

GROUP PIKO

The group Piko is comprised of seven varieties, in all of which the sinus of the leaf blade is cut to the point of attachment to the petiole, this point of juncture being called the piko, or navel, of the taro. Another unusual feature of the Piko taros is the presence of a persistent ridge on the inner surface of the petiole above its sinus. These two characters are found only in this group and seem to be consistently linked. The plants are medium in height, erect, and compact in growth, with stiffly erect petioles and more or less horizontal blades. The leaves are comparatively small and usually ovate in shape. The group produces oha more freely than most other varieties.

This is the most natural grouping of the taros as all the members exhibit close relationship. Most are rather late maturing, being harvested usually about 12 to 15 or sometimes as long as 18 months after planting. They are the hardiest group and, at the present time, are the most common of the so-called wetland taros. They make their best growth in the cooler sections of the islands with an abundance of fresh cool mountain water for flooding the taro patches. They are by all odds the most important of the commercial taros and their popularity is steadily increasing, probably due more to their comparative resistance to root rot than to any other single factor. All are known to make good poi. They are grown extensively throughout the islands, but are especially

popular on the island of Oahu. Piko Kea and Piko Uliuli
are the two most important varieties in this group.