

## ADEPT Committee

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**From:** County Clerk  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 10, 2024 11:22 AM  
**To:** ADEPT Committee  
**Subject:** FW: Testimony on ADEPT-1(26)  
**Attachments:** LPP recommendations - Dept of Ag\_DRAFT COM Food -Nutrition Security Plan.pdf

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**From:** Makalea Ane <makalea@living-pono.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 10, 2024 11:16 AM  
**To:** County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>  
**Subject:** Testimony on ADEPT-1(26)

You don't often get email from [makalea@living-pono.org](mailto:makalea@living-pono.org). [Learn why this is important](#)

Aloha ADEPT committee,

I would like to provide testimony/feedback on DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, DRAFT MAUI COUNTY FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY PLAN (ADEPT-1(26))

### **See attached for comments, suggestions, and edits to this plan**

The Living Pono Project is dedicated to supporting many aspects of this plan to enhance a circular economy here in Hawaii to meet our State and County Sustainability Goals. In particular we have secured two lots at 150 Hana Highway to upscale our current pop up market that services Fire survivors and our local farmers by purchasing local produce for distribution. Additionally, we will build on our success to help families create better opportunities for themselves and their ohana (with key collaborators from UHMC, Nohoana Farms, and GoFarm). Our goal is to establish a self-sustaining system that reduces grant dependency and lays the kahua (foundation) for a circular economy.

Key activities include:

1. Support farmers in expanding their operations and creating value-added products
  2. Connect agricultural procedures with individuals we currently service seeking new career opportunities
  3. Build our a central Resilience Hub to support economic recovery in “normal times” and in times of “shocks and stressors”
  4. Provide resources, host business classes, workshops, and trainings
  5. Address barriers of entry into other programs
  6. Reduce risk to entry into ag related economy (including edible and non-edible products)
- Mobile slaughter facility
  - Mobile poi mill/certified kitchen
  - Makeke for food and product aggregation and distribution
  - Micro-grants and contracting opportunities

Outcomes:

1. These initiatives will address gaps in our islands circular economy and integrate with existing programs to enhance their impact.
2. Reduce barriers to entry in Maui's agriculture sector by providing essential infrastructure and resources.
3. Create economic opportunities for those affected by the maui fires

Malama Ola,  
**Makale'a Ane**  
Climate and Resilience Director



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Maui County

# FOOD & NUTRITION SECURITY PLAN

*DRAFT Plan for Public Comment*



September 2024

Prepared for

Maui County  
Department of  
Agriculture

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# Acknowledgements

*We share our deepest gratitude for our food producers, emergency food and safety net providers, and food system workers for their dedication to feeding our community and protecting and stewarding our ‘āina and kai.*

*The creation of the Maui County Food and Nutrition Security Plan would not have been possible without:*



The 680 (and counting) Maui County community members who shared their time and knowledge through surveys and talk story

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The Maui Nui Food Alliance (MNFA) Steering Committee and the MNFA Food System Subcommittee

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Kamanani Conklin, Eileen Horn, and the New Ventures Advisors team for supporting this plan through synthesis, writing, and community feedback

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Alice Liu, Roella Foronda, and Hawai'i Public Health Institute for their invaluable insight and guidance throughout this process

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Hawai'i Department of Health SNAP-Ed Program

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Kelsey Ige for her upcoming support with graphic design and data visualization

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Jacquelin Varela, Kamanani Conklin, and Hunter Heavilin for their work to develop and conduct the Maui Nui Food System Needs Assessment

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Our action leads and the critical organizations and businesses that support food system change and equity in our islands

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Maui County leaders and the Maui County Council for their support in adopting and prioritizing this plan

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*Mahalo nui to everyone who has supported the plan and made this community-led effort possible.*

*We look forward to adding to this list as the plan moves through two rounds of public comment in fall 2024 and we incorporate the mana'o of additional community members.*

# Understanding our food system

## What is a food system?

A food system includes all the activities and resources that go into producing, processing, distributing, marketing, and consuming food and managing food waste. It involves people, policies, and infrastructure as well as the environmental, economic, and social factors that influence how food is produced and distributed. Thinking about food from a systems perspective helps us understand the interdependent parts and dynamics of this system – its actors, interactions, feedback mechanisms, and boundaries – and identify strategic opportunities for transformation.



In a similar vein, traditional and Indigenous understandings, like the Native Hawaiian concept of ‘āina, offer a deeply relational understanding of the food system. ‘Āina, often translated as “that which feeds,” encompasses both the land (including fisheries) and the people they nourish. This concept emphasizes a symbiotic relationship between humans and the environment, suggesting that caring for and respecting ‘āina leads to greater abundance and sustainability for all beings.

The food system intersects with many other community priorities, such as promoting health, supporting cultural practices, and addressing the impacts of climate change. A just and sustainable food system ensures that all people have access to nutritious and culturally relevant food, supports the livelihoods of those who produce food, and preserves the health of the environment for future generations.

