

**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**

KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI

A HO'OMĀKA'IKA'I

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Notice of Interagency Food Systems Working Group Meeting

Held via Teleconference with In-Person Viewing Location

NOVEMBER 21, 2025
9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Pursuant to section 92-3.7, *Hawaii Revised Statutes*, this meeting will be held using interactive conference technology (ICT). Working Group members, staff, people with business before the Working Group, and the public may participate remotely online using ICT, or may participate via the in-person meeting site which provides ICT.

Interested people may submit written testimony in advance of the meeting, which will be distributed to Working Group members prior to the meeting. If possible, we request that testimony be received by our office not less than seventy-two hours prior to the meeting to ensure that staff in time to disseminate it and that Working Group members have time to review it. Written testimony may be submitted electronically to dbedt.adc@hawaii.gov or sent via U.S. Postal Service, or delivered to:

Agribusiness Development Corporation
235 S. Beretania Street, Suite 205
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

When testifying via ICT, via telephone, or in-person, you will be asked to identify yourself and the organization you represent, if any. Each testifier will be limited to two minutes of testimony per agenda item.

The public may participate in the meeting via:

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_NzUxZDIzNWUtY2ViMy00MGRiLTk4MWEtMTQyMGQzNmVkMzFk%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%223847dec6-63b2-43f9-a6d0-58a40aaa1a10%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22fd1c10fe-d6de-43c9-9e53-03095feee2da%22%7d

Meeting ID: 290 428 316 312 3
Passcode: Pr37iv9U
Telephone: (808) 829-4853

0001

ICT ACCESS

To view the meeting and provide live oral testimony, please use the link above. You will be asked to enter your name in order to access the meeting as an attendee. The Working Group requests that you enter your full name, but you may use a pseudonym or other identifier if you wish to remain anonymous. You will also be asked for an email address. You may fill in this field with any entry in an email format, e.g., ****@****.com.

As an attendee, your microphone will be automatically muted. When the Chairperson asks for public testimony, you may click the Raise Hand button found on your Zoom screen to indicate that you wish to testify about that agenda item. The Chairperson or staff will individually enable each testifier to unmute their microphone. When recognized by the Chairperson, please unmute your microphone before speaking and mute your microphone after you have finished speaking.

For ICT and in-person access, when testifying, you will be asked to identify yourself and the organization, if any, that you represent. Each testifier will be limited to two minutes of testimony per agenda item.

Instructions to attend State of Hawaii virtual Working Group meetings may be found online at <https://cca.hawaii.gov/pvl/files/2020/08/State-of-Hawaii-Virtual-Board-Attendee-Instructions.pdf>.

IN-PERSON ACCESS

There will also be one meeting location, open to the public, which will have an audio-visual connection. That meeting will be held at:

Capitol District Building
250 South Hotel Street 5th Floor, Room 507A
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

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Interagency Food Systems Working Group Agenda
November 21, 2025

business day. New ICT, telephone, and in-person access information will be posted on the website no less than twenty-four hours prior to the continued meeting date. Alternatively, if a decision is made to terminate the meeting, the termination will be posted on the ADC website.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

If you require special assistance, accommodations, modifications, auxiliary aids, or services to participate in the public meeting process, including translation or interpretation services, please contact staff at (808) 586-0186 or by email at dbedt.adc@hawaii.gov.

Please allow sufficient time for ADC staff to meet requests for special assistance, accommodation, modifications, auxiliary aids, translation, or interpretation services.

NOTE: MATERIALS FOR THIS AGENDA WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW IN THE ADC OFFICE, 235 S. BERETANIA STREET, SUITE 205, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813 A MINIMUM OF THREE FULL BUSINESS DAYS (WEEKENDS AND STATE AND FEDERAL HOLIDAYS EXCLUDED) PRIOR TO THE MEETING.

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The Agribusiness Development Corporation does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, or disability, or any other class as protected under applicable federal or state law, in administration of its programs, or activities, and the Agribusiness Development Corporation does not intimidate or retaliate against any individual or group because they have exercised their rights to participate in actions protected by, or oppose action prohibited by, 40 C.F.R. Parts 5 and 7, or for the purpose of interfering with such rights.

If you have any questions about this notice or any of the Agribusiness Development Corporation's non-discrimination programs, policies, or procedures, you may contact:

Mark Takemoto
Acting Title VI Non-Discrimination Coordinator
235 S. Beretania St., Ste 205 Honolulu, HI 96813
(808) 586-0186
dbedt.adc.titlevi@hawaii.gov

If you believe that you have been discriminated against with respect to an Agribusiness Development Corporation program or activity, you may contact the Acting Non-Discrimination Coordinator identified above.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order & Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Regular Session Minutes, October 17, 2025
3. Presentations
 - a. Implementation Options and Governance Framework for Act 239, Amanda Shaw
 - b. Advancing Hawai'i's Food System Resilience & Commodity Coordination, Hunter Heavilin
4. Action Items
 - a. Review Accomplishments and Activities to Date.
 - b. Assign Sections of Report including governance, coordination efforts, implementation plans, recommendations, and proposed legislation.
 - c. Establish Report Structure and Timeline for the Interagency Food Systems Working Group.
5. Adjourn

The Working Group may go into executive session on any agenda item pursuant to the exceptions provided under section §92-5, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Minutes of the Interagency Food Systems Working Group Meeting held Virtually on October 17, 2025
Via Microsoft Teams and/or In-Person at No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 S. Hotel Street, Room 507 A,
Honolulu, HI 96813

Pursuant to section 92-3.7, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), this meeting was held remotely with Board members, Staff, Applicants, and the Public participating via Microsoft Teams meeting venue, and an In-Person meeting location available for public participation at the No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 S. Hotel Street, Room 507A, Honolulu, HI 96813.

Members Present, in person:

None.

Members Present, virtually:

Dane Wicker, Co-Chair, Designee for DBEDT, Ex-Officio Member James Tokioka (Member Wicker)
Sharon Hurd, Co-Chair, Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity
Representative Cory M. Chun, House Designee, House Chair of the Agriculture and Food Systems (AGR)
Senator Lynn DeCoite, Senate Designee, Chair Economic Development and Tourism (EDT)

Members excused:

None.

Staff Present, in person:

Keliann Yamamoto, DBEDT Deputy Director Secretary (Ms. Yamamoto)

Staff Present, virtually:

None.

Guests Present, physical location:

Amanda Shaw, Director Food Systems, Agriculture Stewardship Hawaii
Taylor Mackenzie, Agriculture Stewardship Hawaii

Guests Present, virtually:

Sheryl Shigemasa
Anna Ezzy, County of Hawaii Department of Research and Development, Agriculture & Food Systems
Richard A. "Buddy" Nichols, State Executive Director for USDA Farm Service Agency
Dustin Lee, Representative Chun's Office Manager
Clyds Manzano, Hawaii Food Plus Policy, Program Coordinator
Joy Kono, Department of Education, Regional Kitchen Planner
Carly Wyman
Dexter Kishida, Department of Transportation, Food Security and Biosecurity Program Manager
Janet Ashman, Hawaii Farm Bureau, Environmental Stewardship
P S Geiser
Alice Liu, Hawaii Public Health Institute, Food Systems Program Manager
Alexis Chapman, Director of Operations for Hawaii Food Industry Association
Mark Ladao, Hawaii Public Radio
Grewal Parwinder

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Thomas Heaton, Civil Beat, Reporter

Kima Hardy, Earth Innovation, Community Food Producer in Urban Agroecologist

Hunter Heavilin, Super Assistance Food System Planner & Hawaii Farmer's Union Advocacy Director

Lauren Nelson, Maui Department of Agriculture, Good Access Coordinator

Brian Miyamoto, Hawaii Farm Bureau, Executive Director

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Kahikina

David Elliot

S Potter

Wendy Taylor

Lyle Roe

Matthew Loke

A. Call to Order & Roll Call

Virtual attendance procedures reviewed.

Co-Chairs Dane Wicker and Sharon Hurd convened the meeting at 1:34pm and confirmed role as co-chairs.

Technical housekeeping covered (mute/unmute, hand-raise).

B. Approval of Minutes

None (no prior minutes presented for approval).

C. Action Items

3a) Review Accomplishments and Activities to Date

- The Working Group (WG), established by Act 239, confirmed scope: coordinate and oversee interagency food systems planning; develop governance, decision-making, and operating protocols; coordinate with county/community efforts; identify resources; and establish communication processes.
- Annual legislative report due December 31, 2025, to include activities, recommendations, and any proposed legislation.
- Operating appropriation noted \$100,000, to be expended by DBEDT.
- Discussion highlighted the impact of federal policy changes (funding decreases, tariffs, shutdown) on Hawai'i's food system and planning.

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Key themes to date

- Local production & biosecurity: Emphasis on increasing local food production and protecting against invasive species.
- Infrastructure gaps: Need for cold storage, processing plants, and regional capacity (e.g., regional kitchens) to support institutional purchasing.
- Market & demand: Explore tools (e.g., SNAP utilization) to support local farmers and keep dollars circulating locally (circular economy).
- Sector challenges: Dairy and cattle sectors cited as facing legal/market barriers and data gaps; interest in topic-specific deep dives at future meetings (e.g., composting, dairy).

3b) Assign Sections of the Report

- Agreement to assign drafting responsibility across the following sections:
 1. Governance & Operating Protocols (decision-making, roles, coordination cadence).
 2. Coordination Efforts (alignment with county/community plans; visitor industry engagement; institutional purchasing).
 3. Implementation Plans (infrastructure roadmap—cold storage, processing; workforce; regional kitchens).
 4. Data & Metrics (production, consumption, land requirements, off-grade volumes; sector baselines for cattle/dairy and priority commodities).
 5. Recommendations & Proposed Legislation (policy/funding levers; federal alignment; data reporting).
- (Note: Individual assignees to be finalized offline; Working Group members encouraged to submit materials to the shared inbox.)

3c) Establish Report Structure and Timeline

- Structure: Executive Summary; Background (Act 239); Governance & Process; County/Community Coordination; Implementation Plan (infrastructure, workforce, procurement); Data & Metrics; Recommendations; Proposed Legislation; Appendices (testimony/materials).
- Timeline: Series of five meetings culminating in the Dec 31st report; interim checkpoints for section drafts and data validation.

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Honolulu, HI 96813

Additional Discussion Highlights

- Cross-sector issues: Food security intersects with multiple sectors; proposals should reflect interdependencies.
- Commodity focus: Start with a limited set (e.g., dairy, cattle/beef, selected produce) to establish measurable baselines and demonstrate progress.
- County alignment: Coordinate with county-level initiatives (e.g., Hawai'i County 5-Year Agri-Food System Plan, O'ahu Good Food initiatives, food hub projects).
- Visitor industry: Opportunity to increase local purchasing through partnerships and producer assessments.
- Data partnerships: Engage Hawai'i Tropical Fruit Growers, Hawai'i Farm Bureau, Master Food Preservers, cattlemen's association, and other commodity groups to fill data gaps (including off-grade volumes).

Motions/Decisions

- Agreement to accept written materials/testimony via the Working Group inbox for incorporation into the report and agendas.

Action Items (with owners to be confirmed)

- Submit materials/testimony to dbedt.adc@hawaii.gov in advance of the next meeting for agenda/report integration.
- County coordination: Explore collaboration with county food system planning (e.g., Hawai'i County 5-year plan) and ongoing county initiatives.
- Commodity data outreach: Contact Hawai'i Tropical Fruit Growers, Hawai'i Farm Bureau, cattlemen's association, and others to gather production and off-grade data; address cattle/beef data gaps.
- Topic deep-dive planning: Queue focused sessions (e.g., composting, dairy) for upcoming agendas.
- Visitor industry engagement: Identify avenues to increase institutional and visitor-sector purchasing of local products.
- Report drafting: Section leads to circulate first draft outlines before the next meeting; consolidate into the agreed report structure.

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Honolulu, HI 96813

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned by Co-Chair Wicker at the conclusion of agenda items at
2:34pm.

DRAFT

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEXTER KISHIDA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

December 23, 2024

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi,
President and Members of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

The Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura,
Speaker, and Members of the House
of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Nakamura, and Members of the Legislature:

For your information and consideration, I am transmitting a copy of the Report of the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group in response to SR111, SD1, 2024 Legislature. In accordance with Section 93-16, Hawaii Revised Statutes, I am also informing you that the report may be viewed electronically at <https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/meetings-reports/legislative-reports/>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sharon Hurd".

Sharon Hurd
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

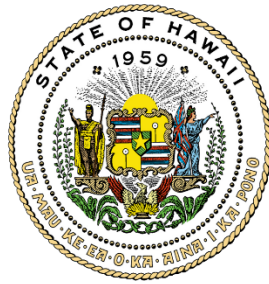
Attachments



0010

REPORT TO THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE 2025 REGULAR SESSION

REPORT OF THE SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS WORKING GROUP
IN RESPONSE TO SR 111, SD1, 2024 LEGISLATURE



Prepared by:
THE HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

December 2024

**Report of the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group
December 20, 2024**

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Executive Summary

This **Draft Hawai'i Food and Agricultural Inter-Agency Coordination Framework, 2025-2026** outlines a strategic and collaborative approach to enhancing inter-agency coordination on reaching key Hawai'i food system goals. Developed by the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group in response to Senate Resolution 111 (SR 111, SD1), the framework integrates insights from past systems levels mapping and research, statewide and county-levels planning processes, policy mandates and goals. Its key recommendation is to establish a fully resourced process for statewide food systems coordination that builds equitably from county and moku-based engagement processes.

