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COUNTY OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS





Meet the Team

Benson Medina

Director

Dennis Lin

Deputy Director

Glenn Sako

Agriculture Specialist

Sarah Freeman

Food Systems Specialist

Anna Ezzy

Agriculture Research
and Policy Specialist

Christian Colo

Food Systems Administration
Associate

Leslie Nugent

Food Systems Network
Specialist

COUNTY OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Program Objectives

- 1** Increase consumption of local agricultural or value-added products through marketing and education
- 2** Support efforts to improve agricultural production, increase producer viability, reduce impacts of pests/disease, and advance agricultural research
- 3** Support food system efforts to reduce waste, develop workforce pathways, and increase food access for low-income residents
- 4** Support agriculture, gardening, and nutrition education programs for improved environmental and community health



COVID Relief Funding (ARPA)

Investment into Infrastructure and Capacity

GRANT PROGRAMS

20+ Food Security Programs

\$500,000

32 Farmers + Food Producers

\$710,000

SHARED KITCHENS

Construction + upgrades

\$2.5 million

Technical Assistance

\$500,000

SOIL INPUTS PRODUCTION

Construction + upgrades

\$330,000

Community and Industry Engagement

COMMUNITY

(20) Food security focus groups

(7) Regional agrifood summits

INDUSTRY / ORGANIZATIONS

(6) Food Security regional meetings

(10+) Advisory Committee meetings

(3) Agrifood Stakeholder Summits

Long-Term Planning

Development of County-wide action plans:

5-Year Agrifood System Plan

*5-Year Community Food
Security Plan*

Developing the 5-Year Action Plan

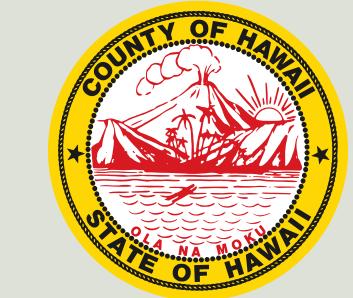
Regional Agrifood System and Community Food Security

Purpose

- Identify strategies and investments to increase agricultural production, food security, and access to local food and agricultural products
- Reflect diverse perspectives and needs to enable ongoing collaboration between the County and our agrifood system stakeholders
- Foster economic resilience within the agrifood system

Collaborators

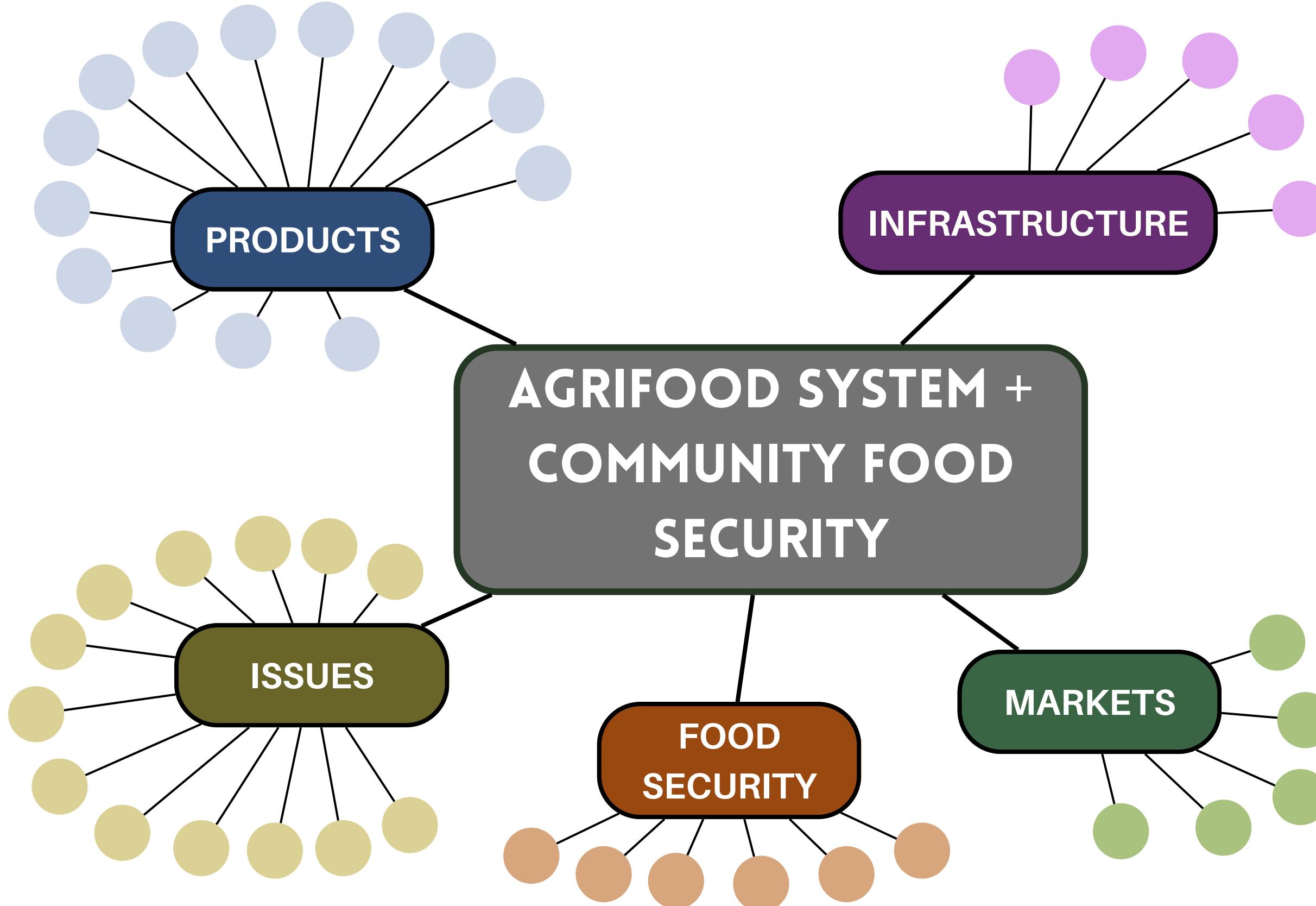
- Hamakua Institute
- The Food Basket
- 30+ member Advisory Committee



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principle	Description
Biocultural Stewardship	Uplift and center Native Hawaiian epistemology and cultural values in land and water stewardship. Advance biocultural restoration through community-based management, 'āina-based education, and regenerative practices that renew relationships between people, place, and waiwai – the abundance and well-being that sustains Hawai'i.
Cultural Heritage	Acknowledge cultural identity, values, and place through intergenerational knowledge exchange and foodways, and the diverse practices and histories of Hawai'i Island's multicultural communities.
Equity	Prioritize those historically underserved and design systems that are inclusive, accessible, and just in opportunity, representation, and outcomes.
Producer & Practitioner Centered	Centering perspectives of Hawai'i Island producers, ranchers, fishers, hunters, and practitioners to advance an equitable agrifood system that sustainably manages and restores natural and cultural resources, while enabling economic viability, food sovereignty, and nutrition security for current and future generations.
Circular & Regenerative Economy	Promote systems that reuse resources, keep wealth local, and prioritize investments that address root causes and community well-being.
Climate Resilience	Support adaptive and regenerative strategies that help producers and communities reduce climate-related risks, strengthen preparedness, and build long-term resilience in food systems, natural resources, and local food security.
Producer & Worker Support Infrastructure	Strengthen community networks to increase producers' and workers' access to supportive resources as well as awareness about compliance laws and worker rights.
Community Food Security	Advance food as a human right by ensuring reliable access to sufficient, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food for all Hawai'i Island residents through place-based solutions, public programs, and community-driven strategies.

