

## **Immigration to Hawaii**

By the mid-1800s thousands of Hawaiians had died from diseases. Sugar owners needed workers for their fields. Workers from all over the world came to Hawaii to work. Once a group started asking to be paid more money, plantation owners increased the labor supply (number of workers) by bringing in a new group of workers from somewhere else. Knowing they could be replaced so easily, the workers decreased their wage demands. The following is the order that the groups came to Hawaii and why they decided to come.

### **Chinese**

Chinese came to Hawaii looking to strike it rich. Their hope was to send money back to their poor families or to return to China after a few years with newly acquired wealth.

### **Japanese**

After a series of crop failures in their country, farmers and peasants from southern Japan came to Hawaii hoping to earn higher wages.

### **Portuguese**

The majority of the Portuguese immigrants came to Hawaii seeking a higher standard of living. Besides wanting to escape poverty, high taxes, and the lack of economic advancement at home, many males emigrated to avoid eight years of service in Portugal's army. Natural disasters also stimulated many to seek opportunities to live and work elsewhere.

### **Puerto Ricans**

On August 8, 1899, Hurricane San Ciriaco, with winds of over 100 miles per hour, struck Puerto Rico and, on August 22, another hurricane followed. The floods caused by 28 days of continuous rain damaged the agricultural industry and left 3,400 dead and thousands of people without shelter, food or work. As a result, Puerto Rican sugar plantations were destroyed. Demand for sugar from Hawaii increased greatly. To meet the demand, Hawaii plantation owners recruited the jobless laborers from Puerto Rico to work in their fields.

### **Koreans**

Natural disasters, poverty, high taxes, and government oppression caused Koreans hoping to build a better life to come to Hawaii.

### **Filipinos**

Filipinos had harsh living conditions, including overpopulation, and limited economic opportunities in their home country. They perceived Hawaii as a paradise of happiness and prosperity. Many came to save money to return home and live comfortably.