For 2025-2026, the framework helps to align existing departmental activities and proposes new areas of work for the philanthropically funded **Statewide Food Systems Coordination team** housed at the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture. The framework outlines further areas of inter-agency coordination to support key efforts on:

- **State-Level Food Systems Governance**
- **Data and Information**
- **Biosecurity and Invasive Species Management**
- **Land, Water, and Infrastructure**
- **Institutional Purchasing and Value-Added Infrastructure.**

Specifically, these include:

- **State-Level Food Systems Governance:** Establish and resource a state-level food systems coordination process that equitably integrates county and moku-based plans, outlines a roadmap for implementation, and tracks progress toward food systems goals.
- **Data and Information:** Advocate for funding to restore the Department of Agriculture's capacity for data collection and analysis to provide accurate and timely agricultural data and track statewide progress.
- **Biosecurity and Invasive Species Management:** Secure funding and establish Inter-Agency agreements to implement the Hawai'i Inter-Agency Biosecurity Plan, including a Level 3 biosecurity facility and invasive species control measures.
- **Land, Water, and Infrastructure:** Create a cross-departmental action group to identify and address land access, water and infrastructure issues and projects.
- **Institutional Purchasing and Value-Added Infrastructure:** Facilitate connectivity between regional kitchens and existing agricultural infrastructure and help identify and address any procurement barriers to increase institutional purchasing of locally sourced food.

Finally, the framework and report also highlights the need to deepen stakeholder engagement and advance understanding of equity, justice and systems transformation in undertaking food systems coordination work.

Acknowledgements

Our deepest appreciation for the farmers, food system workers and ordinary folks feeding their families throughout Hawai'i whose voices have carried us to this point in our work. Collectively, we have a duty to create a food and agriculture system that supports them and helps us reach our shared goals.

Gratitude to the members of the working group: Sharon Hurd, Dexter Kishida, Dane Wicker, Hon. Mike Gabbard, Hon. Kirstin Kahaloa, Michael Burke, Kū'ikeokalani Kamakea-Ohelo, Danielle Bass, Ken Kakesako, Brian Miyamoto, Kaipo Kekona, Hunter Heavilin, Dr. Albie Miles and Jesse Cooke. We are deeply grateful for their time and participation in this process. Mahalo also to Anna Ezzy for her research assistance and to Sarah Freeman, Diane Ley and Greg Chun for their work on long-range planning for the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA).

1. Introduction

Double local food production by 2030 (Act 151, SLH 2019).

Ensure 50% of foods are local agriculture or valued-added/food products within key state institutions by 2050 (Act 176, SLH 2021).

Increase access to labor and land resources to support production, processing, distribution, and consumption of local food (Hawai'i Green Growth).

The list of ambitious goals for Hawai'i food and agricultural systems goes on.

“What is our plan to get there?”

This is the question that leaders, advocates and communities have raised with increasing urgency over the past several years. The efforts of farmers, food producers and others have been numerous in highlighting the roadblocks to reaching more food self-sufficiency as well as achieving equity and resilience in our food and agricultural systems.

Since 2022, local leaders and funders have been working to fund and embed a food systems specialist position or positions within Hawai'i state government to help increase inter-agency coordination as part of reaching these goals. This report and its process has been supported by the success of their efforts in creating a Local Food Project Specialist team - **the Statewide Food Systems Coordination team** – at the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA). This three-year initiative is working within and beyond the HDOA on the following objectives: 1) engaging agricultural communities and stakeholders to promote sustainability and food security; 2) securing federal resources for local food systems; 3) addressing infrastructure barriers to agriculture and innovation; 4) advancing institutional procurement of local food by state entities; and 5) supporting relevant policy initiatives. Supporting the planning process and coordination framework was made possible due to this ongoing backbone support.

This framework specifically has emerged in response to **Senate Resolution 111** (SR 111, SD 1) which called for the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA) and Department of Economic Development, Business and Tourism (DBEDT) to establish a Sustainable Food Systems Working Group to develop an inter-agency food systems plan along with recommendations for the implementation of the plan. The resolution asked for the inclusion of HDOA and DBEDT as well as representatives of the Hawai'i State Senate, the Hawai'i State House of Representatives, the State Department of Health (DOH), Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) and Hawai'i Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD). The Department of Education, the Hawai'i Farm Bureau Federation (HFBF), Hawai'i Farmer's Union (HFU), Transforming Hawai'i Food Systems Together initiative (THFST) and the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) were also added by those members to the working group. The group met between October and December 2024 and held two informational sessions at the

Hawai'i Agricultural Foundation's Ag Conference (November 2024) and Transforming Hawai'i Food System Summit (December 2024).

The outcome of this resolution is this report to the Legislature. It builds on many decades of research and food system consultation, including recent stakeholder consultations for HDOA. The resolution asked for a plan that included:

- any proposed legislation;
- a governance structure;
- a plan for implementation;
- addressing SDGS; and
- incorporating county plans.

The working group has been requested to be dissolved on June 30, 2025. Its **members** include:

1. Sharon Hurd, Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, State of Hawai'i with alternate Dexter Kishida, Deputy to the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, State of Hawai'i
2. Dane Wicker, Deputy Director of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT)
3. Hon. Mike Gabbard, Senator, Hawai'i State Senate
4. Hon. Kirstin Kahaloa, Representative, Hawai'i State House of Representatives
5. Michael Burke, Environmental Health Program Manager, Hawai'i State Department of Health
6. Kū'ikeokalani Kamakea-Ohelo, Director of 'Ōiwi Wellbeing and 'Āina, Office of Hawaiian Affairs
7. Danielle Bass, State Sustainability Coordinator, State of Hawai'i Office of Planning and Sustainable Development
8. Ken Kakesako, Director, Policy, Innovation, Planning and Evaluation Branch, Office of Strategy, Innovation and Performance, State of Hawai'i Department of Education
9. Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director, Hawai'i Farm Bureau
10. Kaipo Kekona with alternate Hunter Heavilin, President/Government Relations Representative, Hawai'i Farmer's Union.
11. Dr. Albie Miles, Associate Professor of Sustainable Community Food Systems at the University of Hawai'i-West O'ahu
12. Jesse Cooke, City & County of Honolulu Member, Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation

It was coordinated by Dr. Amanda Shaw, Statewide Food Systems Coordinator, a consultant with the Department of Agriculture. Research and logistical assistance was provided by Anna Ezzy, Agriculture Research and Policy Specialist, County of Hawai'i.

The framework development process faced several **challenges**. These included:

- Lack of dedicated funding to pay for departmental staff time to participate or for the group to undertake any stakeholder convenings.

- A short time frame from the point of identification of the resolution to the point of putting the group together and conducting its meeting (from October - December 2024).
- Its included stakeholders are partial, meaning that many partners and stakeholders were not able to participate or share feedback on the process.
- Its start was ill-timed to be unable to draw on the legislative reports that departments were working on simultaneously to be able to inform action.

While these challenges were significant, the planning process also drew from multiple and recent farmer and food system assessments and consultations as will be outlined below. The learnings from this process have also shaped recommendations for action going forward, including design considerations for a resourced, county-coordinated and more representative statewide planning processes.

2. Statewide Food Systems Planning and Mandates

Numerous policies and strategic goals have been set over the years to enhance local food systems, with an increasing emphasis on self-sufficiency, sustainability, and food security. These range from policy priorities and targets, to specific mandates enshrined in law. The following list includes legal mandates first, followed by other articulated goals which are being measured and tracked.

1. **Act 151, SLH 2019:** Mandate to Double Local Food Production: Directs the State Department of Agriculture to develop a strategic plan to double local food production and increase food exports by 2030.
Act 176 (SLH 2021) - Hawaii Statewide Farm to School Initiative
Set a target of 50% of food served in schools to come from local agriculture or value-added products by 2050.
2. **Act 175 (HB767 HD2 SD2) (2021) - Hawaii Farm to School Program**
Mandated that by 2030, the Hawai'i Department of Education shall meet the local farm to school meal goal that thirty percent*¹ food served in public schools shall consist of locally sourced products, as measured by the percentage of the total cost of food. HRS §§ [302A-405.5](#) & [302A-405.6](#). Also responsible for improving student health, developing an educated agricultural workforce and accelerating garden and farm-based education.
3. **Act 258 (SLH 2022)**
Provided one year of funding for a School Garden Coordinator to support schools in developing garden programs as part of the Farm to School initiative.
4. **Act 144 (SLH 2022)**
5. [Act 144 \(SLH 2022\)](#), Signed into law by Governor David Ige on June 27, 2022, the Farm to State act amends Act 175 (2021) to apply only to certain governmental entities, including the Departments of Education, Health, Public Safety, Defense, and the University of Hawai'i (HIDOE, HDOH, DPS, DOD, UH).

¹ There are currently two conflicting goals for local food in 2030 - Act 175's 30% and Act 144's 18%. We understand a housekeeping bill will be introduced in 2025 to clarify the correct percentage and amend the laws accordingly.

It amends **Act 176 (2021)** which sets incremental local food procurement goals for all state departments in Hawai'i during each calendar year based on the percentage of total food cost, including the following timeline and minimum percentages of locally grown food:

- 10% by January 1, 2025
- 18% by January 1, 2030*
- 26% by January 1, 2035
- 34% by January 1, 2040
- 42% by January 1, 2045
- 50% by January 1, 2050.

There are other departmental mandates and laws which affect these goals as well as other articulated policy initiatives and measuring efforts such as the Sustainable Hawai'i Initiative (2016) of the Ige Administration and the Hawai'i Green Growth Aloha+ Challenge Goals on access to labor, land, and facilities.

3. Background: Local Food Production and Access in Hawai'i

Historical information as well as descriptions of our current Hawai'i food and agricultural economy has been captured in previous briefs, reports and presentations. The issues presented therein are numerous. Of these, some of the principal challenges include the loss of farms and farmland in production, low revenues for Hawai'i farmers, a demographic transition as farmers age as well as ongoing mental health and wellness concerns. Amidst the loss of 82,000 acres of farmland and over 700 farms between 2017 and 2022, there are also bright spots, including a notable increase in direct and wholesale sales, from \$13.2 million in 2012 to \$42.9 million in 2022. Hawai'i's direct food sales outpace the national average and states like California and Washington are on par with leaders like Vermont and Massachusetts. The opportunities that these trends point toward are encouraging.

In terms of food access, our challenges are also stark: a recent report by the Hawaii Food Bank found that **nearly 1/3 of Hawai'i households are food insecure** ([Hawai'i Food Bank](#)) and rates of food security in Hawai'i are consistently higher than the U.S. average. Food insecurity is significantly higher for some demographic groups and communities in Hawai'i as well as for places outside of Honolulu (Gundersen et al., 2019). Native Hawaiians (25%) and households with children ages 3-18 (23%) experience food insecurity at rates higher than the statewide population ([Kamehameha Schools et al., 2022](#)). Hunger places people at risk for adverse health and social outcomes, yet federal feeding and food assistance programs are insufficiently accessed or insufficiently reimbursed given Hawai'i's substantially higher food costs. Encouraging trends can be found in the SNAP Double Up Bucks program as well as a range of community-based food and resilience efforts.

While this overview only skims the surface on our myriad challenges – as well as our unique assets – there have been a range of **state and county level plans and research, agricultural surveys and assessments and systems-level mappings** whose findings are important to highlight as they background current efforts.

3.1 State Level Plans and Research

The Coordination Framework and Activities also build on previous state-level strategic planning processes and reports ([list of strategic plans](#), [history of agricultural planning](#)). These efforts span multiple decades and include a wide range of recommendations aimed at improving the sustainability, efficiency, and resilience of agricultural systems in the state.

The Hawai'i State Plan ([HRS Chapter 226](#).) lays out goals for the state which include 1) a strong, viable economy, 2) a physical environment that enhances the mental and physical well-being of the people and 3) community and individual physical, social, and economic well-being ([Hawai'i State Plan Goals](#)). The *DOA State Agricultural Functional Plan* (1991) established a foundational strategic framework for Hawai'i's agricultural sector, setting the stage for future planning and policy development. The *State Land Use Regulation and Management Study* (1994) examined land use policies and access to agricultural land, which continues to be a significant barrier for farmers today. Following this, *A Strategic Plan for Hawai'i's Agriculture* (2004) identified key issues such as labor shortages, workforce housing, access to capital, and the challenges posed by water infrastructure and transportation costs. These themes have remained central to more recent plans and efforts.

The *Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan* (2008) outlined long-term sustainability goals for the state, including resource management, which laid the groundwork for a more sustainable agricultural system. The *Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Plan* (2021), available at <https://hawaii2050.hawaii.gov>, has been adopted as the official sustainability and climate strategic action plan for the State of Hawaii for the decade 2020–2030. In alignment with HRS 226-65 and 225 M-8, this comprehensive climate and sustainability plan integrates and coordinates efforts across all state agencies and counties. It also takes precedence over non-legally mandated initiatives, such as the Aloha+ Challenge and the Sustainable Hawaii Initiative, since this plan is required by law, ensuring a unified and legally supported approach to Hawaii's sustainability and changing climate.

The *Increased Food Security and Food Self-Sufficiency Strategy* (2012) further emphasized the need for infrastructure improvements, including water systems and biosecurity measures, in order to enhance food security and offered a number of strategies and recommendations that have been integrated into this framework.