Structure of the 5-Year Plan



What's in a "brief"

BACKGROUND

- Current conditions
- Key data/trends
- Challenges / Opportunities

GOALS

Data-driven measures that describe our desired outcomes

ACTIONS

Steps to achieve our goals, that include:

- Lead / supporting entities
- Funding source
- Timeframe to implement
- Dept. / Agency involvement

PRODUCT	Kalo
PRODUCT	Agricultural Inputs
PRODUCT	Plant Propagation Material
PRODUCT	Animal Feeds
PRODUCT	Floriculture, Ornamental, Landscaping Nursery
PRODUCT	Vegetables
PRODUCT	Macadamia Nuts
PRODUCT	Livestock & Dairy
PRODUCT	Fruits
PRODUCT	Forestry & Wood Products
PRODUCT	Coffee
PRODUCT	Cacao
PRODUCT	Bees & Honey
PRODUCT	Specialty Crops
PRODUCT	Aquaculture & Commercial Fishing

ISSUE	Access to Capital
ISSUE	Biosecurity
ISSUE	Workforce Development
ISSUE	Farmer & Farmworker Wellbeing
ISSUE	Land Access
ISSUE	Climate Resilience
ISSUE	Farm Business Technical Support
ISSUE	Compliance
ISSUE	Environmental Stewardship
ISSUE	Agricultural Theft
ISSUE	Waste Re-Use
ISSUE	Marketing & Awareness
ISSUE	Cooperative Business Development

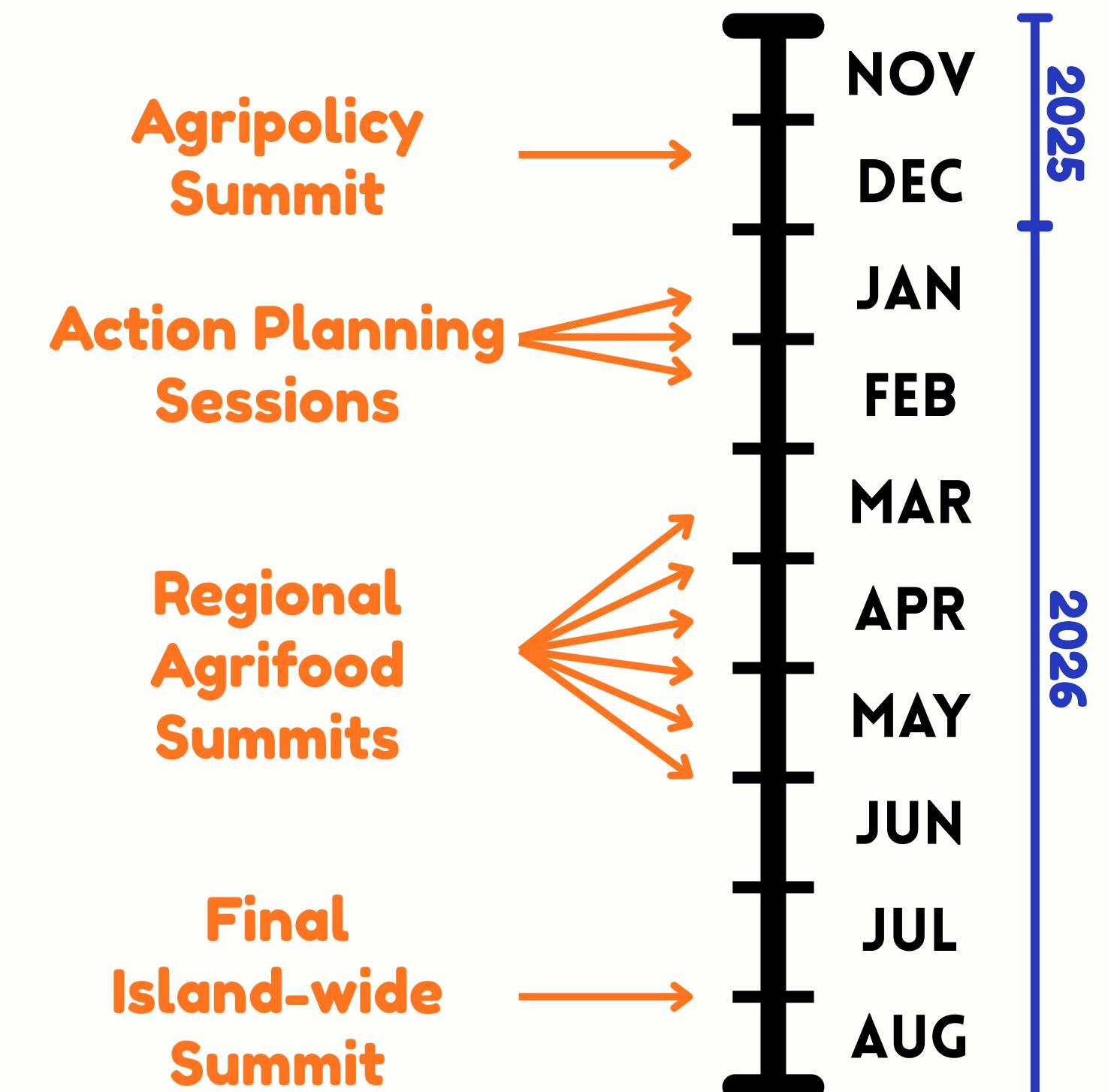
INFRASTRUCTURE	Water Infrastructure
INFRASTRUCTURE	Supplies & Equipment
INFRASTRUCTURE	Farm Infrastructure
INFRASTRUCTURE	Processing & Value Added Production
INFRASTRUCTURE	Transportation, Aggregation, Distribution

MARKET	End-Consumer Markets
MARKET	Institutional Purchasing
MARKET	Resorts & Hospitality
MARKET	Export
MARKET	Agritourism

FOOD SECURITY	Nutrition & Cooking Education
FOOD SECURITY	Nutrition Access
FOOD SECURITY	Subsistence & Informal Sharing Networks
FOOD SECURITY	Emergency Food Assistance
FOOD SECURITY	Community Education
FOOD SECURITY	Disaster Preparedness

The Process

How we got here and where we're going





MAHALO

How to be involved

Ongoing plan development

Ongoing, through Summer 2026

INVITE ONLY: For organizations, agencies/departments, and industry reps that want to contribute to collective actions

Agripolicy Summit

December 11, 2025 - Arc of Hilo

OPEN TO PUBLIC: To follow-up from the 2024 Agripolicy Summit and identify current policy priorities

Action Planning Sessions

January-February 2026

INVITE ONLY: For organizations, agencies/departments, and industry reps to solidify planned actions

Regional Agrifood Summits

March-May 2026

OPEN TO PUBLIC: For community members and regional stakeholders / organizations, to spread awareness of Plan and get regional feedback

Please contact:

Sarah Freeman

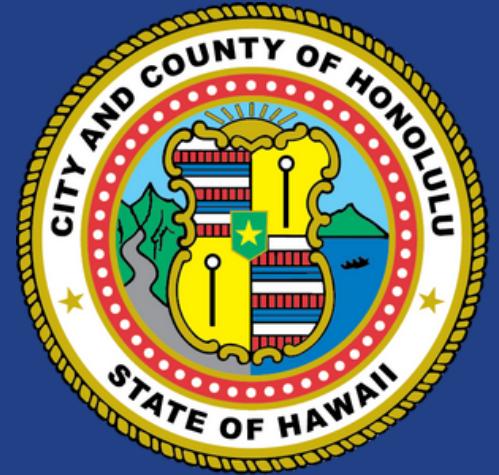
Food Systems Specialist

Sarah.Freeman@hawaiicounty.gov

Leslie Nugent

Food Systems Network Specialist

Leslie.Nugent@hawaiicounty.gov



Food Access for O'ahu

City and County of Honolulu

Office of Climate Change,
Sustainability and Resiliency

Jason Shon



Office of Climate Change, Sustainability & Resiliency

- City Charter amended in 2016 to establish the Resilience Office, ensuring our local government tackles climate change, increases City sustainability, and works with communities to build a more resilient O'ahu
- Coordinate actions and policies within program areas