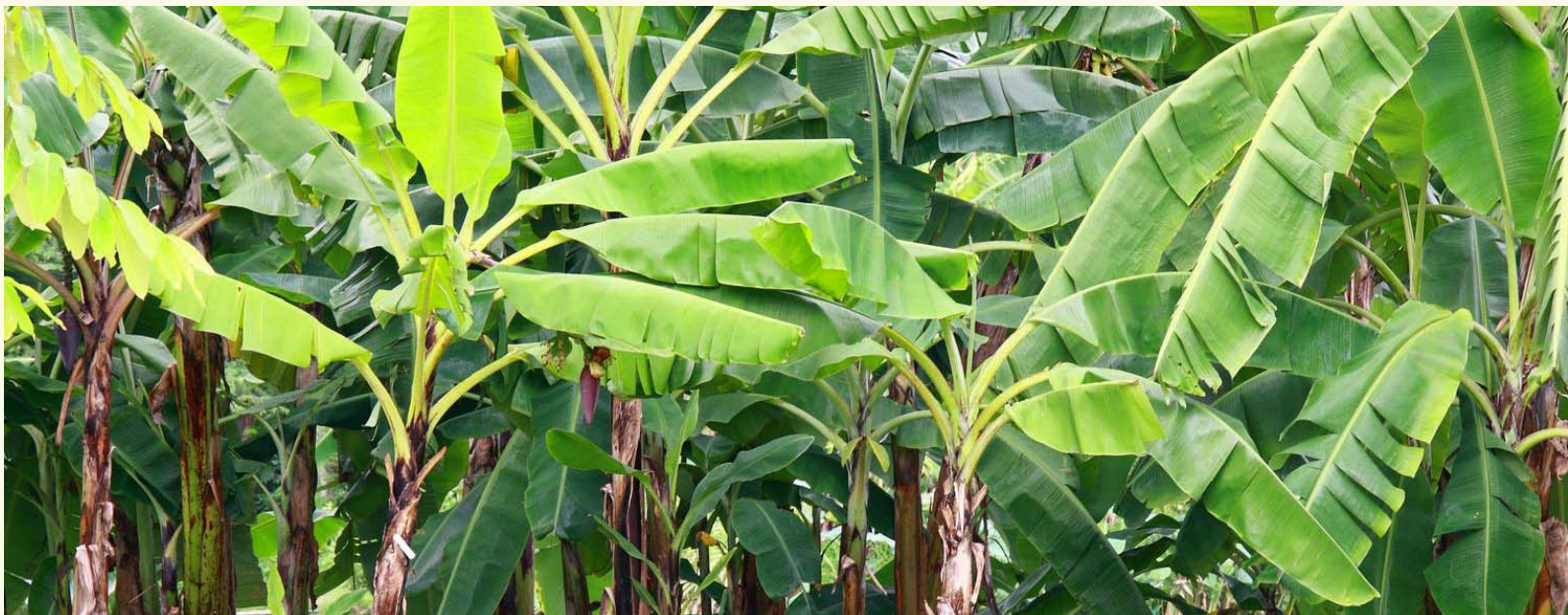
# Why plan for food systems?

A food system plan is a strategic framework that outlines a community’s vision for its food system and maps out the steps and stakeholders needed to achieve that vision. Food system plans often include strategies to support agriculture and food security, but may also focus on issues as diverse as composting, fisheries, and fair labor practices in the agricultural and restaurant industries.

Just as many city and county governments create 10- or 15-year plans for land use, transportation, and economic development, we can create food system plans that take a long-term view of community needs and priorities and help us coordinate efforts that support them.

Food system planning has not always received the attention it deserves, in part because there is no dedicated “Department of Food” to lead these efforts across all the government agencies and sectors that impact the food system. Yet, food is deeply connected to many critical aspects of community well-being. If we do not intentionally plan for food systems, we are likely to miss opportunities to support local people, economies, and ecosystems and may even perpetuate practices that harm them.

Recognizing this, more local governments and community-led groups are beginning to integrate food system planning into their broader strategic efforts, with a focus on developing sustainable and resilient food systems.



# Why does Maui County need a plan?

The Maui County Food and Nutrition Security Plan was created to ensure that all Maui County residents have access to affordable, nutritious, culturally appropriate food. This plan acknowledges the power of food systems as drivers of health, cultural connection, and resilience.

Maui County's food system is part of a much larger system that is influenced by global food production and federal and state policies. For the purposes of this plan, we are focused on the parts of the food system that we can influence within Maui County. We aim to create recommendations that reflect the unique needs and opportunities in our islands, guiding us toward a more resilient and just food system that aligns with our local values and goals.