The *"Ten Year Measurement Update" of the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Plan* (2018) provides critical insights into the progress and challenges of achieving the food production goals set in 2008. Notably, pages 43-47 of the report delve into these issues, including data collection and evaluation efforts mandated by law. Through collaboration with HDOA and USDA, survey data spanning 2008-2017 was gathered, reviewed, and approved, culminating in a bar graph and matrix presented on pages 42 and 43 of the report. **This officially validated data serves as a valuable baseline for ongoing agricultural policy and planning efforts.**

The *Aloha+ Challenge* (2014) was another important milestone, promoting statewide sustainability goals in energy, food, and natural resources, which directly align with the agricultural sector's broader objectives. Biosecurity became a prominent concern with the release of the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council Strategic Plan (2015-2020) and the Hawai'i Inter-Agency Biosecurity Plan (2017-2027), both of which focused on safeguarding Hawai'i's ecosystems against invasive species. The Hawai'i Forest Action Plan (2016) also prioritized forest health, a critical element of Hawai'i's environmental resilience.

The Hawai'i State Hazard Mitigation Plan (2018) and the Guidance for Disaster Recovery Preparedness (2019) brought attention to disaster resilience and the importance of infrastructure preparedness in the face of natural disasters, which continue to impact the agricultural sector. Additionally, the *DOA Agricultural Water Use and Development Plan Update* (2019) outlined priorities for water infrastructure development, a crucial issue for Hawai'i's farmers.

Recent plans such as the Nature-Based Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Change in Hawai'i (2021) and the Integrated Climate Action Plan for the Island of Hawai'i (2023) have placed a strong emphasis on adapting to climate change, particularly regarding water infrastructure and land access, both of which are critical for agriculture in a changing climate. The CTAHR Strategic Positioning and Visioning Plan (2022-2027) highlighted the importance of labor and workforce development in agriculture, addressing a persistent challenge in the sector.

Finally, several other planning processes are underway, such as food system planning efforts in Honolulu and Hawai'i Counties, as well as strategic planning at the Department of Agriculture (HDOA) and the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC). These ongoing initiatives contribute to the broader goal of transforming Hawai'i's food system and addressing the challenges faced by local agricultural producers.

The Inter-Agency Coordination Framework and Activities aim to build on these reports, recognizing that more must be done to make connections amongst these various plans, state level goals, mandates and laws and implementation roadmaps.

3.2 Farmer Needs Assessments and Surveys

The Coordination Framework and Activities also draw on several recent farmer needs assessments and surveys which further highlight the challenges producers face.

The [HDOA Hawai'i Commercial Agricultural Production Expansion Survey](#) (2021) found that many farms (66.9%) are interested in expanding their operations, primarily driven by the desire to increase profit, promote food self-sufficiency, and create local jobs. However, significant barriers such as high production costs and labor shortages remain. Additionally, the need for advanced farm equipment and a focus on local markets were highlighted. This suggests a potential for growth in Hawai'i's agricultural production, but overcoming key logistical and financial hurdles is essential.

The [2018 HFUU Hawai'i Farmer Needs Assessment](#) echoed similar concerns, emphasizing labor, land, and capital as primary barriers, while also suggesting solutions such as improving access to farm labor and providing financial support for expansion. The HFUU 2023-2024 Talk Story Notes reinforced these concerns, highlighting the need for marketing assistance, labor retention strategies, and improvements in infrastructure such as certified kitchens and refrigeration. The Membership Survey provided deeper insight into the widespread nature of labor and marketing challenges, while also emphasizing the importance of regenerative agricultural practices and non-farm income for farm sustainability. Region-specific surveys, such as the Hawai'i Island BBBRC Stakeholder Survey (2022), identified additional barriers such as plant diseases, invasive species, and infrastructure limitations.

The 2022 Native Hawaiian Priorities in the Federal Farm Bill Report, solicited by the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, highlighted the unique needs of Native Hawaiian agricultural producers. The report called for recognition and support for Native Hawaiian Traditional Ecological Knowledge in biocultural restoration efforts, targeted infrastructure investments to strengthen the supply chain for Native Hawaiian producers, subsidies to address the high cost of inter-island shipping, and increased access to land for farming. The report also emphasized the importance of providing technical assistance to help Native Hawaiians access Farm Bill programs, as well as incentives for institutional purchasing of crops from Native Hawaiian producers.

In terms of infrastructure to support small farms, the [Hawai'i Food Hub Hui Needs Assessment \(2024\)](#) found that food hubs statewide face challenges in fundraising, workforce expansion, and infrastructure development, including cold chain logistics and renewable energy. These findings point to the need for comprehensive support across multiple levels of the food supply chain to strengthen local food systems. Other regional assessments, like the Kaua'i-specific surveys and the Kaua'i Agricultural Economic Development Plan (2024), as well as the Maui surveys, highlighted the need for targeted policies that focus on infrastructure, food security, and access to local food markets.

The 2024 *HDOA and County of Hawai'i Farmer needs assessment* also highlighted producer priorities as part of this effort, based on a survey of 549 responses. The department identified 14 top issues impacting producers' economic viability including six priorities HDOA is focusing on in 2025 in bold with the number of producer responses in parentheses:

1. **Invasive Species** (252)
2. Labor Cost (183)
3. **Equipment Cost** (167)
4. **Plant Diseases** (130)
5. Workforce Housing Availability (124)
6. **Access to Capital** (123)
7. Access to Land (121)
8. Skilled Labor Availability (117)
9. Water Infrastructure (115)

10. **Access to Value-Added Processing Infrastructure** (92)
11. Soil Quality (86)
12. Access to Quality/Affordable Farm Inputs (77)
13. **Agricultural Theft** (76)
14. Transportation Costs (71).

Taken together, these findings highlight regional disparities as well as common state- and system-wide challenges related to labor, infrastructure and capital as well as the important role the State can play inter-agency coordination, policy support, and targeted investment in efforts to address the following challenges:

- **Labor** – Identified as a major issue across multiple surveys, with insufficient farm labor being a key limiting factor to expansion and productivity. Retaining skilled workers in the agricultural sector is difficult, with workers often leaving due to low wages or lack of support.
- **High Production Costs** – Farms face significant costs associated with production in Hawai'i, including equipment, materials, and operations, which hinder their ability to grow and expand.
- **Access to Quality Agricultural Land** – Limited availability of affordable, suitable land for farming, especially for new or expanding farmers, is a major barrier.
- **Capital and Financial Support** – Lack of access to capital, low-interest loans or grants for equipment and expansion is a consistent concern, with many farms struggling to secure the funding needed to invest in growth.
- **Infrastructure Gaps** – Shortages in critical infrastructure, such as refrigeration, certified kitchens, cold chain logistics, and renewable energy systems, impede the efficiency and scalability of local food systems.
- **Plant Diseases and Invasive Species** – Biosecurity has been a key concern for Hawai'i farmers since invasive pests can strike farms at their very heart.
- **Marketing and Market Access** – Farms face difficulties in marketing their products effectively, and expanding access to local, national, and international markets remains a challenge.
- **Regulatory and Policy Barriers** – There are barriers related to the regulatory environment, including permitting and policy frameworks that make it difficult for farmers to innovate or scale operations.

There have been fewer assessments of other areas of food systems and supply chains or related needs assessments, say of food processing or meal providers. The need to directly assess the consumption, processing and retail dimensions of the food system is a gap that could be addressed in future research and planning efforts.

3.3 Hawai'i Food Systems Level Mapping and Research

The Coordination Framework and Activities also draw on several areas of systems level mapping and research relevant to inter-agency coordination priorities. These are not exhaustive.

The *Transforming Hawai'i Hawai'i Food Systems Together (THFST)* initiative led by University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu (UHWO) and Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) identified three leverage points for Hawai'i's food system where small-scale investments can drive significant change. These include improving 1) capital flows to the local food system, 2) creating policies for local resilience, and 3) enhancing local food processing, packing, storage, and distribution capabilities. Informed by years of food systems practice and research, the [Integrated State Food Policy Framework for Hawai'i](#) (Framework) developed as well as the [Knowledge Products](#) have been extensively used and drawn upon in the writing of this report and in the work of the Working Group. The policy areas its framework address includes:

- Public health and nutrition
- Indigenous health and cultural wellbeing
- Food access and affordability
- Food safety and food quality
- Social equity and inclusion
- Education and public awareness
- Sustainable use of natural resources
- Agricultural production and productivity
- Sustainable economic development
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation/food system resilience
- Livelihoods and rural development
- Water stewardship and more.

THFST has also developed a [Food System Planning Landscape Analysis](#) - a review and synthesis of 25 state-and city-level food system plans and charters in the U.S. - and is developing efforts on a national level community of practice that can help to inform future statewide planning efforts.

Building on the leverage point identified by THFST on capital access as well as its own decades of work with Hawai'i entrepreneurs and funders, *Hawai'i Investment Ready's (HIR) Capital Scan* research highlights significant challenges in Hawai'i's capital ecosystem, particularly its misalignment with the opportunities and realities of the food system sector. The research calls for a re-envisioning of the state's role in supporting the food system, emphasizing the need for better coordination between investors and enterprises. Key recommendations include establishing capital coordination services, fostering public-private partnerships, and aligning metrics to track progress on critical goals like food security and sector sustainability. As part of this work, HIR has developed a food systems funder cohort as well as dedicated efforts to support food system entrepreneurs. By enhancing coordination between state agencies and other stakeholders, the research and HIR's efforts seek to improve the efficiency and impact of capital investments in Hawai'i's food system. Their systems level thinking and experience have been critical to informing conversations of where statewide efforts can best align.

The *Ulana Na Leo* (Weaving Voices) process, supported by the Ulupono Initiative, also focused on surveying the key opportunities and barriers for Hawai'i's agricultural

producers. It identified several key levers for system strengthening, such as defining shared goals to build alignment, cultivating informed investments at all levels, raising awareness about the interconnectedness of agriculture with the environment and economy, and providing timely access to resources when needed. It also emphasized the importance of recognizing farming as a business, addressing barriers to profitability, and leveraging networks to connect producers with resources and community needs. Ulupono Initiative has played an important role in bringing together food and agricultural systems players and contributed this research toward aligning the efforts of many actors.

4. County Level Food Systems Planning and Snapshots

In addition to statewide precedents, a number of important county and community-level planning processes have been articulated, such as the County of Maui MDOA Strategic Plan (2024-2028) and the County of Kaua'i Agricultural Economic Development Plan (2024). The Hawai'i Food Access Plans 2030 provide a multi-county approach to improving food access and security, reinforcing the goal of increasing Hawai'i's food self-sufficiency by creating specific plans for each county. This framework aims to integrate with these plans. The following summaries provide snapshots of key issues, challenges and opportunities at county levels, as well as some of the economic and food systems goals and priorities that have been identified.

4.2.1 County of Hawai'i

Hawai'i County has a resident population of just over 200,000 people (2020 Census). Agriculture holds a crucial role in Hawai'i Island's economy, food security, environmental sustainability, and cultural heritage. The island drives 43% of the State's agricultural sales, led by crops including macadamia nuts, coffee, vegetables, floriculture and tropical fruits (USDA NASS, 2022). Aquaculture—ranked #2 nationwide in aquaculture sales—and ranching are also major agricultural sectors along with value-added products, of which Hawai'i County producers contribute 65% of the state's total revenue (USDA NASS, 2022). The *County of Hawai'i Agricultural Development Plan* (2008) provided county-specific strategies to strengthen local agriculture, focusing on land access, water infrastructure, and workforce development

Hawai'i County residents face the highest rate of food insecurity among Counties in Hawai'i, with two in every five households (40%) reporting being food insecure in 2023 ([Hawai'i Food Bank, 2023](#)). Hawai'i County also faces a number of risks from natural hazards including volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, floods, severe storms, and tsunamis which affect access to food resources ([County of Hawai'i, 2021](#)). Key challenges for producers in Hawai'i County include an aging producer population and lack of succession plans in place, as well as the high costs of living and doing business in Hawai'i ([CEDS, 2022](#)). A lack of agricultural labor and housing as well as transportation costs and costs incurred from theft and invasive species are also top issues negatively affecting Hawai'i County growers ([CEDS, 2022](#)).

Hawai'i County's strengths include diversity in types of agriculture and aquaculture practiced, numerous State and Federal research centers, availability of land and a collaborative agricultural community (CEDS, 2022). Infrastructure assets include two international airports and two harbors along with smaller airports and harbors which can be used to transport food ([County of Hawai'i, 2021](#)). Producers in Hawai'i County identified opportunities to develop the next generation of farmers, market to local communities, conduct research, implement Indigenous farming and aquaculture practices, produce value-added goods and collaborate with other industry sectors (CEDS, 2022).

4.2.2 City and County of Honolulu

The City & County of Honolulu, home to more than 1 million people, outlined its mission as building "a diversified, regenerative island economy guided by Native Hawaiian values that prioritizes environmental and community health to ensure all life will thrive in an equitable, climate-resilient future," (CEDS, 2022). The O'ahu Food Systems Plan (in progress) presents visions and strategies around five key dimensions of O'ahu's food system: 'Ai Pono (Food & Nutrition Security), Mālama 'Āina (Ecological Sustainability), 'Āina Aloha Economics (Local Food Economies), Ea (Food Sovereignty), and Ola Loa (Long-Term Resilience).

Agricultural weaknesses for O'ahu include high costs of land, water, labor, and inputs paired with difficulty accessing capital and resources, an aging farming population, slow government investment, outdated state policies, and a mismatch between local diets and production ([CEDS, 2022](#)). Market volatility, inadequate food storage infrastructure, and competitive business disadvantages for farmers also threaten O'ahu agriculture ([CEDS, 2022](#)).