Energy



Coastal & Water



Equity



Food Security
& Sustainability

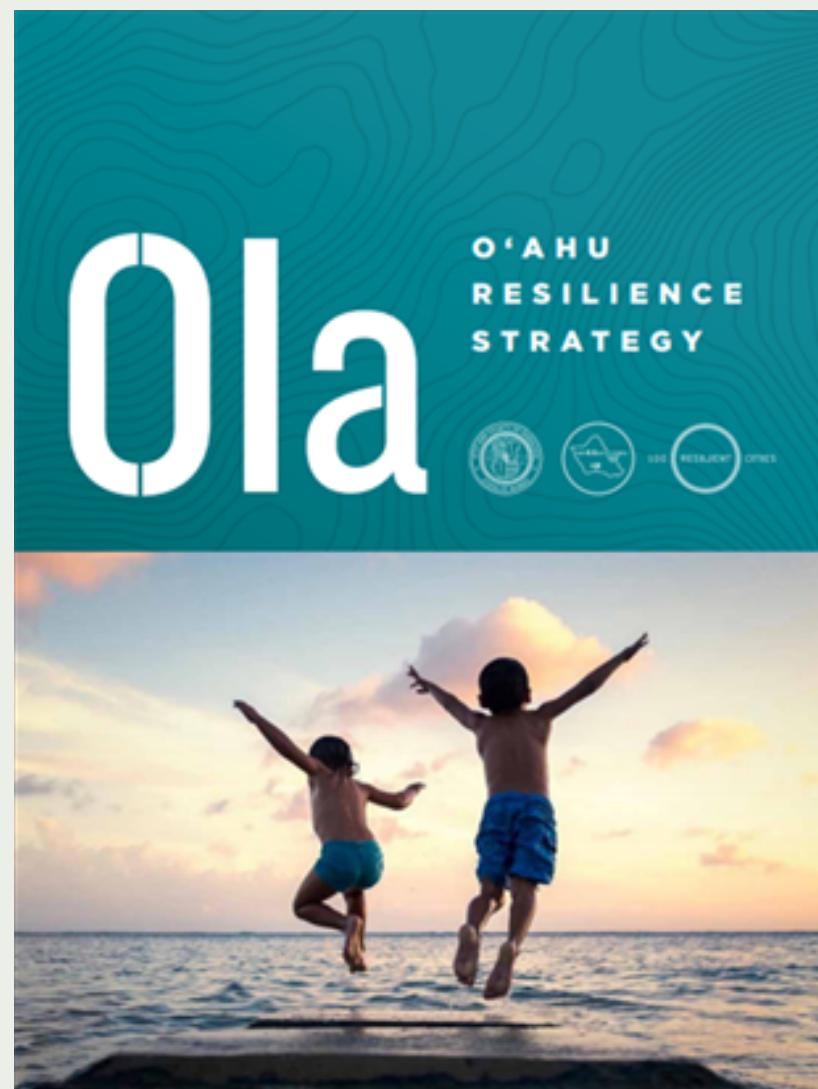


Policy

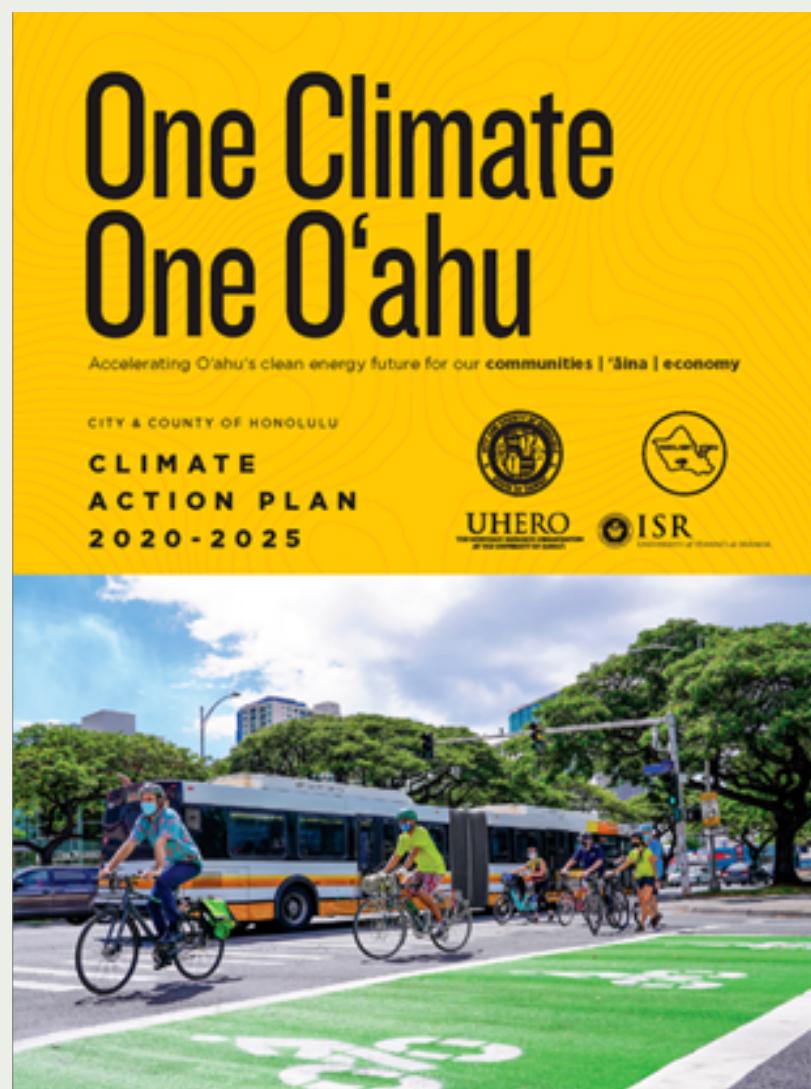


Hazard
Mitigation

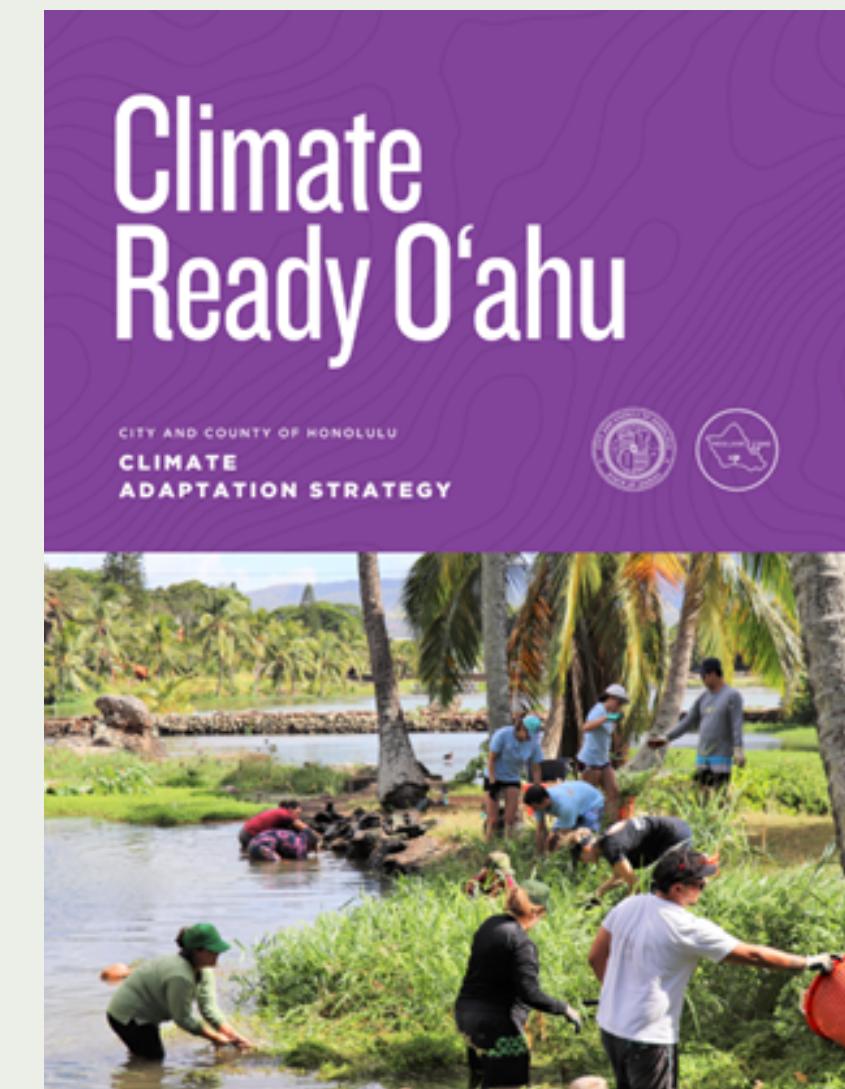
Guiding Documents & Strategic Plans



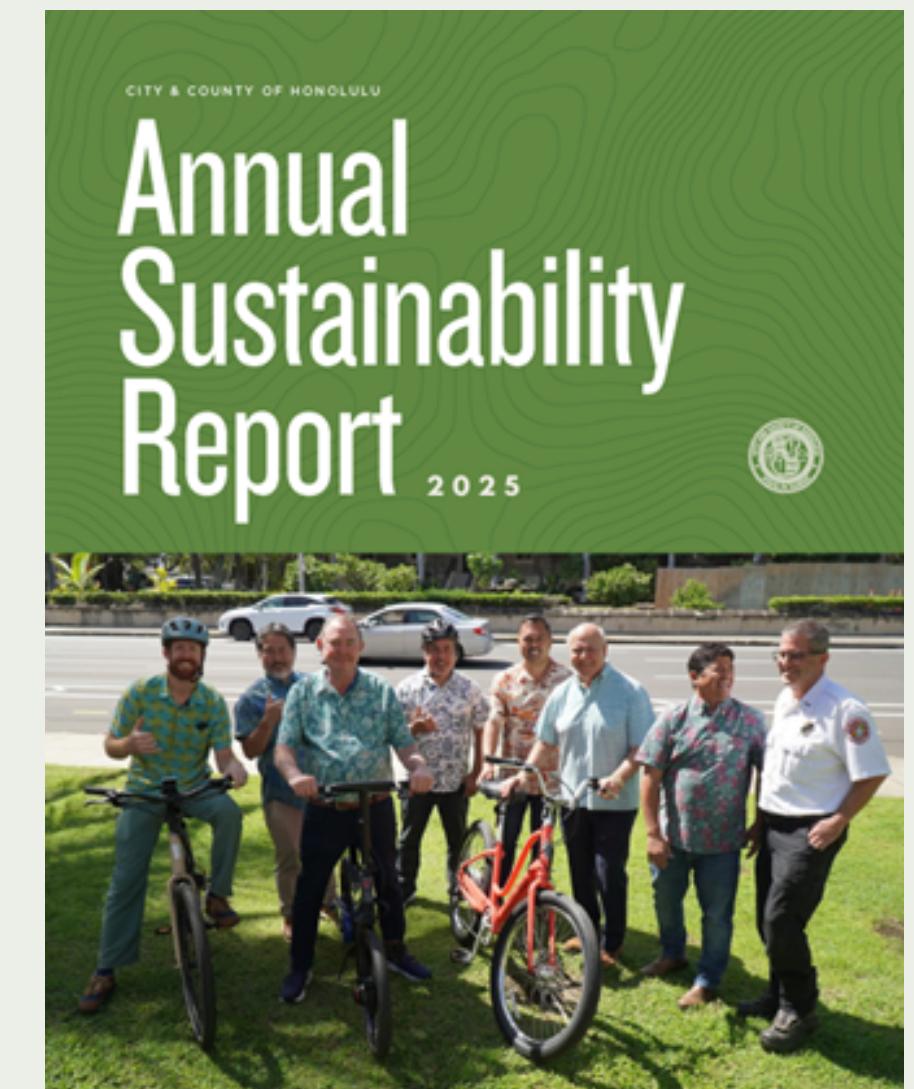
Adopted
October 2019



Adopted
June 2021



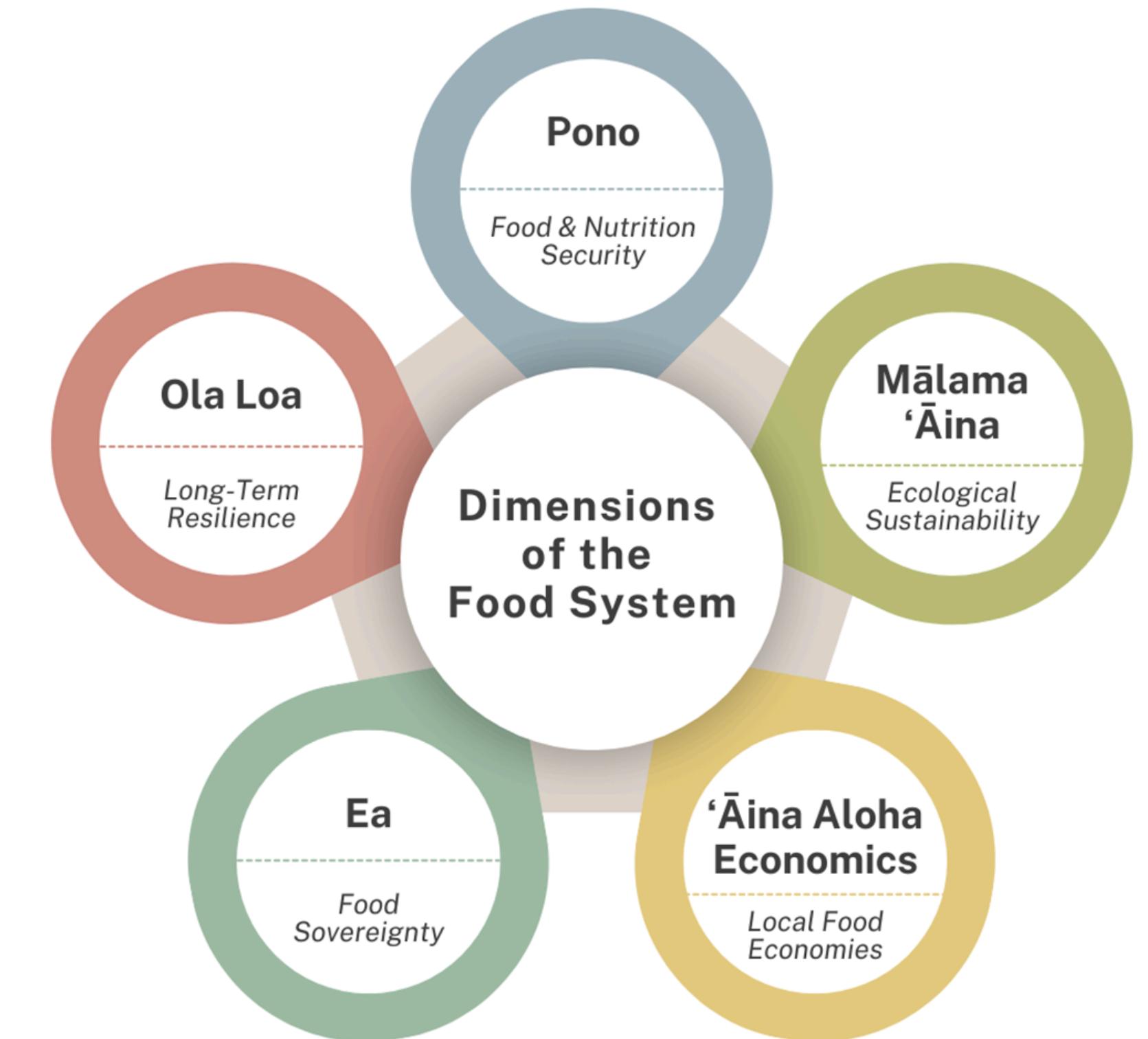
Adopted
February 2024



Virtual Dashboard
Released Each April

O'ahu Food Systems Plan - 2026

Take the survey:
resilientoahu.org/foodsystmsplan



Food Access at Skyline Stations

Goal: Transform Skyline stations into hubs for food access, health, and resilience

MOBILE FOOD PANTRY

Hawai'i Foodbank distributed over 5,000 meals to 640 residents using their new mobile food pantry.