There is a greater need than ever before to coordinate within our communities to create food systems that are equitable, accessible, and affordable. Even prior to the devastating August 2023 fires on Maui, many Maui County residents experienced food insecurity and financial strain. As inflation, food prices, and the cost of living increase, our community is facing greater challenges in affording food and accessing healthy diets. For example, the Maui Together Wildfire Assessment found that 60 percent of county residents have had to recently cut back on food and groceries for personal financial reasons and due to being short on money.

**Despite their resilience, our communities face greater challenges in affording food and accessing healthy diets.**

## 60%

of Maui County residents recently cut back on food & groceries for financial reasons, such as being short on money



# Why does Maui County need a plan?

## Food security is not possible without affordable housing and financial security.

Residents of Maui County pay the highest rent costs in the Nation, and 52.9% of Maui County's population is rent burdened. Hawai'i residents pay the highest food costs in the United States. Prior to the fires, Aloha United Way found that over half of Maui County's residents do not earn enough money to afford the basic cost of living. Hawai'i Food Bank reported that in Maui County, 31% of residents experienced food insecurity in 2023, and among the households affected by the wildfires, 49% experienced food insecurity. Additionally, rural communities face significantly more health challenges than urban residents. The Lāna'i Community Food Assessment and the East Maui Community Food Assessment both highlighted the resiliency of Maui County's rural communities and the multi-layered struggles these communities experience in accessing food and essential items.

We view food systems as one of our strongest levers for improving community health and quality of life. We hope to honor and perpetuate our islands' bountiful history of food production, from the precious lo'i kalo of Waihe'e to the famed loko i'a of Molokai. In addition to preserving our islands' rural agricultural identity, our homesteaders, fishers, foragers, ranchers, and farmers play a vital role in building our resilience. Only together with our food producers can we build food security and community wealth in Maui Nui.

## Food security

When all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life. The four essential components of food security are:

- **Availability:** Is the physical supply of food sufficient?
- **Access:** Can people actually obtain the food?
- **Utilization:** Are people able to eat and benefit nutritionally from the food they have?
- **Stability:** Are people prepared to remain food secure in the face of environmental, financial, political, or social shocks and stresses?



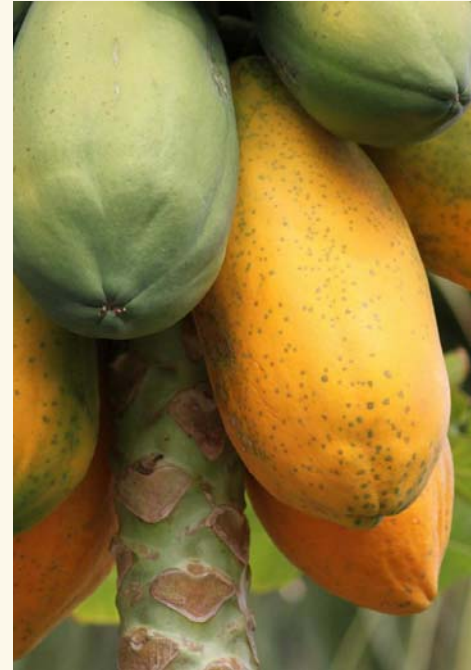
## Nutrition security

Consistent access, availability, and affordability of foods and beverages that promote well-being, prevent disease, and, if needed, treat disease, particularly among racial/ethnic minority populations, lower income populations, and rural and remote populations.

# How this plan is being created

Developed in collaboration with nearly 700 community members, including the Maui Nui Food Alliance, farmers, ranchers, fishers, hunters, foragers, educators, and public health professionals, the Food and Nutrition Security Plan was shaped by diverse voices and experiences across Maui Nui. These individuals shared input through in-person community gatherings, virtual feedback sessions, and online surveys between 2021 and 2024, including:

- Maui Nui 2021 Virtual Food Summit, Maui Nui 2022 Food Summit, and Maui Nui 2023 Food Summit
- Hawai'i Good Food Alliance 2021 Farmer Needs Assessment
- Maui County Department of Agriculture 2022-2023 Food Producer Needs Assessment
- Maui Nui Food Alliance 2023 Food Supply Assessment
- May to July 2023 Maui Nui Food Security Assessment
- Maui Food Bank's 2022 Food Bank and Pantry Assessment
- Maui Nui 2023 Consumer Needs Assessment
- Maui Nui 2024 Community Talk Story Sessions



The Maui County Department of Agriculture and Maui Nui Food Alliance collaborated with New Venture Advisors, a food system planning consulting group, to analyze these data sources and translate community input into the goals, objectives, and actions found in this plan. The plan will be revised based on community feedback shared through two rounds of public comment, which will include:

- September 2024 community feedback survey, public comment forms, and public meetings on the first draft of the Food and Nutrition Security Plan
- November 2024 community feedback and public meetings on the second draft of the Food and Nutrition Security Plan

# How to read this plan

**This plan lays out strategic recommendations to improve nutrition security, climate and emergency resilience, and opportunities for local food producers within Maui County.**

The recommendations are organized into **4 broad goals** that focus on different parts of the food system. Each goal currently includes **3-5 objectives** (more specific targets that focus on community-identified opportunities and barriers in that part of the food system) and **multiple actions** (highly specific policies and programs to achieve those objectives).

