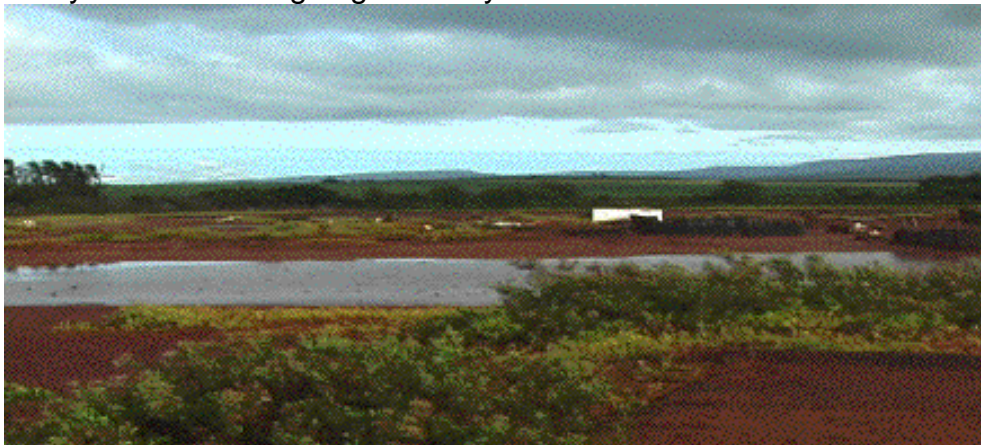


During the summer for generations, Hawaiian families have evaporated seawater in pans dug out of red soil to produce natural sea salt. The art of salt-making in earthen pans is still practiced in Kaua'i by families descending from the ancient saltmakers. The salt is bagged and used for cooking and for medicinal purposes. The right to mine salt from the ponds is passed down from generation to generation. The Ponds at "Salt Ponds" in Hanapepe Kaua'i are the only Salt Ponds in Hawai'i that are still in use and produce the ancient rock salt.



Legend of Salt Pond

This legend dates back to ancient Hawaiian times. The fire goddess Madam Pele is said to be one of the people in this story. The story starts when a lady caught too many fish and didn't want to waste them. So she begins to salt her fish but ends up crying when she ran out of salt. Madam Pele hears the cries of the lady and comes out of a nearby bush to help. Pele then asks the lady why she's crying. The lady tells Pele her story. Madam Pele then tells the lady to follow her. Pele leads the lady to an area covered by dirt. Then Pele started to dig a deep hole until she finally reached salt water. Salt water from underground then started to fill the deep hole until water reached the surface. Pele told the lady to place her fish into the hole and let it sit there for a while. Then take it out to dry, for after her fish dried it would be salted, and the lady did. Madam Pele said to the lady to "remember what I have told you and you will always have salt". And so this process of making salt continued year after year and is still going on today.



Puna Wai

The Puna Wai is where the process of making salt begins. The Puna Wai is a deep well that holds saltwater. You need to dig a deep hole in the ground until you reach saltwater. The saltwater in the Puna Wai comes from underground. You need to know when it's time to make salt. The water is ready when brine shrimp appear at the surface your Puna Wai. Brine shrimp is the sign that tells you the water is salty enough to begin making salt.



Wai Ku

The Wai Ku is the second step in making salt. The depth of your Wai Ku should be about 10 inches. Water is brought to the Wai Ku in plastic buckets. We use plastic buckets because if you used metal the saltwater will rust it. As the water from the Wai Ku evaporates you need to replace it with more water from the Puna Wai. This is the aging process which makes the water's salinity higher.



Loi

The Loi is the last bed that you use when making salt. It's the basic salt bed. The Loi is made out of mud clay balls and smoothed out with a smooth stone. It is shallower than the other beds. It is about 5 inches deep. The water in the Loi is from the Wai Ku. It's brought in by a homemade tool which consists of a small plastic bucket attached to a long wooden handle. Bringing water in from the Wai Ku is a very delicate process. You need to be careful not to disturb too much mud when pouring the

water into the Loi. Once you put the water from your Wai Ku into the Loi you need to let the water evaporate and then refill it gently until you see enough salt to harvest. It'll take about a week before you have enough salt to harvest.



Harvesting

When you are ready to harvest your salt you need to use a rake. Using the rake, gather the salt gently without disturbing too much mud and put it into a basket. When you are done filling your basket, wash the salt and remove all rubbish from it. After gathering all the salt from your Loi spread your salt out in the sun to dry. When dried, your salt is ready to be used.



Using Salt

The last and final step is using the salt! A lot of people use this type of salt for cooking and drying food, but you can also use it as medicine. You can use it on sore feet, body aches, or minor wounds. All you need to do is soak your sore feet or wound in a mixture of salt and tap water. You can also use it for sore throats. Gargle with it and this will help kill a lot of germs and help make you feel better.