MĀKEKE MAHI'AI

'Elepaio Social Services hosted SNAP/WIC-accessible farmers markets featuring 14 local producers and vendors.



COMMUNITY PLANTING

Earth Innovations led community planting days to create new food and cultural gardens.



Food Scaping at Public Housing

Goal: Expand food-growing opportunities at City-affiliated public housing sites



Streamlining Partnerships for Stewardship of Underutilized City Land

Goal: Create clear pathways for community-based organizations to steward underutilized City lands



Role of the Food Access Coordinator (FAC)

- Food systems are interdisciplinary—requiring cross-sector strategy and alignment. FAC work supports coordination across the entire food system.
- Having an FAC allows the City and County of Honolulu to:
 - Leverage the City’s programs and capacity to advance food access.
 - Expand capacity and coordinate internally across departments.
 - Coordinate more effectively 1) internally amongst agencies and 2) externally with City Council, State agencies, and community partners.
 - Develop and implement O’ahu’s first-ever Food Systems Plan.
 - Advance food access as a core City service.



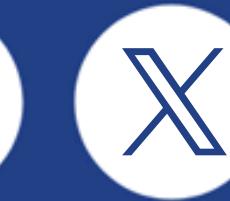
Mahalo



Website: resilientoahu.org

Newsletter: resilientoahu.org/subscribe

Social Media: [@resilientoahu](https://twitter.com/@resilientoahu)



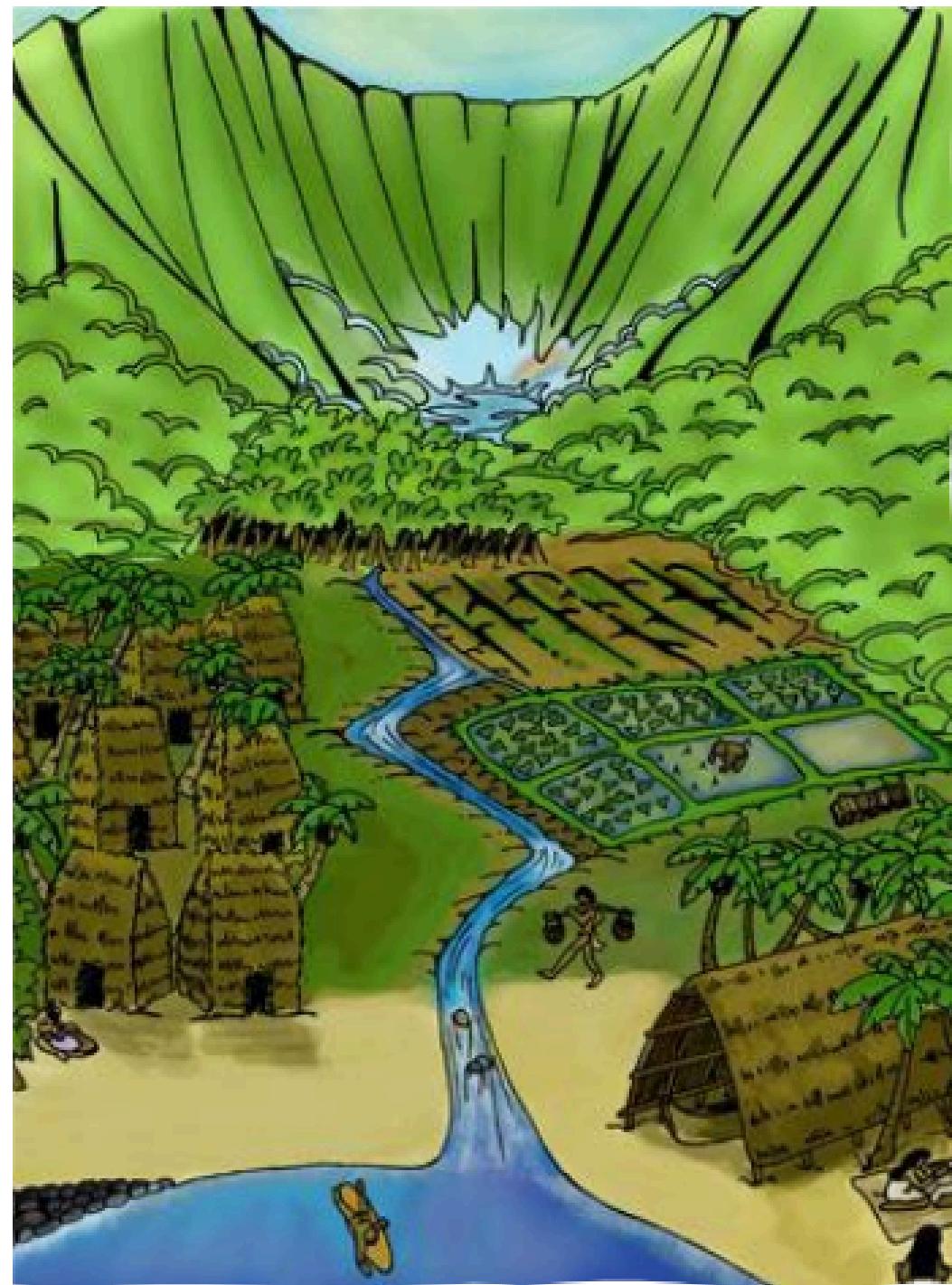
Christopher Fujimoto
Community Wellness Manager

**'Elepaio Social Services, Wai'anae Coast
Comprehensive Health Center**



NUTRITION SECURITY:

A Pathway to Food Sovereignty & Community Resilience



FOOD BASKET TO FOOD DESERT



Community members experience high rates of chronic nutrition-related diseases, such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease.

	Waianae Coast	County	State
Obesity	46%	27.4%	24.5%
Adults with Diabetes	16.3%	12.0%	10.9%
Deaths due to Cardiovascular Disease/Conditions	231/100,000	117.5/100,000	121.7/100,000



Wai'anae Coast Communities have complex needs related to poverty.

	Waianae Coast	Honolulu County	State
Households receiving SNAP/Cash or other public assistance	34.3%	9.7%	11.1%
Children receiving assistance	55%	22.4%	25.3%
Average per capita income	\$23,722	\$40,339	\$39,045

THE PATHWAY...pewa.



FOOD ACCESS

Established in 2008



COMMUNITY WELLNESS

Established in 2013



FOOD AS MEDICINE

Established in 2017

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Established in 2023

FOOD ACCESS: Food Justice Farmer's Market



MAKEKE
Food Justice Farmer's Market

**DOUBLE
Unlimited Doubling
BUCK\$**

We are now offering UNLIMITED DOUBLING of EBT/SNAP on the purchases of fresh local produce, poi, honey, eggs, meat and fish.

HE MEA'ONO POI COMPANY

TAKE WHAT YOU NEED

This banner features the MAKEKE logo at the top left. The main text 'DOUBLE Unlimited Doubling BUCK\$' is in large, bold, green and black letters. Below it, a yellow box contains the text 'We are now offering UNLIMITED DOUBLING of EBT/SNAP on the purchases of fresh local produce, poi, honey, eggs, meat and fish.' At the bottom, there are images of various fresh produce and packaged goods, including a container of 'HE MEA'ONO POI COMPANY' poi and a carton of eggs.



NOW ACCEPTING
WIC HAWAII

ELIGIBLE PURCHASES
FRESH PRODUCE POI

MAKEKE
'ELEPAIO

This banner is green and features the text 'NOW ACCEPTING WIC HAWAII' at the top. Below it, it says 'ELIGIBLE PURCHASES' and 'FRESH PRODUCE POI'. At the bottom, there are two logos: 'MAKEKE' and "'ELEPAIO".