**Goals** → **Objectives** → **Actions**

The final plan will also include:

**Introduction to each goal:** Summarizes key data and community feedback related to the goal and explains how the goal is organized.

**Indicators:** Metrics that can be used to monitor progress toward achieving each objective.

**Potential leads:** Institutions, government agencies, and community organizations whose work aligns with an action and who could support the action's implementation.

Throughout the plan, icons will be used to show whether an action is a policy, program, or advocacy item. Icons will also be used to highlight priority actions, which were identified as the most important and urgent steps to take. Community members will prioritize these action items through two rounds of public comment and community engagement.

The actions will be organized to show their relevance to different parts of Maui County, as determined by the community talk story events. While the plan is intended to support the entire county, it will be helpful to highlight which actions are most important to different communities and if there are actions that only apply to certain communities.

# Goal 1: Ensure all residents have access to nourishing, culturally relevant foods at all times.

→ Objective: Leverage existing institutions, infrastructure, and programs, including those funded by USDA, to increase access to nourishing foods.

- Increase SNAP and WIC participation for eligible residents by increasing awareness of available programs, supporting individuals with the application and recertification process, and providing resources to help residents leverage their benefits (e.g. shopping guides and pictorial food cards for new WIC participants and information about using SNAP benefits to buy fruit, vegetable, and herb seeds and plants)
- Leverage SNAP-Ed funding to provide seeds, food trees, cooking skills, and other resources directly to SNAP participants and explore opportunities to use SNAP-Ed funding for Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) changes like Farm to School
- Increase the number of grocery stores that accept SNAP, WIC, and DA BUX
- Increase vendors' ability to accept DA BUX and WIC at farmers' markets and stores
- Expand student access to local, culturally relevant foods by helping farmers gain compliance to sell to HIDOE and encouraging HIDOE to contract directly with small and mid-sized farms
- Expand Farm to Food Bank and support food bank and pantry local produce purchasing programs, ideally aiming for the same 30% local by 2030 target that has been adopted by HIDOE
- Implement food as medicine and Produce Rx Programs
- Establish a Keiki Food Prescription Program
- Increase participation in school breakfast and lunch programs and address the summer and school break meal gap by leveraging: Summer Meal Box Programs, including backpack buddies and 'Ai Holo/Kaukau 4 Keiki, summer feeding programs through DOE, and Summer EBT
- Enhance and launch new food pantries at schools (from ECE to University)
- Support Kūpuna by expanding Meals on Wheels, hot food delivery programs, and Kūpuna Food Box programs and delivery capacity
- Re-establish a Food Truck Meal Voucher Program for Kūpuna
- Support enrollment in the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) and coordinate with market managers to ensure markets can accept SFMNP vouchers
- Align public transportation routes and schedules with key food access locations, such as grocery stores, farmers markets, and retailers who accept SNAP and WIC

Satellite Kitchens  
-receive and prep  
School Farms  
Encourage designation

Backpack buddies... poi

# Goal 1: Ensure all residents have access to nourishing, culturally relevant foods at all times.

→ Objective: Develop innovative programs to increase access to nourishing foods and lower rates of chronic diseases, especially in rural areas and Pacific Islander communities.

County Operated  
Farmers Markets  
ex. Kauai County

- Establish more fresh food grocery stores and farm stands, especially in rural areas
- Support gleaning organizations and models like Common Ground Collective, which make it possible to get food people grow at home to local markets, including food assistance
- Create community fridge programs to increase neighborhood-level access to fresh, healthy food
- Support cooking classes and educational programs to encourage healthy eating, focused on local produce and culturally relevant foods
- Provide education and training programs (in multiple languages or with interpreters) on food storage, meal planning, diets to prevent or manage chronic diseases
- Offer educational programming to support cafeteria employees, ex: Kalo to Kula program on Kaua'i
- Establish Community Gardens for Kūpuna

Satellite Kitchens for receiving and prepping produce for cafeterias

→ Objective: Increase community self-sufficiency by supporting home food production and access to wild foods.

