

## HFIA Holds Christmas Tree Grower Meeting in Hilo

HFIA held a Christmas Tree Grower Meeting on November 2, 2018 at the Division of Forestry & Wildlife (DOFAW) office in Hilo, which was attended by 30 people.

The Grower Meeting was funded by the State of Hawai'i Department of Agriculture, County of Hawai'i Department of Research & Development, and US Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Marketing Service.

This meeting was part of the ongoing Christmas Tree Demonstration Project in partnership with the Hawai'i Forest Institute and Hawai'i Agriculture Research Center. Topics included: Department of Agriculture's Support for Locally-grown Christmas trees; Hawai'i County Research & Development 'Mo' Better Buy Local'; Humu'ula Douglas Fir Planting Update; and 'Production & Evaluation of Mid-to-Low Elevation Trees to Replace Imported Christmas Trees' Update. Attendees shared their experiences growing Christmas trees and took a self-guided tour of DOFAW Arboretum.



### Why Grow Local Christmas Trees?

According to the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture, shipments of Christmas trees from the Pacific Northwest to Hawai'i have been found to be widely infested with invasive pests. Once an invasive pest or disease becomes established in Hawai'i, it may have a devastating impact on Hawai'i agriculture. By providing Hawai'i with locally-grown Christmas trees, growers will support import replacement and promote the 'Buy Local, It Matters' message.

Goals of this phase of the Christmas Tree Demonstration Project are to demonstrate that conifer species can be grown at mid-to-low elevations and further identify the species and cultivars that produce acceptable Christmas trees grown in pots and planted in the ground. In addition to ten landowner cooperators, other Christmas Tree Demonstration Project partners include Aileen's Nursery; Hawai'i Forest Institute; Department of Hawaiian Home Lands; Hawai'i Agriculture Research Center; DLNR Division of Forestry & Wildlife; College of Tropical Agriculture & Human Resources; Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species; Wade Lee, Hāloa 'Aina; Kulani Correctional Facility, Hawaii Invasive Species Council; and USDA Forest Service.