Strengths among producers in Honolulu County include public support for the farming community, science-based models from ancestral Hawai'i, developing food hubs and aggregation centers, a recent growth in small farms and local chefs and restaurants raising awareness of local agriculture. Opportunities exist in investing in local producers to support competition with imports, improving value-chain coordination, institutional purchasing agreements for local food, and increased access to public-private capital ([CEDS, 2022](#)).

4.2.3 Kaua'i County

Kaua'i is the oldest of the main Hawaiian Islands, encompassing 620 square miles and home to 72,543 people ([CEDS, 2021](#)). Kaua'i County's shared vision is a Garden Island of unique natural beauty and thriving ecosystems, rooted in the principles of aloha and mālama 'āina ([CEDS, 2021](#)). The Kaua'i Food Access Plan 2030 outlines objectives to strengthen food pantries, gardening and market access, food producers, education and farm to school as well as build capacity with the County and State.

Many Kaua'i residents face food insecurity, with one in three keiki projected to be food insecure, yet 58% of food insecure families fall above the threshold to qualify for SNAP ([Malama Kaua'i, 2022](#)). Awareness and access to available food distribution programs

is a key challenge, and 84% of food insecure individuals were found to be unaware of food programs and 63% faced transportation barriers (2030 Kaua'i Food Access Plan). Farmers and food producers on Kaua'i expressed the need for action to address farmer housing, curb invasive species, return land to Indigenous communities for food production, as well as support long-term leases, commercial kitchen access, processing and cold storage facilities, and expansion of collective farmer resources (2030 Kaua'i Food Access Plan). The top challenge for the Halele'a, Ko'olau, Puna, and Kona communities, respectively, was more local food in school meals, a farmer, fisher, and rancher directory, food program awareness, and land access for small farmers.

Land access is critical for Kaua'i families. Among individuals facing food insecurity on Kaua'i, 95% were interested in growing their own food yet only 61% had space to do so. Community gardens and other land access solutions were desired by participants (2030 Kaua'i Food Access Plan). Many Kaua'i individuals also expressed a desire to eat healthy food, including fruits and vegetables but felt they could not afford to, creating an opportunity to expand SNAP/EBT and DA BUX at farmer's markets as well as fresh food access at food pantries. The County of Kaua'i Agricultural Economic Development Plan outlines a strategy to develop a prosperous and resilient agriculture industry which honors the island's unique culture and past. The plan's objectives work to support cooperative ventures which pool shared resources, grow a new generation of farmers through education, innovation and financial feasibility as well as build partnerships that increase opportunities and remove barriers for producers ([County of Kaua'i, 2024](#)).

4.2.4 Maui County

Maui County consists of the islands of Maui, Lāna'i, and Moloka'i (excluding Kalawao County) with a population of 164,221 in 2021, and the visitor industry accounts for about two-thirds of the County's economy ([CEDS, 2023](#)). Maui County is making a historic transition from monocrop plantations of sugarcane and pineapple designated for export to increasingly diversified agriculture intended for local consumption. With 54% of land zoned for agriculture, the County of Maui 2030 General Plan includes objectives of diversifying and expanding sustainable forms of agriculture and aquaculture to improve food security and meet a higher percentage of resident-food needs ([Ordinance No. 3732, 2010](#)).

Key challenges in Maui County include increasing the stock of attainable housing to retain residents and attract skilled workers, managing visitor pressure on communities and the environment, diversification of the economy, increasing the number of living-wage jobs, addressing high shipping costs and complex regulation which inhibits business development, improving access to high-speed internet and emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic-driven supply chain and inflationary issues ([CEDS, 2023](#)). Specifically, the devastating Maui wildfire crises of August 2023 reaffirmed the need for an agricultural sector that promotes resilient ecosystems and responsible resource stewardship, and 60% of Maui County residents reported cutting back on food and groceries for financial reasons in the year after the fires ([MDOA, 2024](#)). The Maui Emergency Feeding Task Force was established in response to the disaster to organize stakeholders and created a plan to identify unmet needs, lessons learned, and recurring

themes within the emergency feeding sector ([MEFT, 2024](#)). Water management is integral to a resilient agricultural sector and Water Use & Development Plans have been adopted for Maui Island and Lānaʻi while currently in progress for Molokaʻi, Hana, Kahikinui, Wailuku, Koʻolau, Central, and Lahaina regions.

Stakeholders are in consensus that Maui's economic development must be driven by increased sustainability and resilience ([CEDS, 2023](#)), as demonstrated by the passage of a charter amendment in 2020 to establish a County of Maui Department of Agriculture (MDOA). MDOA is engaged in a strategic plan focused on market development, expanding infrastructure and facilities, increasing access to capital and improving connections to expertise and information ([MDOA, 2024](#)). The most recent community plan updates in Maui County encourage the development of diversified agriculture, with distinct regional goals, priorities and strategies ([Hana Community Plan, 1994](#); [Paʻia-Haʻiku Community Plan, 1995](#); [Makawao-Pukalani-Kula Community Plan, 1996](#); [Kihei-Makena Community Plan, 1998](#); [Wailuku-Kahului Community Plan, 2002](#); [Lānaʻi Community Plan, 2016](#); [Molokaʻi Island Community Plan, 2018](#); [West Maui Community Plan, 2022](#); [Maui Emergency Feeding strategy](#)).

5. Other recent or in progress planning and research

There are several planning processes currently in progress such as the Honolulu County food systems plan and Hawaiʻi Counties' updated food system planning efforts and strategic planning at HDOA and ADC. Recent studies also include a Land Study Bureau and a University of Hawaiʻi CTAHR study for Hawaiʻi Crop Suitability Maps for the Major Hawaii Islands and 2024 [Soil Classification Systems & Use in Regulating Agricultural Lands Study](#) which can provide further insight into land use and land access dimensions of food systems planning.

6. Statewide Inter-Agency Coordination Framework

The *Draft Food And Agricultural Inter-Agency Coordination Framework, 2025-2026* directly responds to the requirements set forth in Senate Resolution 111 (SR 111, SD1). Developed through the collaborative efforts of the Sustainable Food Systems Working Group, the framework reflects the input gathered during meetings and two public sessions held in late 2024. This framework fulfills the resolution's mandates by:

1. **Proposing Legislation:** The framework includes recommendations for legislative actions, such as appropriations, new statutes, and policy updates, to address biosecurity, data collection, land access, and governance.
2. **Establishing a Governance Structure:** It outlines a proposed strategy for state-level food systems coordination, rooted in equity and informed by county-level plans, including moku-based engagement processes (see Appendix A).
3. **Providing a Plan for Implementation:** The document includes coordination activities over 2025-26, partners and champions to maintain momentum.
4. **Aligning with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** the framework emphasizes strategies that align with global SDG benchmarks.

5. **Incorporating County Plans:** The framework integrates county level priorities, outlining synergies between 2025-2026 proposed actions and ongoing county-level work and priorities.

TABLE 1: Food And Agricultural Inter-Agency Coordination Framework, 2025-2026

Theme	Champions and Partners	2025-2026 Coordination Activities	Strategy
I. Governance: State-level food systems coordination	All working group department, Senate, House, Statewide food systems coordinator	1. Fully resource a state-level food systems coordination process that equitably builds from county-level plans and processes such as moku-based stakeholder engagement, outlines an implementation roadmap toward reaching key food systems goals and improves data tracking on progress toward these goals in 2025-2026. See Appendix A for draft legislative proposal.	Legislation and advocacy (new statute, appropriations), Inter-Agency coordination and planning
II. Data and information on Hawai'i food and agriculture.	DOA, DBEDT, DOT, USDA NASS, USDA AMS, Counties, HIAP, UH, agricultural producers, distributors/grocery stores	2. Support HDOA in advocating for a general budget request of ~\$900K in FY 2025-2026 to restore and increase capacity for data collection, statistical analysis and research to provide the agricultural sector access to timely and accurate data. Ensuring production data is accurate will support increased capacity to also track progress on statewide goals.	Legislation and advocacy (appropriations), Research, data and tracking
II. Biosecurity Inter-Agency coordination activities	HDOA , ADC, DLNR, DOT, OHA, UH, DHHL, HISC, community organizations, agricultural producers	3. Support HDOA in advocating for general budget request in 2025-2026 for biosecurity/invasive species control through Act 231 implementation, securing positions, establishing a recurring budget item and funding for an operational Level 3 biosecurity facility (modular units) for biocontrol agent research. 4. Establish MOUs that allow Inter-Agency rules of engagement (ROE) to control and mitigate invasive species.	Legislation (appropriations) and advocacy, Inter-Agency coordination and planning
III. Land, water and	ADC , HDOA, DBEDT, OPSD, OHA, DHHL,	5. Create and coordinate a land, water and infrastructure action group in 2025-2026 to 1)	Action Group to identify issues, policy options and impact

infrastructure.	Counties, private landowners, farmers	review of state and private agricultural land access issues, cases and/or leases/licenses terms, including on lands administered by HDOA, ADC, DLNR, DHHL and large private landowners in 2025-2026; 2) collaborate across departments on research efforts such as land inventory (ADC), crop mapping (DEBDT, OPSD) to identify land use suitability and communal zoning and stewardship possibilities (OHA); 3) collaborate on cross departmental efforts to clarify agricultural worker housing IAL lands (OPSD) and county rules on ag worker housing. 6. Support ADC in advocating for a general budget request in FY 2025-2026 for Wahiawa Irrigation System multiphase water sustainability project with DLNR, HDOA, and ADC.	analysis, stakeholder engagement and Inter-Agency coordination and planning; Legislation and advocacy (appropriations).
IV. Institutional purchasing and value-added infrastructure	DOE, DBEDT, ADC, SPO, WAM, DOH, HDOA, DLE, DOD, UH, Farm to School network, farmers	7. Support Inter-Agency coordination for Phase 2: Commercialization and scaling of O'ahu regional kitchen in 2025-2026 in collaboration with HiDOE, DBEDT, ADC, HDOA and others by 1) supporting connectivity between kitchens, centers and HDOE in relations with the agricultural community, food hubs and farm to school advocates and identifying the resources and services to help local farmers supply regional kitchens and 2) helping identify procurement options and barriers with SPO, DOE, DOH, UH and other ACT 175 institutions to enable purchasing from local farmers.	Research/identification of issues and policy options, stakeholder engagement and Inter-Agency coordination

TABLE 2: Activities and State, County and International Goals, Mandates and Recommendations

2025-2026 Coordination Activities	Related State Goals and Recommendations	Related County Goals and Recommendations	Links to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
1. Fully resource a state-level food systems coordination process that equitably builds from county-level plans and processes such as moku-based stakeholder engagement, outlines an implementation roadmap toward reaching key food systems goals and improves data tracking on progress toward these goals in 2025-2026. See Appendix A for draft legislative proposal.	- Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan, doubling local food production by 2030 - Provide Policy and Organizational Support to Meet Food Self-Sufficiency Needs (2012 Food Self-Sufficiency), - Aloha + All (Clean Energy, Local Food, Natural Resource Management, Waste Reduction, Smart Sustainable Communities, and Green Workforce & Education).	- Establish policy committees and conduct cross-sector work to guide food systems policy (County of Hawai'i). - Develop a Food and Agriculture strategic plan (Kaua'i County).	All SDGs but especially SDG Goal 16: peaceful and inclusive institutions. SDG 2: Zero hunger. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. Target 2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.
2. Support HDOA in advocating for a general budget request of ~\$900K in FY 2025-2026 to restore and increase capacity for data collection, statistical analysis and research to provide the agricultural sector access to timely and accurate data. Ensuring production	-Restore the Market Analysis and News Branch of DOA to track progress toward food self-sufficiency (2012 Food Self-Sufficiency) - Restore or recreate data to support tracking Aloha+ Food production and other goals.	- Prioritize gathering and reporting better information on pricing, supply, and demand and create an accessible dashboard/data repository on raw, interpreted and updated data to producers and other stakeholders in the food system (county of Hawai'i)	SDG 2, zero hunger. Target 2.c Adopt measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives and facilitate timely access to market information, including on food reserves, in order to help limit extreme food price volatility.

data is accurate will support increased capacity to also track progress on statewide goals.	- Aloha+ Challenge goals: Local food production and consumption, Smart sustainable communities, Economic prosperity	- collect data for analysis of input costs and market prices (Kaua'i county).	
3. Support HDOA in advocating for general budget request in FY 2025-2026 for biosecurity/invasive species control through Act 231 implementation, securing positions, establishing a recurring budget item and funding for an operational Level 3 biosecurity facility (modular units) for biocontrol agent research. 4. Establish MOUs that allow Inter-Agency rules of engagement (ROE) to control and mitigate invasive species.	-Support and Seek Stable Dedicated Funding for Programs to Prevent, Control and Manage Pests (2012 Food Self-Sufficiency); - By 2030, implement Hawai'i Inter-Agency Biosecurity Plan to address invasive species priority (Hawai'i Inter-Agency Biosecurity Plan 2027). Aloha+ Challenge goals: Local food production and consumption, Natural Resource Management	-Implement the Hawai'i Biosecurity Strategy (Honolulu) -Work with U.S. federal and State regulatory agencies, industry stakeholders, and commodity groups to create and implement a comprehensive and effective strategy (Hawai'i) -Require the use of noninvasive plant species for new landscaping in public areas, funding for conservation and biosecurity by implementing a clearly articulated plan, track invasive species and focus attention on the most damaging, persistent, emerging and un-established invasive species (Kaua'i County)	SDG 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. Target 15.8. By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species.