- Establish additional community gardens and expand tree and seed distribution programs
- Expand educational programs that support home gardening, including seed saving and pest management
- Acknowledge the importance of foraged foods and suggest strategies to support those non-commercial food economies (e.g. catch limits, DLNR's rule restricting annual foraging amounts, etc.)
- Fund educational programs for foraging, plant identification, and other self-provisioning skills
- Increase access to hunting and fishing areas and the resources needed to hunt and fish successfully and responsibly
- Offer education and skills development programs for young and beginning hunters and fishers, including supporting their secondary needs (e.g., offer driver's education on Lāna'i so youth can obtain driver's licenses and engage in hunting)
- Provide limu foraging education, protection of important foraging sites
- Support Kīpahulu Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Area
- Address DLNR regulations that negatively impact local communities access to aquatic resources (e.g., on Molokai, reconsider bag limits in the context of people catching for their neighbors)



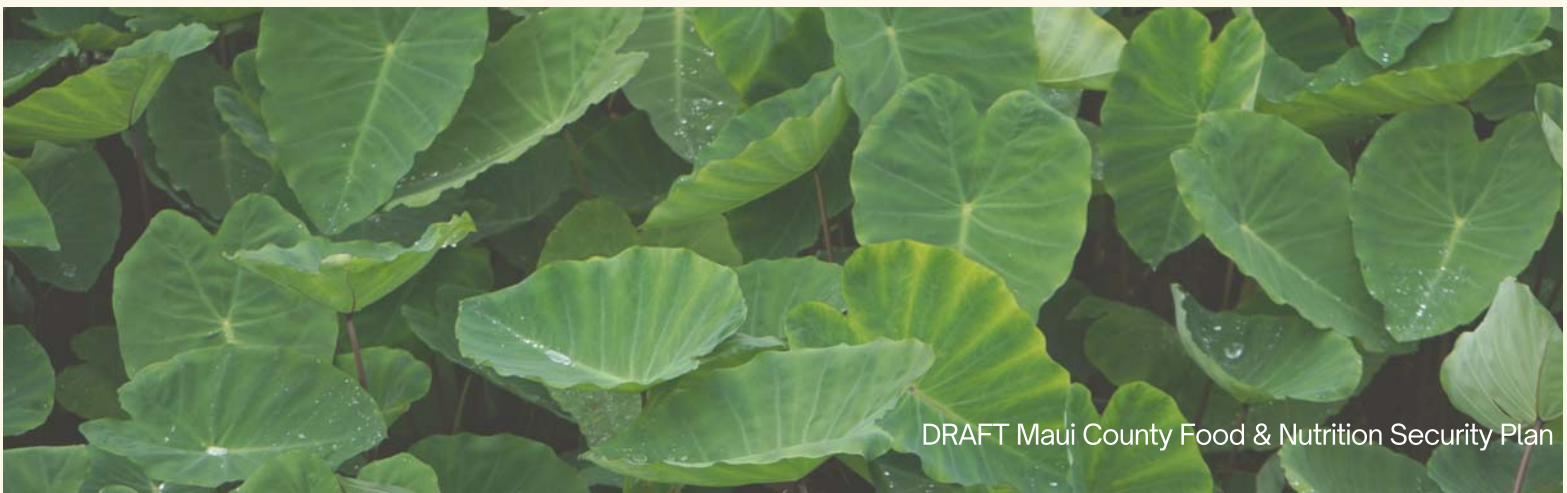
# Goal 1: Ensure all residents have access to nourishing, culturally relevant foods at all times.

→ Objective: Increase individual and community capacity to remain food secure in times of emergency.

- Implement public campaign to increase awareness of emergency food supply needs
- Establish food stores on each island (and ideally, each moku) for resilience during emergencies, increase storage capacity at food pantries **facilities, cold and dry storage**
- Support local producers in developing shelf-stable food products like macadamia nut butter and sunflower seed butter, which would also support better food distributions that consider food allergies **include free drying and dehydrating. Kalo, ulu, uala flour production**
- Create a Maui County Emergency Feeding Plan, with specific actions and implementation leaders for each region of the county (e.g. East Maui, West Maui, Central Maui, South Maui, Lana'i, East Molokai, West Molokai)
- Provide educational classes on food preservation and storage methods
- Support resilience for aquaponics systems via backup generators and other supplies that reduce vulnerability to electrical outages  
**Support loko'ia our traditional refrigerator in emergencies**

→ Objective: Support economic security, food affordability, and financial safety nets to prevent poverty and food insecurity, especially in the face of rising food prices.

- Expand availability of financial literacy trainings (like MEO's Senior Club) and integrate support with digital literacy, enrollment in SNAP enrollment and other public benefits, etc. into these trainings
- Support regulation in real estate and brokerage industries, short-term rentals, etc. to control housing costs
- Support rent control and access to affordable housing, since food security is not possible without housing security
- Consider restructuring taxes on food (i.e., allocate the county 0.5% surcharge on the state excise tax to healthy food access programs)



# Goal 2: Support farmers and expand food production to create an abundant, self-sufficient food system.

## → Objective: Protect and expand access to agricultural land.

- Address DLNR regulations that complicate access to ag infrastructure, loko i'a, and areas for hunting, foraging, and fishing **Increase State run hunting areas/programs**
- Protect agricultural leases need and ensure they are sufficiently long to farm **with infrastructure**
- Provide support with farm lease transfer and succession planning **+++ this is great**
- Establish community land trust or county funds to purchase large tracts of agricultural land
- Lease more state land for Ag use and enforce the creation/issuance of leases, ADC should buy more land on Maui to increase ag access
- Grow food on County and State land, with a focus on canoe crops including 'ulu, niu, and kalou **uala**
- Enforce ag-zoned land **+++++ absolutely, need enforcement**
- Partner with producers in identifying and reducing land code barriers to agriculture and value-added agricultural production such as building setbacks, food stand regulations and/or home occupations standards

