLCANO ISLAND HONEY COMPANY

A Taste of the Magic of Hawaii®

This is our 14th Annual Newsletter - December 2008

I really can not believe that I am sitting here writing the 2008 newsletter! Didn't I just do this? Has a whole year gone by?

Bees: The bees are central to our business as well as our lives. Do you know that 1/3 of all the food you eat is pollinated by bees? We feel that the bees are the "canary in the coal mine" of the condition of our global environment. Their decimation and disappearance (Colony Collapse Disorder) is indicative of the many errors of our ways- from industrial agricultural practices to over consumption. The varroa mite was found on Oahu in April 2007, unfortunately there was not an effective response from the private or government sector. As a result, the mite has now been found in some hives here on Hawaii Island. The problem is not yet widespread, but we are preparing for this possibility. We are hoping that our organic, non-toxic, non-violent beekeeping techniques will enable us to keep our hives strong and healthy if the varroa problem spreads. So this holiday season, put some bees on your trees and send a prayer out to our bee friends.

Family: On a brighter note, my expanding family is happy and healthy! I now have five beautiful grandchildren- three in California and two here on the Big Island.

Staff: I continue to be blessed by all of the queen bees in our hive. It's a wonder they tolerate a male drone in their midst at all! After laying off many of our long time staff members as a result of last year's forest fire, we have been operating with a small core crew. Candice, Donelle, Kerri, and Andrea are the full time staff and Lisa, Laura, Maile and Sunee support us seasonally, along with Christina as an apprentice beekeeper.

Company: We continue to refine and implement our triple bottom line business practices and look at things in new ways. We are especially excited about a grant from Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education, which has enabled us to kick start a project to make our own organic wax foundation (a strip of wax with hexagonal embossing onto which bees build their honeycomb) for the hives. Our honey and unique business practices continue to attract international media attention. An article in the Japanese edition of Madame Figaro magazine has unexpectedly brought many Japanese visitors down our driveway! We are also honored that Volcano Island White Honey has been nominated and accepted on the Slow Food Ark of Taste for preservation of a food that is threatened with extinction.

Honey: Our raison d'être- serving the bees and sharing their exquisite honey. After a strong start, we ended up with less honey than we had hoped, but given the fact that 50% of the forest burned last year, we are more than thankful for such a great year.

Subscription Honey: Lower production continues to be coupled with extremely high demand for our unique honey. With the continued pressures of forest fire, varroa mite and climate change, we suspect this trend may continue. In order to ensure that we reserve enough honey for our ardent honey lovers, we are offering you the opportunity for a honey subscription at the 2008 price. Please see the reverse side for details.

May this Holiday Season bring peace in your heart, in your family and in the world.

Aloha,

Richard


Richard Spiegel and Ohana (Family)
Beekeepers & Gatherers of Fine Honey



For this year's Holiday Special, new products and ordering deadlines please see the Order Form on the reverse side.

Volcano Island Honey Company, LLC ❖ 46-4013 Puaono Road, Honokaa, Hawai'i 96727

Tel: 808 775-1000 ❖ Fax: 808 775-0412 ❖ Toll free: 888 663-6639 ❖ Website: www.VolcanoIslandHoney.com

 Printed on paper that contains 30% post consumer waste. ❖ FSC Certified and manufactured carbon neutral.