5. Create and coordinate a land, water and infrastructure action group in 2025-2026 to 1) review of state and private agricultural land access issues, cases and/or leases/licenses terms, including on lands administered by HDOA, ADC, DLNR, DHHL and large private landowners in 2025-2026; 2) collaborate across departments on research efforts such as land inventory (ADC), crop mapping (DEBDT, OPSD) to identify land use suitability and communal zoning and stewardship possibilities (OHA); 3) collaborate on cross departmental efforts to clarify agricultural worker housing IAL lands (OPSD) and county rules on ag worker housing. 6. Support ADC in advocating for a general budget request in FY 2025-2026 for Wahiawa Irrigation System multiphase water sustainability project with DLNR, HDOA, and ADC.	- Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan, doubling local food production by 2030 - Provide Suitable Public Lands at Reasonable Cost and with Long-Term Tenure for Commercial Agricultural Purposes (2012 Food Self-Sufficiency); - Support CIP Funding to Maintain and Repair State Irrigation Systems (2012 Food Self-Sufficiency).	-Invest in a crop suitability tool, including existing and projected water demand; improve and expand agricultural water systems in appropriate areas; streamlined, long-term leases for agricultural parks and more (County of Hawai'i). -Increase accessibility of agricultural land and water (City & County of Honolulu) -Protect and expand access to agricultural land; Develop agricultural parks as on-ramps for new farmers; Improve water infrastructure and management (Maui County) - Long-term land leases (10-25 years) and land purchasing support for farmers; convene all involved with management of water on-island and map out of the island's water systems.(Kaua'i County).	SDG 2: Zero hunger. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. Target 2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality
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7. Support Inter-Agency coordination for Phase 2: Commercialization and scaling of O'ahu regional kitchen in 2025-2026 in collaboration with HiDOE, DBEDT, ADC, HDOA and others by 1) supporting connectivity between kitchens, centers and HIDEO in relations with the agricultural community, food hubs and farm to school advocates and identifying the resources and services to help local farmers supply regional kitchens and 2) helping identify procurement options and barriers with SPO, DOE, DOH, UH and other ACT 175/144 institutions to enable purchasing from local farmers.	-Act 175/144, 176: Mandated that by 2030, thirty percent of food served shall consist of locally sourced products, as measured by the percentage of the total cost of food for Departments of Education, Health, Public Safety, Defense, and the University of Hawai'i. - Encourage public institutions to purchase locally grown foods (2012 Food Self-Sufficiency). - Aloha +: Increase local green jobs and education to implement the Aloha+ Challenge sustainability goals	-Explore incentives to encourage or require greater use and reporting of local food purchasing by meal service providers, food concessionaires, and food service companies contracted by the City; Grow institutional markets for local food by expanding the O'ahu Good Food Program. (City and County of Honolulu). - Develop purchasing guidelines that prioritize local and sustainable foods (Maui County) - Create pipelines that connect local producers with institutional purchasing (Kaua'i County)	SDG 2: Zero hunger. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. Target 8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors SDG4: Quality education.
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Appendix A: Food System Planning Considerations for 2025 Legislative Proposal

Statewide Food System Planning: This bill would reintroduce and expand upon the Statewide Food System Planning Bill (SB2414) to extend support for long-term food system level planning and coordination. The bill would facilitate coordination between state and county-level food system initiatives, ensuring a cohesive, strategic approach to food security, economic resilience, and sustainability in Hawaii beyond the current timeline of SR 111 SD1.

Some dimensions this bill will consider include:

- **1. Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement through Integration with existing county-led planning processes,** such as County Food Summits, to implement moku by moku consultation in collaboration with counties and community stakeholders. In 2025, there are several already planned which this process can collaborate with. The process should consider:
 - Public Communications: Develop a strategy for informing the public and relevant political bodies about the plan, its goals, and progress.
 - Advocacy and Support: Engage with community members, policymakers, political leaders, and advocacy groups to gain support and buy-in for the Inter-Agency collaboration.
- **2. Institutionalizing the Statewide Food Systems Coordination team.** Provide funding for backbone support for coordination, communications and tracking activities.
- **3. Design and implementation of Statewide Food Systems Coordination processes.**
 - **Membership.** The SR 111 Sustainable Food Systems working group and Statewide Food Systems Coordination team will be responsible for developing nominating criteria and gathering public feedback on these before dissolution.
 - Nominations to serve will be broadly announced and criteria developed that provide geographic, sectoral, demographic and expertise balance.
 - Members should be sufficiently empowered within their organizations or agencies to be able to implement actions
 - Undertake relationship building processes within the group to build trust
 - **Governance, Decision-Making and Operating Protocols and Agreements**
 - Values: source community-based values to integrate into the planning process through stakeholder engagement.

- Leadership: Designate a lead agency or agencies for each action alongside support from the Statewide Food Systems Coordination team.
- Decision-Making Framework: Develop a structure for making decisions, resolving conflicts, and updating priorities.
- Accountability Mechanisms: Set up reporting systems and ways to ensure accountability among the different parties involved.
- **Resource Allocation**
 - Develop a funding model and agreements about how resources flow for coordination activities.
 - Budget and Funding Sources: Identify the resources needed and how they will be allocated or shared among agencies.
 - Personnel and Expertise: Ensure the availability of the right expertise from each agency and consider the need for joint teams, liaisons/coordinators or specialized units.
- **Internal Information Sharing and Communication**
 - Developing a shared narrative about the process
 - Data Management: Establish protocols for sharing data, research, and information between agencies, including confidentiality and security concerns.
 - Inter-Agency Communication: Create communication strategies including meetings, reporting, and information dissemination.
- **Laws, Goals and Mandates**
 - Ensure coordination and planning clearly links back to statewide, county and community goals, laws and mandates.
 - Inter-Agency Agreements: Consider formalizing collaborations through Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), joint operating agreements, or contracts to clarify expectations and legal boundaries.
- **Ex-Ante Impact Analysis**
 - Consider impact analysis of proposed policy measures, including by using equity, racial justice and place-based or indigenous assessment tools and methodologies.
- **Timeline and Milestones**
 - Phased Implementation: Outline a timeline for action, breaking down the plan into phases with clear deadlines and key milestones.
 - Review Periods: Schedule regular reviews and updates to adapt to new challenges or evolving goals.
- **Evidence, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Feedback**
 - How do we evaluate evidence and determine what is working?
 - Performance Metrics: Define clear metrics for monitoring progress toward the stated goals.
 - Evaluation Plan: Set up an evaluation framework to assess effectiveness of the Inter-Agency collaboration and make necessary adjustments.

- Consider ex-post impact analysis of key policy measure outcomes and impacts.
- Feedback Loops: Incorporate a system for regular feedback from stakeholders, agencies, and external parties to improve the plan as it progresses.

Appendix B: Snapshot of Departmental Activities 2025-2026

Department	2025-2026 Activities
HDOA	Biosecurity. Pursuing increased funding to enable implementation. Act 231 implementation (biosecurity/invasive species) and securing positions and programs as recurring budget items. Establish 44 Positions in base-budget. Support the safety and efficacy of Prevention, Mitigation, Control, and Outreach Programs to address Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle and other invasive agricultural pests.
	Increase Access to Capital. Update existing agricultural loan programs to improve access to debt capital and establish other avenues of capital access for stakeholders throughout the agricultural value chain. Legislation proposed to establish a loan program to encourage growing of import replacement crops and crops grown for state agencies and lowering interest rates and establishing new programs.
	Statistics and Research. Enhance the collection and analysis of data on the movement of select agricultural products between islands and within specified islands. Contract sector-specific surveys to routinely collect data on key agricultural activities
	Enforce and Prevent Agricultural Crimes. DLE Agricultural Crimes Investigator on each island; Increase penalties for trespassing and theft; Mitigation resources for counties and producers; Hotline and website for collection of evidence; Social media campaign by DLE.
	Land Management. Act 90 implementation (transfer of leases from DLNR to HDOA)
	Pesticide safety. Legislation proposed includes: requiring the Department of Agriculture to develop and implement a commercial pesticide disposal collection program; an increase on the cap on the pesticide use revolving fund and; appropriation of funding to continue implementing the statewide pesticide drift monitoring project.
DBEDT, OPSD, ADC	Agricultural Infrastructure and Regional Kitchens. DBEDT's hub-and-spoke model pilot in West O'ahu via the Value-Add Product Development Center is a key initiative. This model includes: Phase 1: R&D and proof of concept with the University of Hawaii.

	Phase 2: Commercialization and scaling in collaboration with ADC. Phase 3: Expanding agriculture and value-added processing, with centralized facilities supporting small and medium businesses. ADC supporting HDOE Wahiawa Regional Kitchen construction. - Establish lease terms with HDOE - Design Build Contract negotiation - Support services for farmers that plan to supply the HDOE regarding food safety, Hauling, Distribution, Dry Storage, Cold Storage, Pre-processing facilities, etc. ADC is also doing preliminary work on egg cracking facilities to support this. ADC support to Wahiawa Value Added Product Development Center. - Testing small High Pressure Processing equipment - Commercial kitchens ADC High Pressure Processing equipment and facility build. - Draft Operate & Maintain RFP negotiation - Product development ADC Agricultural warehouses for storage: Dry & Cold ADC High-tech hydroponic greenhouse buildout ADC Infrastructure to support FPIN facilities (roads, sewer, walkways, etc.) ADC Preliminary work on HDOE regional kitchens for other counties
	Market Development and Export Growth. Efforts to create markets for off-grade produce include partnerships with the Made in Hawai'i and Hawai'i Seals of Quality program to enhance the branding of local products. Participation in trade events like HiSTEP to expand Hawai'i-branded product exports.
	Collaborative Initiatives for Food Security. Collaboration with ADC and OPSD on land inventory mapping to identify high-priority agricultural lands for food production. Contributions to the Food Self-Sufficiency Strategy, focusing on increasing local food production and reducing dependency on imports.

	Support for Technological Adoption. Partnering with HTDC and community stakeholders to pilot advanced farming technologies such as precision agriculture tools, biosecurity hubs, and automation.
	Workforce Development. Developing Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in partnership with DOE, with pathways in Business Management, Finance, Marketing, and Agriculture.
	Water and Irrigation System Improvements. Collaborating with DLNR, DOA, and ADC to restore and expand irrigation systems like the Wahiawa Irrigation System to ensure water access for agriculture. ADC Water System Projects: - Wahiawa dam, reservoir, and ditch acquisition - Waiahole water system back-up, deep well - Kekaha ditch modification, Waiawa hydro - Upper Aahoaka reservoir improvements - Central Oahu R-1 wastewater improvement - East Kauai Irrigation System - Operation of two hydropower plants on Kauai
	Strengthening Food and Product Innovation Network (FPIN). Supporting ADC's plans to create FPIN subsidiaries that integrate innovation, manufacturing, and marketing to increase the economic impact of local agriculture. Develop an FPIN Subsidiary (ADC).
	ADC land management and acquisition. - ongoing identification of land assets and infrastructure for acquisition. Partner with OPSD on a study of priority land acquisitions and infrastructure. -Inspect and secure existing priority land inventory by securing perimeters and addressing risks on the land (e.g. people, brush etc.) by clearing, managing, and implementing security infrastructure by July 2025 (ADC)
	ADC value added infrastructure and meat processing work. - Kekaha packing and processing facility - ADC Aquaculture feed mill prototype RFP Issued - Small animal processing facility, work to determine location - Preliminary work on forage drying facility
	ADC Establish an ADC nonprofit

	ADC Preliminary work on Ag worker housing
	OPSD will present a final report on soil classification systems reforms.
	OPSD proposed a bill to clarify the use of farm worker housing on IAL lands.
	TBD OPSD Integrated land use study that will evaluate lands in the State Agricultural District that are needed for agriculture to reduce the competition with energy and housing
DOH	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program's (SNAP's) Double Up Bux program, produce prescription programs, and WIC acceptance at farmers' markets to increase access to healthy local produce and address chronic health conditions, and establishing a position to coordinate efforts for 'āina-based education and healthy eating in schools. -Support the establishment of Medicaid coverage for Produce Prescription Programs AlohaCare; Anti-Hunger Coalition 2025 (Hawai'i State Department of Health, 2023).
	DOH SNAP-Education (SNAP-Ed) Program provides funding and support for local farmers and food producers, and the food systems strengthening projects (e.g., Land to Table, Agro-cultural Access Improvement Site Expansion). Development of a training toolkit, cultivation of food garden sites, and facilitation of training sessions for stakeholders. Supports the Farm to School Network. Developing a policy map that connects local farmers, gardens, farmers' markets, and food hubs statewide and aims to enhance partnerships and improve access to local produce consumption in early childhood care settings. - Support School Garden Coordinator to enhance nutritious food options in schools DOE; HIPHI; DOH 2025 - DOH's CDPHPD (SNAP-Ed) provides funding to support FAC positions across Hawai'i. Secure increased county funding to support the activities of the Food Access Coordinators and food access coalitions. Non-profit organizations and county agencies that house Food Access Coordinators (e.g., City and County of Honolulu, County of Hawai'i, County of Maui, Malama Kaua'i, Elepaio Social Services) 2025 (Hawai'i State Department of Health, 2023). -
	Local Institutional Purchasing Hui Oahu Good Food Purchasing Program (Act 175/144,176) in schools and hospitals (Department of Education (DOE); Department of Health (DOH); Department of Public Safety (DPS); Department of Defense (DOD); University of Hawai'i (UH) Hawai'i State Department of Health, 2023).