## → Objective: Improve water infrastructure and management to support food production.

- Prioritize farmers for installation of water meters
- Support farmers in improving their water infrastructure, including smart irrigation, rain capture, rain filtration, etc. and expanding water storage capacity on farms and ranches **and practices: mulching vermicomposting**
- Explore strategies to lower water rates for farmers **501c13**
- Implement appropriate drought regulations and incentives/disincentives for ag and hotel water use
- Identify opportunities to use wastewater for agriculture and ranching **R1 water reuse on ranchland, doubles as fgreen firebreaks and fuel reduction**
- Provide financial support to develop water infrastructure, water storage, reservoirs, including at higher elevations to reduce need for electricity and pumping
- Conduct an island-wide assessment of water supply and availability, including private water systems, to identify opportunities for improving water-related infrastructure.
- Protect kuleana water rights for traditional agricultural uses **+++++ absolutely**

**Funding for conservation efforts ensure protection of freshwater resources**

## → Objective: Improve agriculture infrastructure and establish new facilities to increase capacity and resilience.

- Develop food processing centers (wash, pack) and commercial kitchens **Living Pono Project is committed to implementing these objectives**
- Establish food aggregation facility to facilitate getting produce to market
- Expand cold and dry storage options in each moku
- Expand key egg infrastructure, like processing centers (wash and pack) and reefers
- Increase meat processing capacity, especially for axis deer, by establishing new slaughterhouse facilities and training for slaughterhouse workers
- Apply for USDA funding for mobile slaughterhouse units for rural areas

**Funding for shared use - Equipmet coop with funding for operators and mechanics for maintenance**

## Goal 2: Support farmers and expand food production to create an abundant, self-sufficient food system.

→ Objective: Diversify food production and increase the amount of food grown for local consumption, with a focus on culturally relevant foods and sustainable protein sources.

**Example: Taro Tax exemption SB1499**

- Support production of culturally relevant crops such as ‘ulu, kalo, ‘uala, and mai’a, such as by reducing tax burden for these farmers and incorporating more of these crops into school food.
- Support development of value-added products to increase the availability of local food, utilize byproducts, and extend shelf life (deer jerky, etc.)
- Increase the number and capacity of USDA/state inspectors to go out on hunts, such as by sharing the costs of flying inspectors from other areas to Maui County or providing scholarships for Maui residents to become inspectors.
- Establish/expand county trapping programs for pigs, which makes it easier for inspection staff to be onsite
- Explore alternative approaches to inspection for hunted meat **Network of nurseries and seed banks**
- Build a thriving local plant nursery and seed industry with a focus on culturally relevant crops and preserving the genetic diversity of locally adapted varieties
- Support production of seed crops for local use, such as by working with NRCS and DOA to pay people who grow seeds for food production and cover crops
- Support nursery businesses in securing land and make State and County land available to nurseries
- Establish seed banks and support seed saving, maybe a free bulk seed bank with vouchers to get seeds instead of grants to fill out or paperwork

**Educational Programs such as Kanu ka Ike to preserve agri-cultural knowledge**

→ Objective: Support producers in navigating regulations and reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens.

- Increase awareness and understanding of regulations and requirements and support training and steps needed to achieve certifications, including food safety and successful inspections
- Provide support throughout the permit and regulation processes, such as by creating videos and guides to help people fill out forms
- Provide financial support to defray costs of transportation and certifications since it’s the government that is increasing the requirements for those elements
- Align state and county permitting requirements and increase county capacity to respond to permits in order to shorten the permit response time
- Revise waste water/septic requirements for commercial kitchens (DOH needs to revise their calculation based on use, so put water meters in to understand the amount of waste water)



