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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Hawaii's Oldest Food Festival Celebrates 46 Years Toast the Roast at the Kona Coffee Cultural Festival, November 4-13, 2016**

**Kona, Hawaii (October 10, 2016)**—1970 was a banner year for Hawaii: the Fabulous Five thrilled UH basketball fans, 36 swimmers dove in for the first Waikiki Roughwater Swim and Hawaii's tourism accelerated as Pan Am began regularly scheduled jumbo jet service to Honolulu. On Hawaii Island, an iconic event also launched that year—Kona Coffee Cultural Festival.

It's doubtful that missionary Samuel Ruggles was thinking of international acclaim when he brought the first coffee trees to Kona in 1828 or 29. Coffee changed the local landscape and set Kona on a new economic journey that continues today. For nearly 200 years much has been celebrated, discussed and enjoyed over a cup of Kona's world famous coffee. Praised for its fine, light and memorable taste, Kona coffee once again takes center stage at the 46<sup>th</sup> annual Kona Coffee Cultural Festival from November 4-13, 2016.

Kona's annual coffee harvest has sustained this agricultural community and the community gathers to celebrate every November. The award-winning Kona Coffee Cultural Festival is recognized as the oldest and one of the most successful food festivals in Hawaii. The 10-day Festival honors Kona's cultural heritage and recognizes the accomplishments of Kona coffee pioneers, farmers and artisans.

Nearly 50 events crowd the 10-day schedule where locals and coffee-loving visitors gather to celebrate the harvest. Festivities include a lantern parade that lights up the evening sky, several coffee and food events that offer tastings, hands-on cultural events, a collection of farm and mill tours and coffee art exhibitions. The scholarship pageant crowns its queens and the finest Kona coffees are announced.

**A Sampling of Kona Coffee Cultural Festival Events** (a complete schedule is available at [KonaCoffeeFest.com](http://KonaCoffeeFest.com))

### **Holualoa Village Coffee & Art Stroll**

Stroll through the quaint art district, visit galleries and choose from over 30 Kona coffee farms offering tastings and coffee for purchase.

### **Miss Kona Coffee Scholarship Pageant**

Hawaii Island's talented contestants compete for the coveted Miss Kona Coffee and Miss Aloha Hawaii titles. Did you know that a former Miss Kona Coffee Carolyn Sapp went on to become Miss America?

### **Kona Coffee Living History Farm Tour**

A visit to this historic Kona coffee farm reveals the story of Kona coffee farmers from 1926-1945. It's America's only living history coffee farm.

### **Kona Coffee Cupping Competition**

An international panel of professional cupping judges conduct side-by-side blind tastings as they sniff, slurp and taste their way through 50+ entries to crown the winner.

### **Kona Coffee, Beer and Wine Pairing**

Savor small plates, smooth music and a Kona coffee, beer and wine pairing.

### **Kona Coffee Lantern Parade**

Colorful lanterns wind their way through Historic Kailua Village at this parade that culminates in an evening of cultural music and dance.

### **Hoolaulea**

Ethnic food booths, arts and crafts, lei contest, Ikebana and all-day live entertainment featuring one of Hawaii's most popular entertainers Robi Kahakalau.

A souvenir Festival button is required for attendance to all events and can be purchased for \$3 at all events and many retail and farm locations throughout the Kona area. For a complete listing of 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Kona Coffee Cultural Festival events or for more information visit [www.konacoffeefest.com](http://www.konacoffeefest.com). Follow the Festival on social media @konacoffeefest

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### **About Kona Coffee Cultural Festival**

The award-winning Kona Coffee Cultural Festival is recognized as the oldest and one of the most successful food festivals in Hawaii. The 2016 Festival includes 10 days of events that promote Hawaii's unique culture and diversity and supports the Festival's mission to preserve, perpetuate and promote Kona's unique coffee heritage.

The Kona Coffee Cultural Festival is supported as a Signature Event of the Hawaii Tourism Authority and is made possible through the support of UCC Ueshima Coffee Co., Ltd., Kamehameha Schools, Alaska Airlines, Hawaii Community Federal Credit Union, Kawakami Family of Captain Cook Fund of the Hawaii Community Foundation, KTA Super Stores and numerous other corporate and community donors.

*Note to editors: For high-resolution Coffee Festival images or to schedule an interview, contact Laura Aquino at 808.326.7820 or email [laura@current-events.com](mailto:laura@current-events.com).*