	Food Safety activities. - Implement Produce Chemistry Testing - Calibrate and train on new laboratory equipment, achieve U.S. FDA certification (DOH Food and Drug Branch, DOH SLD) - Update Food & Food Products Code (HAR 11-50, Food Safety Code) – Update and adopt revised administrative rules relating to homemade foods (i.e., home kitchens) (DOH Food Safety Branch). (HAR 11-29, Food and Food Products) – Update and adopt revised administrative rules relating to commercial manufactured foods and current U.S. FDA GMPs and address homemade pet treats (DOH Food and Drug Branch)
DOE	HiDOE Regional Kitchen, Wahiawa. HiDOE has begun developing a plan for a regional kitchen approach for school food services which will be an ongoing and collaborative effort with numerous stakeholders. - Development and education on HiDOE Food Safety Standards.
	Draft school garden program plan. Completion of a School Garden and Farm to School Assessment to provide insight as to current practices and areas of needed support. - The top three content areas requesting additional support for learning in the garden are science, Hawaiian studies, and CTE. - Priority topics for professional development are native plant propagation, agriculture technology, and compost.
OHA	Advocacy and community representation for Native Hawaiians within food and agriculture systems work. Proposed legislation on communal zoning and stewardship. Helping to facilitate across depts e.g. DLNR and DHHL.

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- [DOA State Ag Functional Plan](#)
 - Identifies priority issues in agriculture and implementing actions; ceased after 1991
 - 2024 bill to prepare and update the State Ag Functional Plan: [SB2159](#)
- OSP Transformation Action Group
 - Came out of [1994 State Land Use Regulation and Management Study](#)
 - General bottleneck areas to facilitate plantation transition
- "Blueprint Plan" - DOA New Opportunities for Agriculture in Hawaii 1994
 - Outlines vision of diversified ag with DOA as the catalyst for planning and implementation with ADC and HARC
- DOA Hawaii's Agriculture: 2000 and Beyond
 - Commodity-specific vision
- ADC Progress Report Draft Outline 1997
 - Project focused priorities
- ADC RETA-H Marketing Inventory
 - Concept proposal for federal funds to inventory water systems and adjacent lands
- [DOA Agricultural Water Use and Development Plan](#)
 - Included master inventory of irrigation water systems, identifying the extent of rehabilitation needed and subsidy required for upkeep. Plan developed long-range plan for water management.

- [2019 Update](#)
- CTAHR Strategic Plan
 - Comprehensive overview of staff and resources
 - Agricultural Development in the American Pacific (ADAP) Project [1997-2002](#)
 - Strategic positioning and visioning [2022-2027](#)
 - [1999-2004 Strategic plan](#)
 - [2005-2010 Strategic plan](#)
 - HISC (Hawai'i Invasive Species Council) [2015-2020 Strategic plan](#)
- USDA/HACC Action Plan Statement
 - Joint Federal/State effort outlining new plan for ag in Hawai'i
 - Topics: Market Development, Pest Management, Quarantine Treatment, Biotechnology Development, Forestry Development, Reuse of Agricultural Lands, Rural Infrastructure Development, Agricultural Financial Assistance, Conservation and Resource Management, Transportation, and Other Issues.
- [2008: Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Plan](#)
 - [10 year measurement update in 2018](#)
- [HFB Strategic plan for Hawaii Ag 2004](#)
 - Roadmap for addressing issues
- [DBEDT Increased food security and self-sufficiency strategy 2012](#)
 - Recommends actions to strengthen infrastructure, provide for food safety, pest prevention and control, workforce training, research and extension services, and policy and organizational support. A critical factor towards successful implementation will be building partnerships with the increasing number of organizations involved in food self-sufficiency/ food security
- Agriculture Strategy Working Group: A Strategic Direction for Agriculture in Hawaii 2017
 - Addresses the following issues: 1) Identify regions to develop economies of scale for the purposes of cost control and price competitiveness; 2) Identify commodities that can replace imports and commodities that will increase exports (i.e., value-added products) based on private distributors; 3) Match commodities with regional pilot project areas to see growth potential; and 4) Create a comprehensive approach to address problems of housing, workforce training, and research

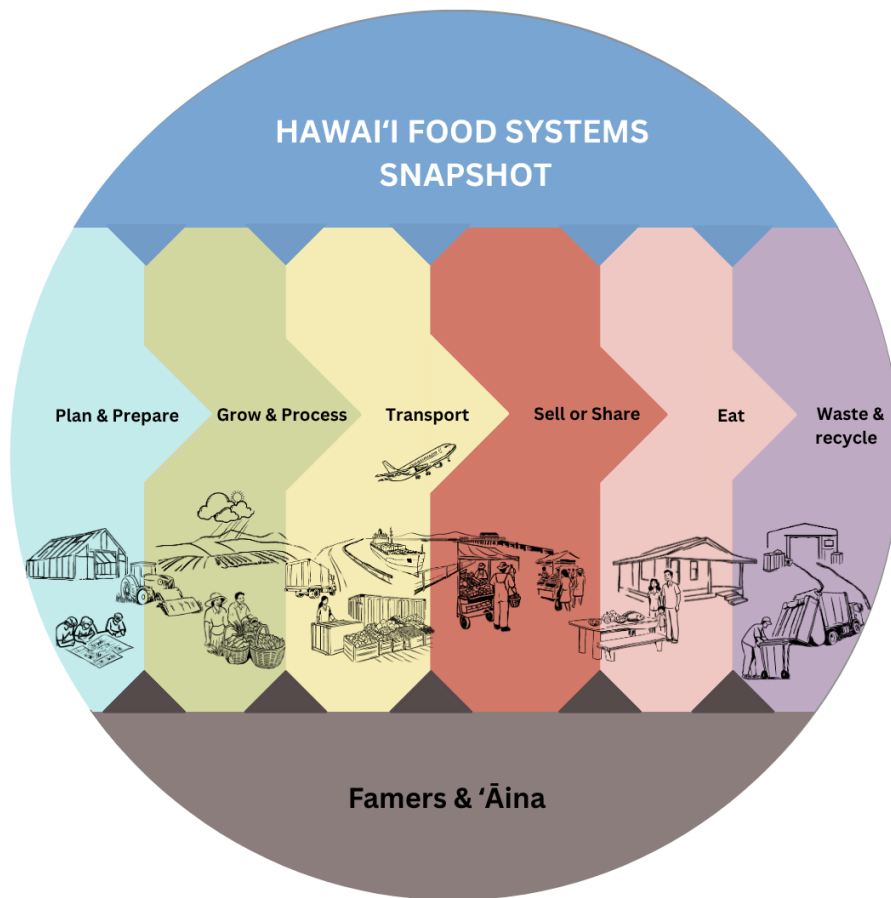
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Exploring Options for Act 239

Report to the Co-Chairs

October 2025



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Executive Summary

Hawai'i's food system coordination and planning efforts build on years of collaborative work across agencies and stakeholders to strengthen local agriculture and reduce dependence on imports. In June 2025, Governor Josh Green signed Act 239 (formerly SB1186) into law, establishing a formal statewide framework to build a sustainable, resilient, and equitable food system. The measure responds to urgent challenges including chronic food insecurity, barriers to local food production, and limited household disaster preparedness. Act 239 creates a statewide interagency coordination team, housed within the Agribusiness Development Corporation and co-chaired by the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism and the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity, with legislative participation and invited experts. The law provides a foundation for statewide action and for the development of governance protocols, coordination with counties and community-led organizations, identification of funding resources, creation of time-bound implementation plans, and effective communication systems.

The information summarized here highlights explored options for implementing Act 239, including possible thematic working groups, decision-making and operating protocols, county and community coordination mechanisms, funding sources, communication and policy impact tools. These options are intended to support the interagency team and co-chairs in exploring relevant options and draws on research and comparative examples from Vermont, New Mexico, Los Angeles and more.

1. Background

Hawai'i's food system coordination and planning efforts build on years of collaborative work to strengthen local agriculture and reduce dependence on imports amongst a broad network of farmers, community organizations, state agencies, and philanthropic funders. Act 239 (formerly SB1186) was signed into law by Governor Josh Green on June 27, 2025, to strengthen Hawai'i's commitment to building a sustainable, resilient, and equitable food system. Recognizing high rates of food insecurity, barriers to local food production, and limited household preparedness for emergencies, the law establishes a statewide interagency food systems coordination team and an interagency working group housed within the Agribusiness Development Corporation. Co-chaired by the Board of Agriculture and the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, with participation from legislators and invited experts, the group is tasked with developing governance protocols, coordinating with counties and community partners, identifying resources, creating implementation plans, and using policy analysis tools to guide decisions. The measure appropriates \$100,000 for FY 2025–2026 to support operating costs and requires annual reports to the Legislature.

1.2 Comparing Similar Efforts

Legislatively mandated statewide food systems planning and coordination processes can achieve measurable success when built on dedicated funding, legal backing, and broad stakeholder engagement. Some examples relevant to Hawai'i include Vermont, New Mexico and the City and County of Los Angeles (two separate entities). Internationally, New Zealand, Canada, France and Brazil.

There is a large diversity of ways of organizing food systems planning and coordination efforts (see Appendix on thematic groupings, for example). Based on review, official government-sanctioned processes lend more credibility and access to policymakers, potential official capacity to craft public policy, utilization of government facilities, resources and staff, and access to federal dollars targeted for local government initiatives (Ambrose et al 2022; Siddiki, Saba N., et al. 2015). Food systems planning and coordination efforts organized within government agencies also face particular challenges including varying levels of support for the effort and for food system issues by their host agencies (ibid).

Vermont

Vermont has one of the most comprehensive statewide food system strategies in the country, anchored in law through the *Farm to Plate Investment Program* and implemented by the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund. Its Farm to Plate Plan (2021–2030) integrates economic

development, climate resilience, equity, and food security, with measurable goals and a statewide backbone network that convenes over 350 organizations. Vermont's Farm to Plate initiative has been linked to more than \$11.3 billion in food system economic output, supporting 64,000+ jobs and 11,500+ farm/food businesses ([Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund+1](#)) Over the first 4–5 years alone, more than 2,200 new food system jobs and nearly 200 new businesses were created under its implementation. The state's legislated Farm-to-Plate Investment Program recorded an increase in local food consumption from 5% to 13.9% over seven years, along with enhanced economic activity and stakeholder engagement. Vermont's mandated Farm-to-School program also produced improvements in student nutrition and farm profitability. Vermont [Farm-to-Plate](#) was codified into state statute as the Farm-to-Plate Investment Program and is administered by the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund (VSJF).

New Mexico

New Mexico's *Food Charter* and the Economic Development Department's [Food, Hunger & Agriculture Program](#) link policy vision with operational support for producers and communities. The focus is on food access, Indigenous food sovereignty, local procurement, and infrastructure (aggregation, processing, distribution). The [New Mexico Farmer's Marketing Association](#) also promotes institutional purchasing across the state.

Los Angeles City and Los Angeles County

The Los Angeles [Food Policy Council \(LAFPC\)](#) coordinates hundreds of partners to advance food equity, access, and sustainability in a massive urban region. Its policy platform emphasizes healthy food retail, food recovery, urban agriculture, and equity initiatives like the *Food Equity Roundtable*. LA county also hosts a [Office of Food Systems](#), established as a directive of the LA County Board of Supervisors, and created through an official partnership agreement between Los Angeles County and local philanthropic organizations.

2. Hawai'i Act 239, 2025

Act 239 ([Bill PDF](#)) creates a formal governance framework for statewide food systems coordination, planning and legislative reporting. Its requirements include developing a process to implement interagency food systems plans and actions and is tasked with:

- 1) Developing governance, decision-making, and operating protocols;
- 2) Coordinating with county and community-led organizations that are involved with food systems planning;

- 3) Identifying resources to support interagency food systems coordination and implementation efforts;
- 4) Developing internal and external communication processes
- 5) Creating time-bound implementation plans and ways to measure progress toward statewide food systems goals; and
- 6) Utilizing policy impact analysis tools to evaluate proposed actions.

3. Governance

Act 239 sets out clear processes for membership selection and highlights the need to develop operating and decision-making protocols. Governance design also implies finding ways to address key issues and individual geographic contexts. Decision-making and operating protocols—guided by Hawai'i's Sunshine Law—provide the structure and decisions can be made by majority voting, consensus, or modified consensus models. Together, these elements establish the foundation for how the group is composed, how it organizes its work, and how it makes decisions in ways that reflect both statutory requirements and best practices from other food systems planning and coordination frameworks.

3.1 Membership and Appointment

The Act requires co-chairs from the HDAB and DBEDT, along with one legislative appointee each from the House and Senate, plus members with relevant expertise invited by the co-chairs. Members could be appointed directly or through a nomination process.

3.2 Possible thematic groupings for PIGS or Standing Committees

In a short literature review of studies from the U.S. and Canada, the most frequent themes for thematic groups are **food access and security** as well as **agriculture and food production** (see References). **School food and procurement policies** and food justice and equity were also common, followed by **procurement and farm-to-institution** efforts, public health and healthy environments, and stakeholder or community engagement. Economic development, land use and planning, policy development, hunger and poverty, food waste and recovery and leadership or governance were also mentioned as well as individual topics such as labor, infrastructure, healthy retailing, and rural–urban integration. A list of these topics by state can be found in the Appendix E.