# Goal 3: Build vibrant local food economies & profitable career pathways for farmers & food system workers.

## → Objective: Increase market access for local producers & support value chain coordination.

- Support producers with networking, accessing markets, and matchmaking with local stores
- Support more avenues for sale, such as broker networks, state-funded projects, farmers markets, including more markets for small producers on Molokai
- Support transportation and collaboration to get small producers' products to market (ex: Coordinate transport for producers in East Maui, such as by using empty trucks leaving Hana Ranch Store & Hasegawa General Store to transport food grown in East Maui)
- Start a farmers' hui to ensure that producers are paid standard rates for produce, especially by large buyers such as hotels, and support producers in developing contracts and negotiating for fair prices
- Support local markets for kalo, 'ulu, niu, and other culturally relevant foods
- Develop a pipeline to get axis deer to local markets, especially to food assistance
- Support fisheries, such as by establishing Community Supported Fisheries with individual fishers and loko i'a
- Increase understanding (through research, etc) of fish and aquatic food markets to support fisher market access
- Add farmers markets to the Ag Directory and information on how to join as a vendor or customer; develop map of Farmers' Markets and Agriculture Opportunities  
*Utilize: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/20ac6a7b09284684805e4b5d2ceee158/page/Main-Page/>*
- Promote an Eat Local Maui campaign to encourage residents, grocery stores, hotels, and other large purchasers to prioritize local, sustainable foods in their procurement
- Create a customer-oriented directory showing where you can purchase local food, such as an app listing retailers (grocery stores, farmers markets, farm stands, etc.) and restaurants.
- Develop purchasing guidelines that prioritize local and sustainable food, such as by setting targets for % of food sourced locally or establishing separate bidding processes for local producers, for local government agencies.
- Train future generations of chefs to use, prioritize, and promote local ingredients

## → Objective: Support producers in navigating regulations and reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens.

- Fund entrepreneurship programs that support small businesses, providing mini-grants, loans, and technical assistance to food businesses. These could be micro-grants to cover expenses that are commonly barriers to food system startups (i.e. licensing or legal fees). *Living Pono Project initiative*
- Support the creation of food business incubators and commercial kitchens for food business owners to grow and scale locally sourced and produced foods.
- Clarify county and state regulations that impact small food businesses, including cottage food laws
- Utilize Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) to leverage additional investment in neighborhood food system businesses and infrastructure.

# Goal 3: Build vibrant local food economies & profitable career pathways for farmers & food system workers.

## → Objective: Increase farm viability and the viability of farming as a sustainable and fulfilling career.

- Increase access to capital, such as by exploring CDBG funding for the County and floating municipal bonds to front CDBG funds [US Economic Development Administration](#)
- Provide grants to pay for labor to install fencing, electric fencing, and water infrastructure
- Increase financial literacy by supporting small business development for farmers, especially for Lanai and Molokai (regular community OED consultations)
- Establish a Lānaʻi-based OED specialist, like Molokai, and an annual business fair
- Expand grant writing support and application coaching
- Consider restructuring taxes on ag inputs, both county taxes as well as state taxes [Example: Taro Tax Exemption Similar to Film exemptions](#)
- Identify and implement strategies to help producers achieve living wage
- Explore new zoning codes that make it easier to live where you farm (including makeshift structures)
- Support mixed use zoning/eco village zoning
- Subsidize the cost of building housing on ag land – it is currently way too expensive to do so which makes it hard to afford to farm [US Rural Development Funding](#)

## → Objective: Develop future generations of farmers and support ongoing advancement for current producers.

- Expand partnerships with DOE and integrate agriculture in the classroom to grow a future generation of farmers (as one community member said, “Make ag programs accessible for all students — not just as volunteer hours or detention”)
- Develop a community-driven agriculture curriculum, such as by working with kūpuna to create a curriculum and pass down their agricultural knowledge
- Establish more school gardens and hire both staff and student garden coordinators to increase capacity and enable students to gain more leadership and work experience [Space and infrastructure Support during the summer](#)
- Increase support for agriculture and garden teachers (funding to cover supplies for classroom, training opportunities, etc.)
- Offer additional Farmer Education Programs, accessible in multiple languages
- Expand Farmer Extension services and support direct mentorship for producers
- Provide pathways for agriculture jobs, including by strengthening partnerships between high schools and UHMC to help students access pipelines to ag training and financial support for training
- Offer an agriculture area at DOE career days and establish a standalone Agriculture Career Day
- Support and expand paid internship programs
- Support producer mental health and build capacity for mental health support
- Improve communication (marketing, central hubs) for farm opportunities and learning opportunities. Identify a media partner or partner with food distributors who already work with producers (SunFresh, Local Harvest, VIP, etc.) [additional aggregators and educators like Living Pono Project](#)

# Goal 4: Promote healthy, resilient ecosystems & responsible resource stewardship.

## → Objective: Promote food waste diversion, composting, and other efforts that reduce waste and improve soil fertility.

- Establish a island-wide County-supported composting (regional compost center), which will also prevent spread of CRB and pests that thrive on decaying matter
- Increase access to wood chips
- Incentivize cover crops in fallow fields for soil health, water retention, and fire prevention
- Repurpose food waste and animal carcasses in soil management practices

## → Objective: Support Ridge to Reef resource management practices.

- Support traditional Native Hawaiian land management practices of ridge to reef stewardship to prevent erosion and lessen damage from flooding
- Address erosion, plant native trees and shrubs, etc.
- Restore historical waterways and support Community Water Authorities' efforts to restore stream flow for food production and healthy aquatic systems
- Support Community Based Subsistence Fishing Areas where appropriate (as determined by community experts in partnership with DAR)
- Invest in improving traditional fisheries infrastructure and loko i'a

