



in your neighborhood

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FY26 County Council MDOA Budget Hearing

Chief Executive Officer Testimony

4/16/2025

Aloha County Council,

My name is Scott Lacasse, and I am the CEO at Grow Some Good. Today, I'm asking for your continued support of our organization and the Maui Department of Agriculture (MDOA), whose partnership drives our collective efforts toward a shared goal- a thriving, food-secure Maui. Together, we can make this vision a reality.

At Grow Some Good, we empower keiki and families through hands-on agricultural education. Leilani Kato, a parent from our program, said, "My daughter used to shy away from new foods, but after working in the garden, she's excited to try what she grows." As Colleen Okuda, a 4th-grade teacher at Wailuku Elementary, said, "Taking home food samples, being active in the garden, and witnessing plant life from seed to table is truly amazing. Students will remember and appreciate these experiences for years to come." These stories are just a glimpse of our programs' transformative impact on students and families.

This year alone, we've reached over 8,000 students, helping them build skills, confidence, and a connection to the 'āina.

Our partnership with MDOA is crucial. Their \$150,000 FY26 funding line item to GSG fuels our community farm at the Maui Family YMCA and our Farm to School program with HDOE. As an "Action Lead" in MDOA's Maui County Food and Nutrition Security Plan, we're advancing access to fresh, culturally significant foods and supporting local farmers. Your funding is not just a contribution but a vital part of our collective mission.

Unlike my colleagues, who focus on specific events or workshops, I want to underscore the ripple effect of our work and how MDOA's support amplifies it. County funding keeps us growing, reaching more and more families across Maui.

Mahalo for championing Grow Some Good and MDOA. Together, we're cultivating a future where every child knows the value of the land and the food it provides.

Sincerely,

Scott Lacasse

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