List of topics from the SCR 111 report:

- **Supporting Local Agrifood Economies** (Policies and Governance, Institutional Purchasing, Capital Access)

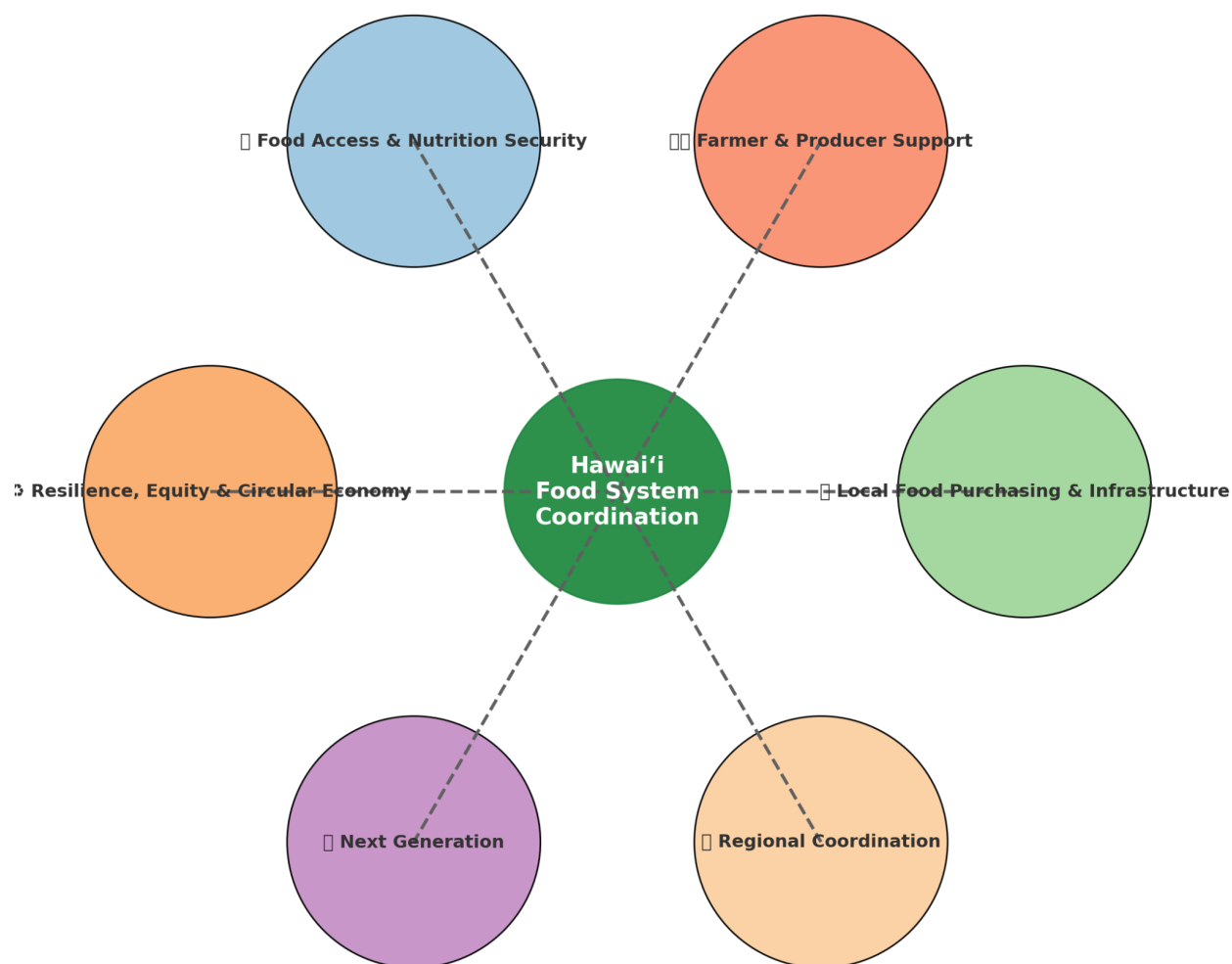
- **Valued, Safe and Nutritious Food** (Food Access, Safety, Public Health and Nutrition, Household Food Security)
- **Secure, Connected and Abundant Farms & Fisheries*** (Biosecurity, Pest Management, Agricultural Theft, Infrastructure, Land and Water Access, Soil quality, Transport, Ag Statistics & Marketing)
- **Farmer & Farmworker Wellbeing & Futures** (Housing, Labor, Education & Food Literacy, Workforce Development, Fair Labor)
- **Just & Resilient Communities** (Social Equity & Food Justice, Biocultural Restoration, Ecological Sustainability, Food Waste, , Food System Resilience, Disaster Preparedness & Response)

List of groupings based on other states' working groups:

- **Local Food Purchasing and Infrastructure** (procurement, processing, value-added infrastructure)
- **Farmer Support** (Land, Water and Capital Access, labor, workforce housing +)
- **Food Access and Food Security**
- **Resiliency and equity** (Climate, Waste and Circular Economy, Disaster preparedness, equity, cultural considerations)
- **Next generation**
- **Regional Coordination Networks** (see county coordination below)

Possible thematic groupings for Act 239 working group:

- **Local Food Purchasing & Infrastructure** – institutional procurement, aggregation, processing, value-added infrastructure, transportation, marketing.
- **Farmer & Producer Support** – land and water access, capital/financing, housing, workforce development, labor, farmer/farmworker well-being.
- **Food Access & Nutrition Security** – household food security, affordability, culturally relevant/kūpuna crops, public health and nutrition.
- **Resilience, Equity & Circular Economy** – disaster preparedness, climate resilience, equity & food justice, ecological sustainability, food waste and recovery, biocultural restoration.
- **Next Generation** – youth engagement, intergenerational farmer training, career pipelines.
- **Regional Coordination** – county-level and regional community networks.



3.3 Decision-making protocols

The **Hawai'i Sunshine Law** (HRS Ch. 92) governs *how* boards meet and make decisions (open meetings, notice, testimony, minutes, etc.), but it **does not itself set the voting threshold** (simple majority, supermajority, unanimous, etc.).

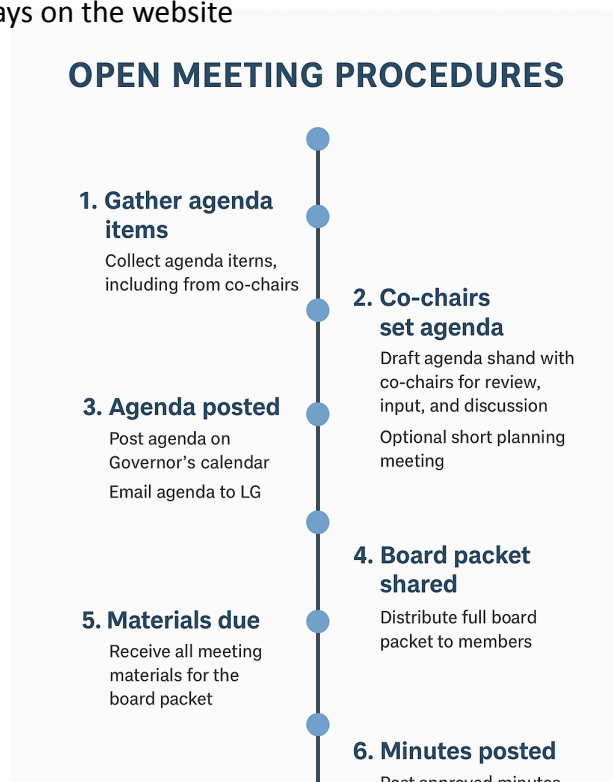
- **Simple Majority.** For most state and county boards in Hawai'i, unless another law, charter, or the board's bylaws specify otherwise, decisions are made by a simple majority of members present (as long as a quorum is met). Some boards and commissions are required by their enabling statutes, administrative rules, or county charters to use a supermajority (e.g. 2/3) or unanimous vote for certain actions (such as budget adoption, disciplinary actions, or major land-use approvals)
- **Consensus-based Decision-Making** is also an option. Consensus does not imply complete unanimity (everyone voting the same) but it does "requires that all present

avoid obstruction in a common search for agreement and has the great advantage of not leaving behind an unhappy minority” (Food Policy Council’s “Getting Started”).

- **Modified Consensus Building (see appendix A).** Rhode Island Food Policy Council (uses a process where they first try to reach consensus; if not, a vote is taken with options for abstaining or standing aside; if more than 1/3 strongly disagree, they reopen for discussion and aim for a supermajority).

3.5 Operating protocols

- **Open Meeting Procedures (see Appendix D for tools).**
 - 1. **Gather agenda items** 3-4 weeks prior to meeting, including from co-chairs.
 - 2. **Co-chairs set agenda.** Share agenda items and draft agenda with co-chairs for review and input, discussion as needed, before posting. (Short regular meeting may be helpful) 2-4 weeks in advance.
 - 3. **Agenda posted.** Post meeting agenda 7-10 calendar days in advance on governor’s calendar, emailed to LG.
 - 4. **Materials.** Receive all meeting materials for board packet 7-10 calendar days in advance.
 - 4. **Board packet.** Share board packet 7-10 calendar days in advance.
 - 5. Complete meeting and take minutes.
 - 6. **Post minutes.** Previous month’s approved agenda and minutes posted with 7 calendar days on the website



4. County Coordination

Act 239 emphasizes the importance of **county and community coordination** to ensure statewide food systems planning is grounded in local priorities and lived experience. Counties bring critical partners such as agriculture, planning, health, and emergency management departments, while community-led organizations contribute data, expertise, and direct engagement with residents. Formal liaisons, regular updates, and inclusive opportunities for testimony and collaboration can help bridge state-level planning with county initiatives and community efforts.

4.1 Coordinating with county agencies

Mapping these partners would be an important first step including of county agencies such as:

- county agriculture departments or other departments tasked with food and agriculture, food access coordinators and agricultural liaisons (HDAB).
- planning departments, public health departments, economic development offices, procurement/food service purchasers (e.g., public schools), county emergency management.

- Options for coordination:

- Invite in existing food access coordinators and agricultural liaisons to provide updates and information at Act 239 meetings
- Ask Counties to formally assign specific liaisons
- Backbone support gathers information on county priorities and helps to inform Act 239 working group.

4.2 Coordinating with community-led organizations

Mapping these partners can be done through collecting existing food systems stakeholder maps available through county food systems plans and initiative such as Transforming Hawai'i Food Systems actor maps.

- Options for coordination:

- Attend or Submit written or oral testimony Working Group meetings.
- Share information, data, or community stories.
- Offer subject-matter expertise on key topics.
- Review and comment on draft reports or policies.
- Encourage others in your community to engage.

5. Resources for Implementation

Act 239 requires identifying resources which could include State and County appropriations, federal funding and philanthropic/private partners (“Identify resources to support interagency food systems coordination and implementation efforts”). Potential funding sources include state and county appropriations, cost-sharing through agency partnerships, and targeted federal grants for local food infrastructure and system development. In addition, philanthropic partners—both local and national—can provide critical support for piloting projects, community engagement, and evaluation efforts, helping to ensure long-term sustainability of the initiative.

5.1 Resource Options

- **State and county funding options:**
 - **Agency cost-sharing:** MOUs where partner agencies commit staff time and in-kind resources (data, meeting space, technical assistance)
 - **Budget appropriations:** request line items to fund staff, operating costs, and a small grants pool for pilots. Start with temporary and build toward multi-year.
- **Federal grants:**
 - Pursue USDA food systems grants for infrastructure where, including, but not limited to:
 - LAMP grants (especially FMLFPP and LFPP) for Farmers Market Promotion, Local Food Promotion, and Regional Food System Partnerships for coordinating local/regional food system expansions.
 - AFRI Sustainable Agricultural Systems (through NIFA) for multi-disciplinary projects that integrate research, education, and extension.
 - Sentinel landscape, REPI and DOI WATERSMART opportunities.
- **Philanthropic partners:** approach foundations with food systems/health/environment portfolios to pilot innovative projects, fund community engagement, or support evaluation/analytics. Examples include:
 - Stupski, Weinberg, Healy and other local foundations and local healthcare funders.
 - National funders such as the Better Food Policy Fund and other members of networks such as SAFSF and RFSI.

6. Communication Processes

Act 239 emphasizes the need to **develop clear internal and external communication processes** to ensure transparency, coordination, and public engagement. Strong internal systems help



streamline collaboration among agencies and working group members, while external communications provide stakeholders and the public with accessible information, opportunities for input, and updates on progress.

6.1 Internal Communications options:

- Shared workspace (document repository) within existing government file systems.
- Share message board/chat spaces within existing or new government IT seems.
- Participation in common project tracking systems (e.g. ADC project pipeline tracker) or a shared project management process or dashboard that aligns with existing efforts.
- Processes and support for Co-Chairs to connect on developing agendas.
- Standard operating templates (agenda, action log, MOU templates).

6.2 External communications (public & stakeholders)

- Public website page with statute text, agendas, minutes, draft plans, dashboards, and ways to engage.
- Including updates in existing newsletters and email listserv.
- Annual report to the Legislature (statutory requirement) plus a one-page public summary.
- Media outreach and success storytelling for pilot projects.

7. Implementation Plans and Measuring Progress

Act 239 requires the development of **time-bound implementation plans and progress measures** to guide statewide. (“Create time-bound implementation plans and ways to measure progress toward statewide food systems goals.”). Options for creating an implementation plan include:

- Utilizing funds to develop the plan internally or externally.
- Utilizing PIGs or standing committees to be responsible for particular sections of the plan, with support and central pulling together across themes.
- Learning from county-level processes on what worked and didn’t work for the drafting of their plans.

Time-bound implementation plan structure Examples

- **Short term (1 year)**
 - **(0–3 months):** Constitute group; support staff; implementation and prioritization plan, including legislative priorities for 2026, and report for legislature.