FOOD ACCESS: Food Pantries



Keiki Pantries

- Serving 11 public and charter schools each week
- 5,000+ keiki served weekly
- Provides ready to eat meals, shelf stable food, healthy snacks and fresh local produce



Kupuna Pantries

- 5 weekly pantry sites
- 1,100 unduplicated kupuna served weekly
- Provides ready to eat meals, fresh local produce, frozen meats and pantry items

FOOD ACCESS: Food Distributions

Pandemic



Pre/Post Pandemic



COMMUNITY WELLNESS: Workshops & Events

**Pickling Class**

TUESDAY, MAY 28, 2024
5:30 PM - 7:00 PM
WCCHC DINING PAVILION

'ELEPAIO SOCIAL SERVICES presents a Community Wellness Workshop:

Join us for a fun evening of pickling veggies! Learn to come up with what will feed your veggie addiction. Call us for more information.

THIS FREE WORKSHOP IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC! REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN

Go to the link to register or scan the QR code <https://forms.office.com/r/WBq7afGUQP>

For any questions, call: 808-697-3709 or email: cfujimoto@wcchc.hawaii.gov



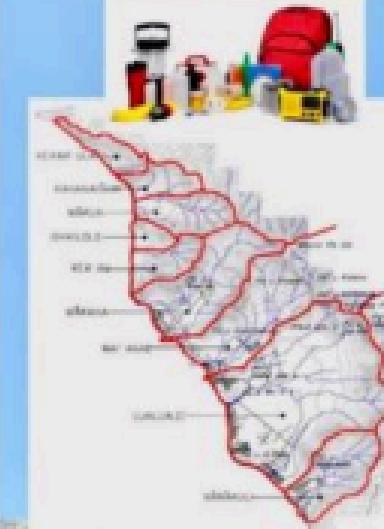
Wai'anae Moku Disaster Preparedness Workshop Part 2

Be prepared. Learn what to do before, during, and after a natural disaster, together as a 'ohana!

This workshop is part 2 of our Wai'anae regional community disaster preparedness workshop.

For this session, we will be going over:

- How to pack your own go-bag, what each item is
- hour bag / kit
- rations and what exercise for the leaders
- unity plans during the most common



SATURDAY, AUGUST 3, 2024
10 AM - 1 PM

WCCHC DINING PAVILION

HOSTED BY 'ELEPAIO SOCIAL SERVICES & THE WAI'ANAE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Part 2 of this financial workshop will focus on credit. The goal of these workshops is to help community connect to personal finances through cultural concepts and mo'olelo, or stories.

Participants will:

- Understand how Hawaiian values tie into managing our finances.
- Understand the power of credit, and why it matters.
- Learn the concept: Spend, Save, and Grow.
- Understand the factors that determine your credit score.
- Learn about how your credit score is allocated.
- Understand credit score ranges.
- Learn strategies to increase your credit scores.

THIS FREE WORKSHOP IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC! REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN

Go to the link to register or scan the QR code <https://forms.office.com/r/WBq7afGUQP>



FUN FOR THE ENTIRE 'OHANA AT
+ MĀKEKE WAI'ANAE +

Join us for
Ho'olaule'a

SATURDAY
DECEMBER 9
MUSIC, FOOD, RESOURCES

SATURDAY, AUGUST 3, 2024
10 AM - 1 PM

WCCHC DINING PAVILION

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Wai'anae EAT LOCAL CHALLENGE

Join us as we celebrate in February, the delicious and nutritious COCONUT (Niu)!

FEBRUARY 3, 10, 17 \$24
MĀKEKE WAI'ANAE WAI'ANAE MALL
86-120 FARRINGTON HWY, WAI'ANAE, HI 96792
8:00AM - 12:00PM

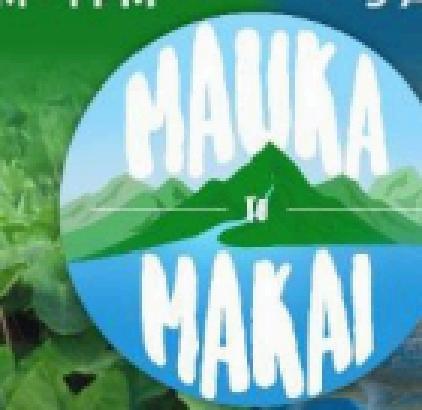
Saturday during the Challenge, Wai'anae Information Booth to get:

- It Bag & Recipes
- 1 of the 4 Saturdays to win a Eat Local Challenge trucker hat
- Stamp Card
- Change Bonus Card for a chance to win prizes, WAI'ANAE gift card and a lei! board and stones.

TELEPAIO SOCIAL SERVICES PRESENTS

SATURDAY
at Ka'ala Farm
Wai'anae Valley
Sept. 28
9 AM - 1 PM

SUNDAY
at Nene'u
Poka'i Bay
Sept. 29
9 AM - 3 PM



Cultural Land & Ocean Activities | Expert Mo'olelo | Free Lunch Provided

MAHALO to our sponsors & partners



FREE Registration starts SEPT. 13
Registration REQUIRED for EACH DAY to participate

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL (808) 697 - 3709



Food as Medicine

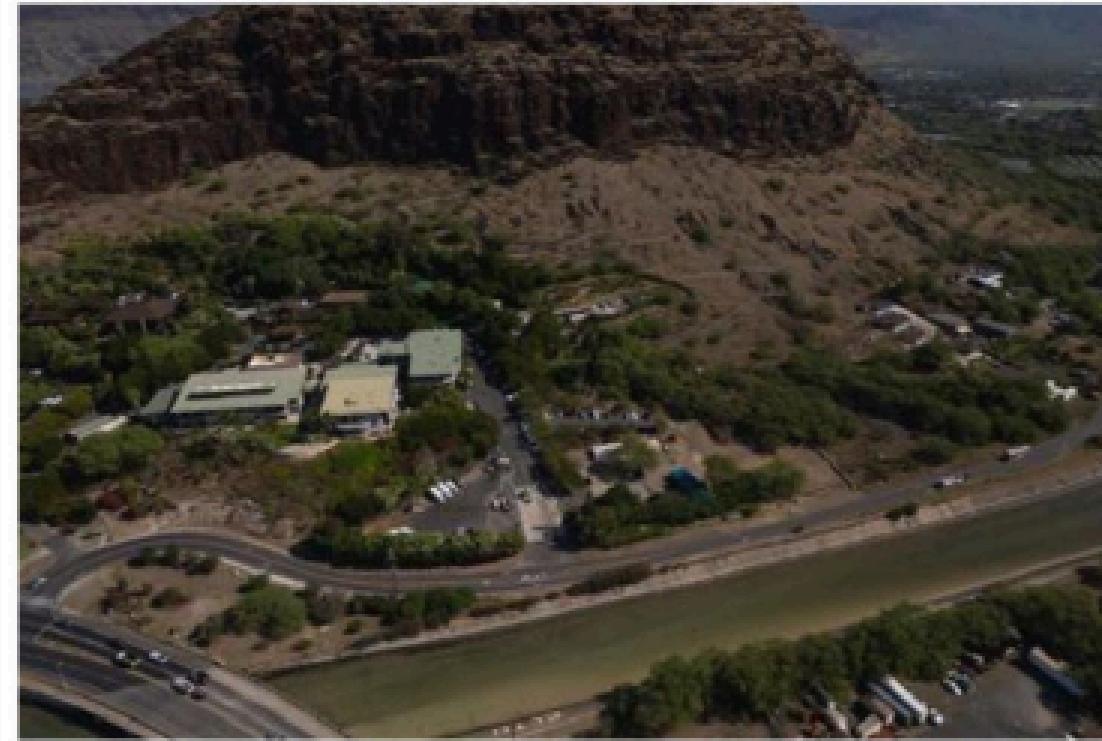
Food Sovereignty / Indigenous Food Systems

