

**BENJAMIN J. CAYETANO**  
GOVERNOR



Department  
of Agriculture  
State of Hawaii

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

Contact: Ann Takiguchi, Information Officer

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visit our website at: <http://www.hawaiiag.org/hdoa/>

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NR 99-15

October 29, 1999

### **First Beneficiaries of New Rules for Importing Animals and Microorganisms to Hawaii**

Two aquaculture companies are anxiously awaiting permits to import certain species of corals for propagation and export resale to capture a portion of an estimated \$10 million worldwide coral industry.

In the past, researchers and businesses contemplating the listing of new species for import were very reluctant to submit such a request because of a lengthy review and public hearing process which could take years depending on circumstances. New amendments to import rules (Hawaii Administrative Rules, Chapter 4-71, "Non-Domestic Animal and Microorganism Import Rules") that went into effect on August 16 will shorten the process time to just four to five months in most cases.

"The new listing process allows for a sound review, while providing ample opportunity for public input so that import requests can be handled in a safe and timely manner," said State Department of Agriculture Chairman James J. Nakatani. "With a level playing field, our researchers and businesses can optimize the use of our natural resources and year-round tropical climate to become leaders in different fields including aquaculture and biotechnology — two of the fastest growing industries."

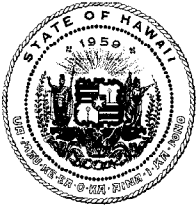
The following is a brief summary and an estimated time breakdown for the new listing process:

- 1) request is reviewed by technical consultants (1 month);
- 2) request is published in the Office of Environmental Quality Control (OEQC) Bulletin, a monthly publication;
- 3) synopsis of request is disseminated to the media and interested parties simultaneous with publication in OEQC Bulletin (see attachment, future notices will follow same format);
- 4) comments from technical consultants and interested members of the public are compiled by the PQB and reviewed by an Advisory Committee on Plants & Animals at a public meeting (1 month);
- 5) advisory committee recommendations are forwarded to the State Board of Agriculture for decision-making at a public meeting (2 - 4 weeks);
- 6) Board's order adopting the requested changes is forwarded to the Governor for approval (2 weeks);
- 7) approved changes are published in a statewide publication of daily or weekly circulation (2 weeks); and
- 8) changes go into effect 10 days following publication (2 weeks).

The most significant change in the new listing process is that public hearings for rulemaking will not be necessary, as authorized under ACT 244, Session Laws of Hawaii, 1998. Instead, public input will be accepted throughout the process until the Board renders a decision. Other recent rule changes include a user fee (\$5 for a single shipment, \$50 for unlimited shipments within a one-year period) for covering costs to process and issue a permit, as well as an increase in the minimum bond amount to \$1,000 and \$2,000 for certain animals.

For more information, please contact the Department's Plant Quarantine Branch Specialist Domingo Cravalho at (808) 586-0858.

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NR99-15 (attachment)  
October 29, 1999

### **Proposed Amendment to Import Rules Lists to Allow Import of Certain Soft and Stony Corals**

The Hawaii Department of Agriculture has received a request to place the soft coral, Sarcophyton (all species in genus), and stony coral, Acropora (all species in genus), on the List of Restricted Animals (Part B) under Chapter 4-71, Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR), "Non-Domestic Animal and Microorganism Import Rules," for import for aquaculture production.

These stony and soft corals are currently listed on the List of Restricted Animals (Part A) which allows import, by permit, for research by universities and government agencies, exhibition in municipal zoos and government affiliated aquariums and other institutions for medical and scientific purposes as determined by the Board of Agriculture. The requested amendment to delete these two genera of corals from the List of Restricted Animals (Part A) and add them to the List of Restricted Animals (Part B) will broaden the permitted uses of these corals to allow import, by permit, for private and commercial use, including research, zoological parks, and aquaculture production.

Pursuant to Act 244, Session Laws of Hawaii, 1998, and section 4-71-4.2, HAR, the requested changes will proceed through an expedited rule amendment process which provides for public notification and input through press release and publication in the Office of Environmental Quality Control Bulletin, mailed notice to persons who make timely written request for advance notice of rulemaking proceedings, as well as through public meetings of the Board and its Advisory Committee on Plants and Animals. This expedited process provides for adoption of amendments through Board order and approval by the Governor. Approved changes will be published in daily or weekly publication(s) of statewide circulation and will go into effect 10 days following publication.

A copy of the proposed changes and the Board's order of approved changes will be mailed to any interested person who requests a copy upon payment in advance of costs for photocopying, preparing, and mailing the copy. A copy of the proposed changes and Board's order will also be available for review or pickup following payment in full of costs for photocopying and preparing the copy at the following Plant Quarantine Offices: Oahu - 701 Ilalo Street, Honolulu HI 96813, phone: (808)586-0858; Kauai - 4398A Pua Loke Street, Lihue HI, phone: (808)274-3071; Maui - 635 Mua Street, Kahului HI, phone: (808)873-3556; Hawaii - 16E Lanikaula Street, Hilo HI, phone: (808)974-4141.

The Department of Agriculture is soliciting comments regarding the proposed changes mentioned above during the next 30 days. Oral or written comments may be communicated to the Department's Plant Quarantine Branch at the Oahu address or phone number shown above. Interested persons are also encouraged to attend the public meetings of the Advisory Committee on Plants and Animals as well as the Board, on the proposed changes and should contact the Plant Quarantine Branch at (808)586-0844 for meeting dates and times.

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