## → Objective: Manage invasive species populations.

- Protections need to be made to stop the spread of invasive species, like the Coconut rhinoceros beetle and Little fire ants, from coming to our islands through inter-island shipping of plant materials.
- Develop an Emergency CRB Response Plan for Maui County
- Fund responsible fencing to keep undulates off of farms and reconsider how the Hawai'i Conservation Program and similar programs approach fencing (i.e. fence in or fence out, fences have to consider access for hunters)
- Support responsible population management (e.g. dispose of animals properly after animal control goes out to reduce populations, which will help to protect the safety of our water supplies)
- Incentivize hunting and trapping of invasive species, and not just for large landowners



# Implementing the plan

The plan will be carried out and co-led by community leaders, including non-profits, small businesses, and government-supported projects working to build a better food system for Molokai, Lānaʻi, and Maui. Potential leads for each of the plan’s action items will be identified by community members based on the lead’s current work, skills, and kuleana and their alignment with the action. The Maui County Department of Agriculture and the Maui Nui Food Alliance aim to meet with each of the potential leads prior to publishing the plan in order to collaboratively assess their capacity to lead the action and develop a preliminary plan to do so.



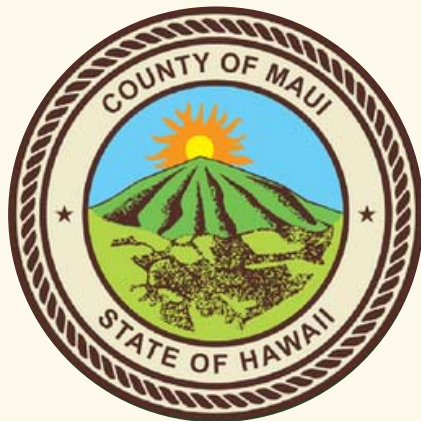
The Maui County Department of Agriculture will support the advancement of the Food and Nutrition Security Plan’s goals through ongoing coordination with action leads and annual evaluations of the plan’s progress.



# Contact Us

We look forward to hearing your feedback on the draft plan!

Please add your comments using the form on our website and [take the survey](#) by October 11, 2024.



## Maui County Department of Agriculture

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Email

[Agriculture@co.maui.hi.us](mailto:Agriculture@co.maui.hi.us)

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Website

[https://www.mauicounty.gov/2473/  
Department-of-Agriculture](https://www.mauicounty.gov/2473/Department-of-Agriculture)

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**in your neighborhood**

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October 10, 2024

ADEPT Committee Hearing

re: [Draft Maui County Food and Nutrition Security Plan](#)

Executive Director Testimony

Aloha, Chair Johnson, members of the ADEPT Committee, and the Maui County Department of Agriculture. I am Scott Lacasse, the Executive Director of Grow Some Good, a 501(c)(3) focused on cultivating a healthy community by strengthening local agriculture and improving access to nutritious, affordable food.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on the Draft Maui County Food and Nutrition Security Plan. We appreciate the plan's focus on ensuring access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food. Its recognition of food systems as drivers of health, cultural connection, and resilience is deeply aligned with our mission.

Grow Some Good and its partner organizations contribute to a self-sufficient and abundant food system through our core programs—Nā Māla Kaiāulu, Farm to School, and Kumu Mea Kanu Kits. For example, our Nā Māla Kaiāulu agroforestry initiative, in partnership with the Maui Family YMCA, is transforming nearly three acres of County-leased land into a thriving community food forest. This work promotes resilient ecosystems and responsible stewardship, which aligns with Goal 4 of the plan.

Our Farm to School program, reaching over 8,000 students annually, supports Goal 3 by fostering future farmers and food system leaders. By integrating agricultural education and distributing nearly 4,000 plant starts through our Kumu Mea Kanu Kits, we empower families to grow their food and strengthen food security.

While we're proud of these contributions, additional collaboration and support are essential. Increased access to infrastructure like tools, water, funding, and workforce housing for school garden coordinators would help us expand, especially in underserved communities.

One area where we urgently need support is expediting permit approvals for land and building use related to our agricultural activities. Navigating SMA rules, exemptions, and

*Grow Some Good is a 501(c)(3) organization. All donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by the IRS.*

RECEIVED AT ADEPT MEETING ON 10/10/2024  
from Scott Lacasse



building permits is often complex, and more straightforward guidance and review would significantly expedite our progress on key projects.

Additionally, streamlining the County's grant process for organizations like ours that annually receive line-item funding would enable us to focus more on delivering results and significantly increase our efficiency and impact. This change is crucial for the success of our initiatives.

In conclusion, we want to reiterate our full commitment to supporting the County in realizing the vision of the Food and Nutrition Security Plan. We are committed to working closely with the ADEPT Committee and the Maui County Department of Agriculture to achieve our shared goals. Together, we can build a just, resilient, and culturally connected food system for all Maui residents.

Mahalo for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Lacasse".

Scott Lacasse  
Executive Director  
Grow Some Good  
808-215-9228 ext 700