Disaster Preparedness

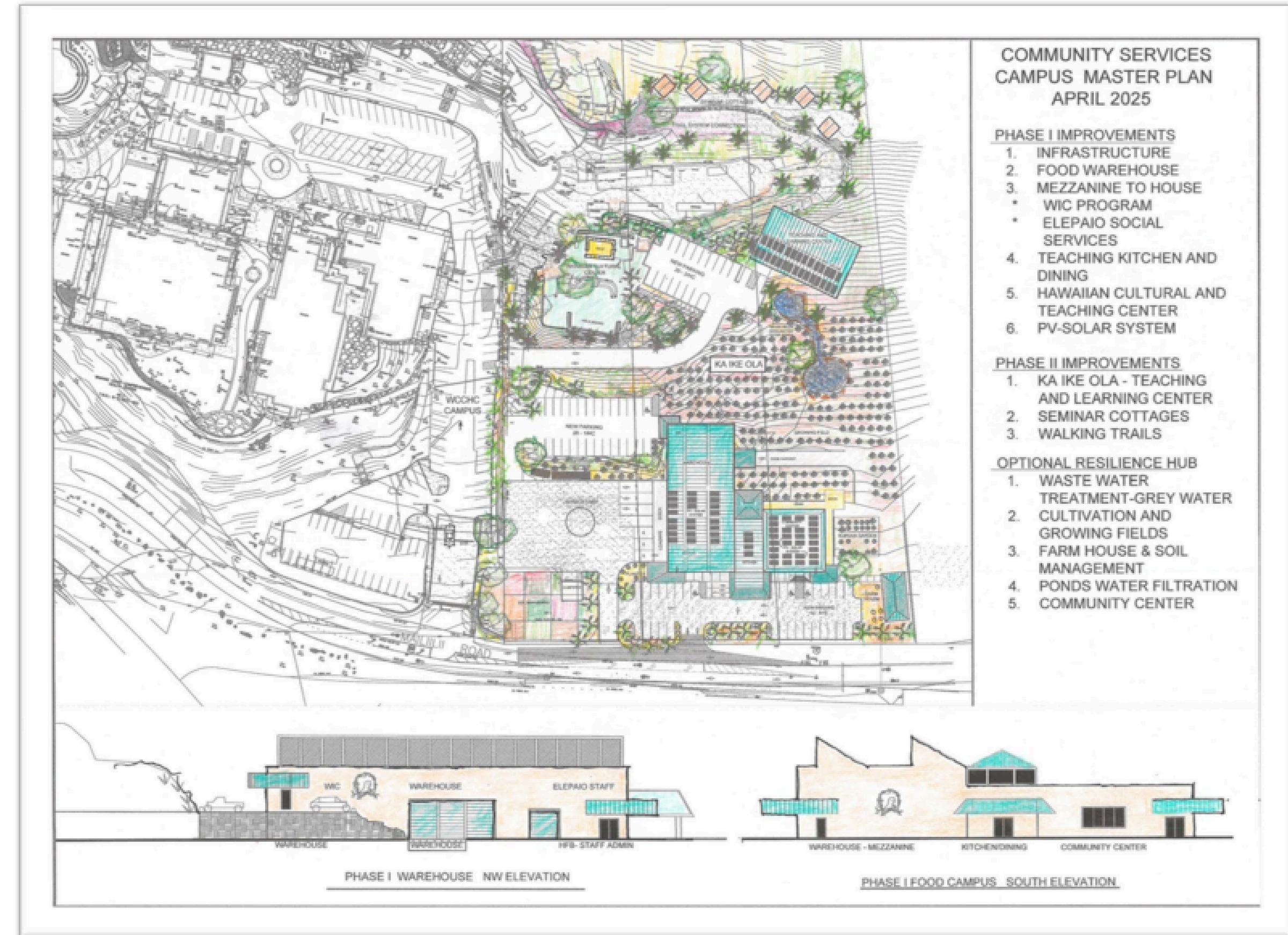
A collection of informational flyers for various food programs. The flyers include:

- OHANA PRODUCE PRESCRIPTION program**: Offers \$120 per month for 20 months to buy fruits, vegetables & poi at Makake locations. Eligibility criteria include being a Primary Care Provider at the Center, living along the Leeward Coast of Oahu, having a nutrition-related chronic disease, having Medicaid insurance or SNAP/EBT, and willing to complete surveys and clinical blood pressure, weight, and HbA1c (blood test). To find out if you are eligible, contact 808-697-3228 or email foodmedicine@wcchc.com.
- KEIKI PRODUCE PRESCRIPTION program**: Offers \$60 monthly vouchers for children 2-12 years old. Participants must meet all 5 criteria: have a primary care provider at WCCHC, have food insecurity and/or overweight or obesity, be 2-12 years old, live in Waianae (96792), and have Medicaid insurance or SNAP/EBT. To find out if you are eligible, contact 808-697-3228 or email foodmedicine@wcchc.com.
- FOOD SUBSCRIPTION program**: Offers \$250 per month for 6 months to buy fruits, vegetables, protein, poi, and honey at Makake Wa'aniwa, a farmers' & green market. Eligibility criteria include being an active patient at the Waianae Coast, having lived in an eligible WCCHC doctor within the past 12 months, living along the Leeward Coast of Oahu, having SNAP/EBT, and needing help accessing food. To find out if you are eligible, call 808-697-3736 or email foodmedicine@wcchc.com.

WAI'ANAE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE HUB



Current 15 Acres

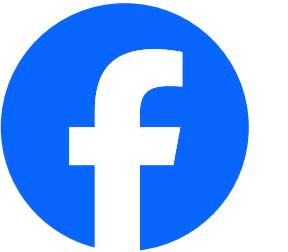


Mahalo Nui Loa!

Chris Fujimoto

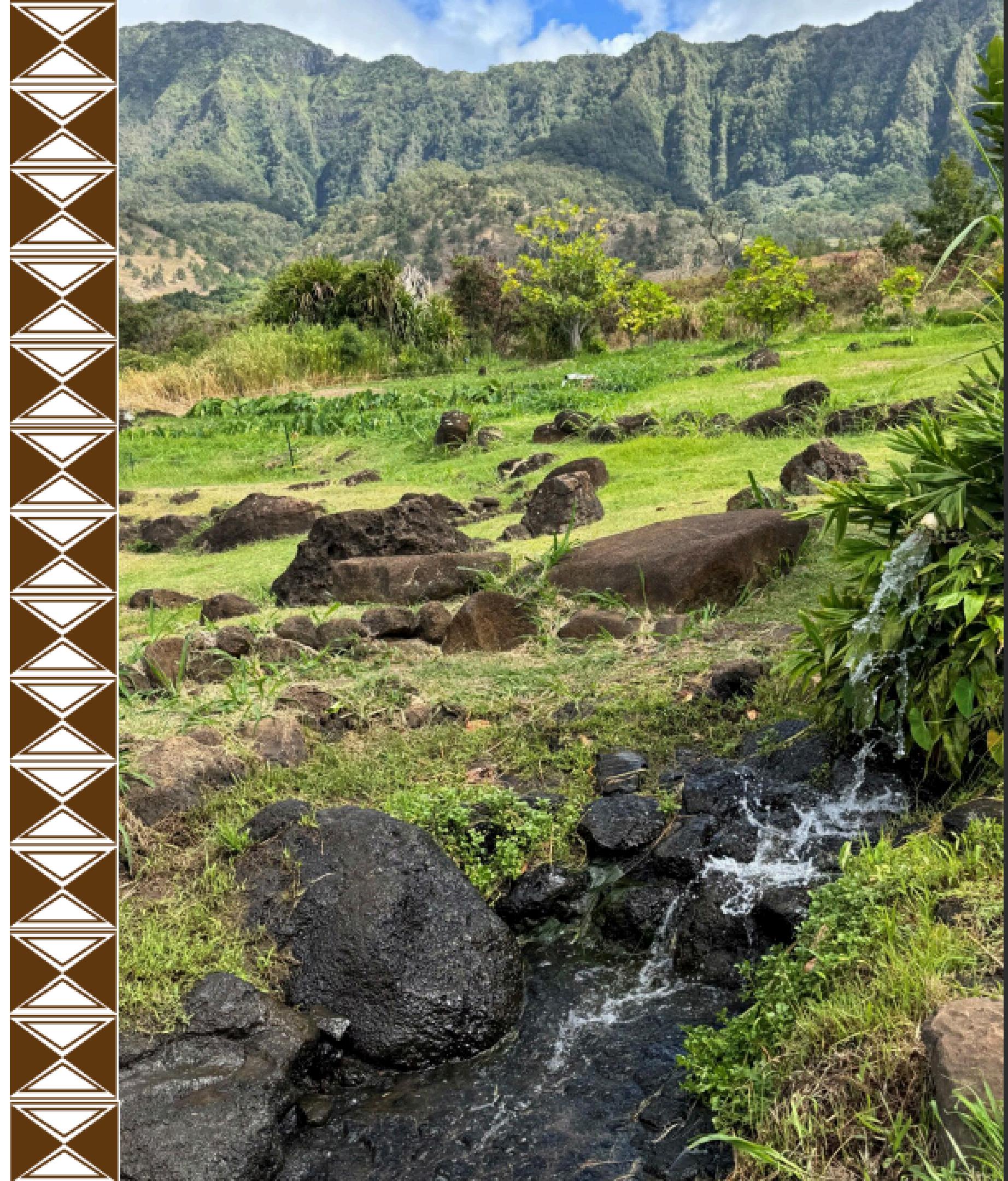
Community Wellness Manager, 'Elepaio Social Services

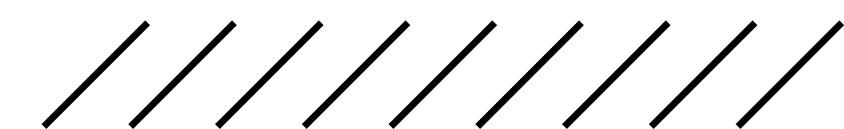
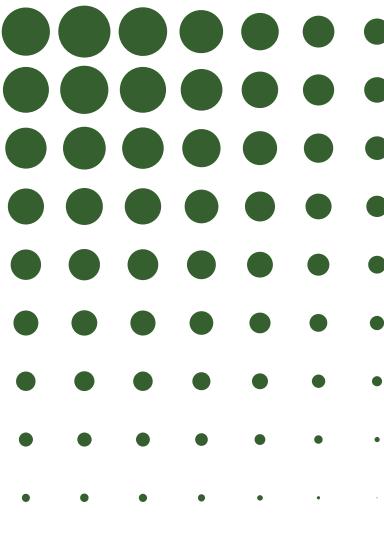
Email: cfujimoto@wcchc.com Phone: 808-697-3709



@elepaiosocialservices

@mekekefarmers





KAUA'I FOOD ACCESS CAPACITY BUILDING

A Community-Based Plan & Response



Megan Fox, Executive Director
Mālie Contrades, Food Access Alaka'i





KAUA'I FOOD ACCESS CAPACITY BUILDING

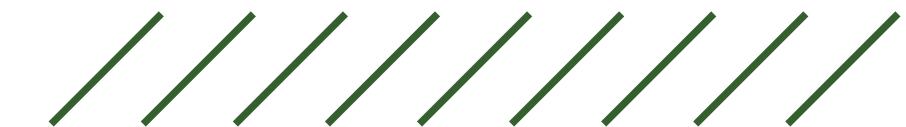
- Our Kuleana
- 2030 Kaua'i Food Access Plan
- Wins
- Challenges
- Working Together through Disasters
- The Future



- Host Quarterly Food Access Meetings
- Coordinate Annual Food Systems Summit
- 2030 Kaua‘i Food Access Plan
 - Kaua‘i Farm to School Hui Planning
 - School, Farmer, & Community Meetings and Surveys
 - 2022 Food Insecurity Survey



OUR KULEANA



Founded in 2006, Mālama Kaua‘i is a community-based, 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that focuses on increasing local food production and access for Kaua‘i. We do this through a lens of resilience and sustainability, which leverages workforce and economic development efforts, partnerships and innovative programs to grow community capacity.

Food Access Coordinator - as well as on the front lines of floods, landslides, the pandemic, and other disasters since 2018.



Emergency Food Transport

Emergency food is available via delivery islandwide for those with transportation barriers



Produce at Pantries

A minimum of 75% of food pantries offer local produce monthly



Community Gardens

A community garden or orchard in every moku



SNAP Online

Allow for SNAP Online to increase pickup and delivery capacity of KauaiLocalFood.com



Land Access

Stable land access is consistently available to farmers, focusing on long-term leasing and Kānaka Maoli land ownership



Equipment Sharing

Expand farmer association equipment share and discount programs

2030 KAUAI FOOD ACCESS PLAN OBJECTIVES



Invasive Species

Provide farmers financial support and incentives to address invasive species



Gleaning Program Expansion

Invest in gleaning program expansion so excess fruit can be delivered to local schools for snacks



Farm to School

Support the achievement of Farm to School goals, including 30% of school food being locally sourced by 2030



Hire a Grant Writer

Hire a grant writer dedicated to funding this food access plan and collaborative projects



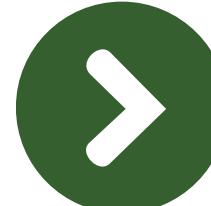
Obtain Government Funding

Obtain a commitment from County and State government for funding for producers and food access programs



WINS

- Deeper collaboration (and less duplication) between various agencies, not only those in food systems



\$1M+ in Farmer Grants Distributed by MK

YoY Kaukau 4 Keiki Expansion with High % of Locally Sourced Food

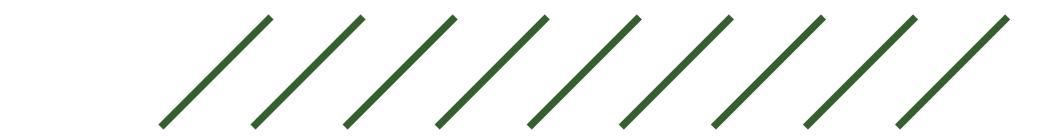
80% of Pantries Distribute Produce Monthly

SNAP Online Accepted at 3 Pilot Food Hubs Statewide (But Not Ours..)



WORKING THROUGH DISASTERS

- Enabled strong volunteer engagement and coordination efforts
 - Database of residents with boats, jet skis, UTVs, trailers, 4WD trucks, & other equipment for remote delivery
 - Matching of volunteers to agencies and a consolidated FB hub for volunteer postings
- Stronger relationships with food agencies and VOAD; VOAD with a seat on Kaua'i EOC
- Strengthening streamlined collaborative process for intake of impacted residents; reducing paperwork burdens and preventing victim neglect and centralized data control
- Advocacy for policy that provides local preference for recovery spending and contracts



CHALLENGES

- Limited staffing funding to see the work through long-term (approx. 0.5 to 0.75 FTE), awarded year to year - SNAP-Ed cut 2026's funding
- Dedicated grant writer position needed to develop funds for implementation work
 - Position has been declined by all requests so far, including a partner's awarded grant the role was later cut out of
- Many Food Access Plan Objectives rely on others to do the work (ex. farming associations, government, pantries) who may not have the dedication, interest, or staffing to implement
- Invasive species such as CRB and Parakeets are reducing net food production on current farms



THE FUTURE

- Releasing a full update and status on the 2030 Kaua‘i Food Access Plan in January 2026
- 2026 Kaua‘i Food Systems Summit in Summer
- Seek funding for a Grant Writer to help raise funds for plan implementation, and/or continue/expand Food Access Coordinator role to build that capacity
- We can't build capacity if we don't have capacity.





THANK YOU

MalamaKauai.org
KauaiLocalFood.com