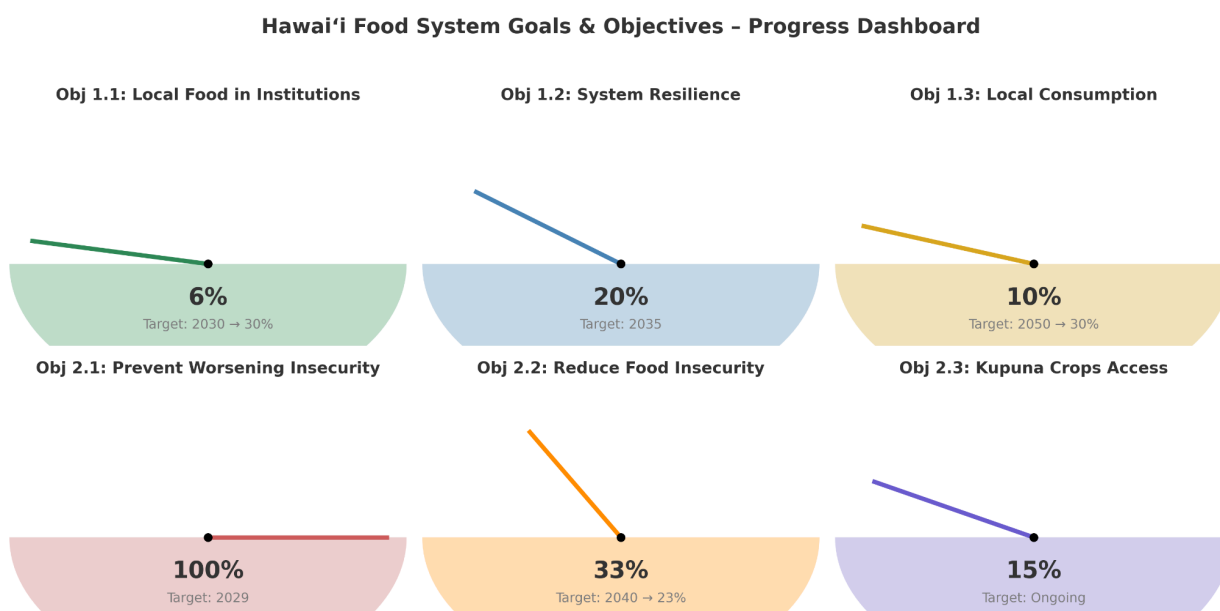
- **(3 - 6 months):** Develop and share collective messages for 2026 policy priorities.
- **(6 - 12 months):** Finalize data tracking and public dashboard, governance structure, standing committees/PIGs, including how counties will feed into the working group. Deploy prioritized pilot projects; build procurement pipelines; implement infrastructure projects where feasible; develop policy proposals.
- **Medium term (2 years):**
 - Deploy prioritized pilot projects; build procurement pipelines; implement infrastructure projects; develop and implement policies.
- **Long term (3+ years):** Scale successful pilots, institutionalize funding streams and governance, evaluate impact and revise statewide plan.

Sample Implementation Plan

Year	Example Activities
2026 Inter-Agency Foundations	Governance and strengthened interagency coordination, finalized land/infrastructure assessment, yield and value-add planning, procurement engagement, scope farmer support, emergency feeding and affordability programs, baseline data and reporting.
2027 Scale Production & Access	Cold storage mapping, expand local purchasing , launch value-add operations, implement farmer support, emergency feeding and affordability programs, consumer campaigns and expand disaster resilience/preparedness.
2028 Integration & Market Linkages	Implement cold storage, expand local purchasing, scale value-add operations, expand farmer support, emergency feeding and affordability programs

2029 Diversification & Resilience	Expand cold storage, farmer support, emergency feeding and affordability programs efforts, expand local purchasing, enhance resilience, disaster preparedness and climate-readiness.
2030 Consolidation & Scaling	Consolidate and expand value-add & market linkages, farmer and food access programs, 5 year evaluation.

Example Metrics & monitoring (sample dashboard items)



6. Policy Impact Tools

Act 239 includes the use of “policy impact analysis tools to evaluate proposed actions.” Policy impact tools provide a structured way to understand the tradeoffs and benefits of proposed food system policies. Some examples include:

- **Regulatory impact analysis or assessment (RIA)** — high-level cost/benefit analysis of new regulation or statute change. It includes: problem definition, objective, description of the regulatory proposal, identification of alternatives, analysis of benefit and costs, identification of the preferred solution and setting out the monitoring and evaluation framework.

- **Economic impact modeling** — estimate jobs, income, and value-added from local production and procurement policies. Simple input-output models can be used initially. One such model is Loke and Leung’s economic multiplier model for investments in the local food system showing \$1 in farm-gate sales of fresh vegetables generates about \$2.06 in total sales (i.e. multiplier ~2.06) in the economy (Loke and Leung).
- **Equity and social impact assessment** — structured assessment of how policies affect disadvantaged groups and Native Hawaiian communities. For example, A Racial Equity Tool for Food Systems Planning uses a series of questions to help understand the social context of policy interventions.

Conclusion

Hawai‘i’s Act 239 provides a rare opportunity to build a robust statewide food systems governance structure rooted in interagency coordination. Lessons from Vermont, New Mexico, Los Angeles and more suggest that success depends on strong governance, reliable funding, and stakeholder engagement. By establishing thematic working groups, formal county and community linkages, and strong project tracking and communication systems, Hawai‘i can maximize collaboration across agencies and islands. Pairing policy impact tools with time-bound implementation plans and metrics can ensure accountability and progress, while external storytelling efforts can help highlight project learnings and success.

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Appendix A: Modified Consensus Process

- 1. Hear all viewpoints:
 - a. Hear and address concerns
 - b. Hear reservations
- 2. Seek consensus. If consensus is reached, move forward.
- 3. If there is no consensus, take a vote, noting:
 - a. Blocking concerns
 - b. Stand aside (abstain)
- 4. Decisions shall be made by a simple majority. When decisions cannot be made by simple majority, distinguish types of disagreement as either:
 - a. Can live with it
 - b. Strong disagreement
- 5. If more than 1/3 of the group strongly disagrees, reopen for discussion to reach compromise with at least 2/3 majority.
- B. Draft report outline
- C. Full Text of Act 239
- D. Open meeting Tools

Appendix B: Automatic Scheduling table example

Step	Task	Timing	Date (Auto)	Enter Meeting Date:
1	Gather agenda items	3–4 weeks before	-28	
2	Co-chairs set agenda	2–4 weeks before	-21	
3	Agenda posted	7–10 days before	-10	
4	Materials due	7–10 days before	-10	
5	Board packet shared	7–10 days before	-10	
6	Meeting held	Meeting Date	0	
7	Minutes posted	Within 7 days after	7	

-

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- Example
-

Step	Task	Timing	Date (Auto)	Enter Meeting Date: 9/18/25
1	Gather agenda items	3–4 weeks before	8/21/25	
2	Co-chairs set agenda	2–4 weeks before	8/28/25	
3	Agenda posted	7–10 days before	9/8/25	
4	Materials due	7–10 days before	9/8/25	
5	Board packet shared	7–10 days before	9/8/25	
6	Meeting held	Meeting Date	9/18/25	
7	Minutes posted	Within 7 days after	9/25/25	

Appendix C: Example formats of challenge areas (County of Hawai'i)

Challenge	Description	Producer-Expressed Needs
Invasive Species and Pest Management	Significant financial burden on farmers from crop loss and high costs to manage invasive species.	More robust inspection system to prevent the entry of invasive species; expand CRB response to include DLNR and OHA due to social and cultural impacts; subsidies or reimbursements for management measures (fencing, netting, pest control)
Labor Cost	High labor costs limit growth of agricultural businesses.	Labor pools; Subsidy for labor costs; Conservation corps model for farming; Streamline H2A process.
Equipment Cost	Shortage of equipment availability.	Shared equipment and equipment operators.

Workforce Housing Availability	Housing is important for retaining employees but there is a funding barrier to developing onsite housing; Leased land often restricts ability to live on the land.	Clusters of ag housing; Streamline ag housing in high ag areas; funding/grants for ag housing; address DHHL waiting list
Access to Capital	Producers lack capital to scale operations amid high land and water costs, lack of agricultural labor housing and agricultural infrastructure, and biosecurity challenges.	Grant-writing support; business-assist grants; tax exemptions for agricultural producers.
Access to Land	Producers face barriers accessing affordable land for agriculture.	ADC pathways to land acquisition; farmer-owned land cooperatives; lease County lands; Incentivize private landowners to lease to farmers; Create partnerships to leverage private lands (DHHL, KS, etc.); Land trusts for agriculture; Raise taxes for inactive ag land owners.
Water Infrastructure	Water infrastructure needed with land access; climate-change is exasperating water scarcity.	Federal funding for water infrastructure; supporting water reclamation and use of greywater; increasing reservoirs in rural areas; restoration of native ecology and the hydrological cycle here.
Agricultural Theft	Agricultural theft and vandalism restricts economic viability.	Ability for producers or staff to live on farms to discourage theft and vandalism.
Transportation Costs	A 2020 NASS survey found shipping and transportation costs are the third leading barrier for almost 2 in 5 producers.	Lower ag-freight with inter-island shipping; support shipping of bulk materials

Appendix d: Example stakeholder identification chart (County of Hawai'i)

	Stakeholder Partners					
Ag Challenge	Federal	State	Counties	Non-profit	Private Sector	Working Groups
Invasive Species & Pest Management	USDA NRCS, APHIS	HDOA AI, PI; UH CTAHR	COH R&D	HISC, MISC, BIISC, OISC, KISC	Plant nurseries	Hawaii Invasive Species Council
Housing	HUD; USDA FSA, Rural Development	HICH	COH OHCD	<u>KVDC</u>	Developers ; land-owners	TBD
Labor Cost	USDA FSA (<u>FLSP</u>)	<u>WDD</u> ; UH CTAHR; RCUH	COH R&D	Hamakua Institute	H2A contractors	TBD
Infrastructure	USDA RFSI	HDOA ADD	COH R&D	HGFA	TBD	TBD
Soil quality	USDA NRCS	UH CTAHR	TBD	Local SWCD; HGFA	TBD	TBD
Ag Statistics & Marketing	USDA NASS; USDA AMS	DBEDT ADC; HDOA ADD; UH UHERO	COH R&D	Food hubs; Farmer's Markets; Hamakua Institute	Aggregator businesses; food hubs	TBD
Access to Capital	USDA FSA	HDOA AL, MD, ADD	TBD	HIR; HGFA	TBD	TBD
Land and Water Access		DLNR; DBEDT ADC;	TBD	Bishop Estate	TBD	TBD

		HDOA ARM; DHHL				
Shipping and Transportation costs	USDA FSA	TBD	TBD	TBD	Shipping industry	TBD

Appendix E: List of Statewide and County Thematic Groupings

State / City	Thematic groupings	Link (plan / program / council)
Vermont	Food access / food security; Resilience / climate; regional coordination	Hunger Councils / Farm to Plate strategic planning. (vtfarmtoplate.com)
New Mexico	Food access / food security; Local procurement & infrastructure; Agriculture / production; Indigenous food sovereignty	New Mexico Food Charter (Legislature) • NM EDD Food, Hunger & Agriculture Program • Food, Farm & Hunger Initiative Fact Sheet • Indigenous Food Systems Planning Project (USDA)
Los Angeles (city / county)	Food access / food security; Equity / food justice; food recovery	LA Food Policy Council / Food Equity Roundtable / Food Forward. (LAFPC)
Iowa	Local food infrastructure & procurement (regional food hubs)	Iowa food hub & infrastructure planning resources (Leopold Center / Iowa Food System Coalition). (leopold.iastate.edu)
Washington (state)	Regional coordination / networks; resilience	Washington State Food Policy Forum (statutory forum / Food Policy Forum). (Washington State Conservation Commission)
Nevada	Food access / food security (Five-Pillar Food Security Strategic Plan)	Nevada Food Security Strategic Plan (Office of Food Security). (dpbh.nv.gov)

Maryland	Food access / food security; Waste reduction / circular economy	Maryland food-waste & policy resources / food security efforts. (NRDC)
New York City	Food access / food security; urban agriculture	Food Forward NYC — 10-Year Food Policy Plan (City). (NYC Government)
North Carolina	Equity / justice / BIPOC farming; resilience	NC food system resilience & equity analyses (CEFS / Duke WFPC). (Center for Environmental Farming Systems)
South Carolina	Equity / justice; regional coordination; support for processing	Healthy Palmetto / SC food equity & processing capacity efforts. (livehealthy.sc.gov)
San Diego (county)	Equity / food justice; food access	San Diego County Food Justice / Community Action Plan (engagement page). (Engage San Diego County)
Virginia	Local food infrastructure & procurement; farm-to-school; AFID infrastructure grants	Virginia AFID (Agriculture & Forestry Industry Development) infrastructure grants & program. (Virginia Agriculture & Consumer Services)
California (state)	Resilience / climate / sustainability; climate-smart ag	CA Dept. of Food & Agriculture — Climate Smart Agriculture & TA. (CDFA)
Oregon	Resilience / sustainability; waste reduction / circular economy; local action plans	Oregon Food Action Plan / state food waste strategy. (Oregon)
New England (regional)	Regional coordination; resilience / 30% regional food by 2030	New England Feeding New England / regional 30% by 2030 initiative. (NYC Food Policy Center (Hunter College))
Rhode Island	Urban agriculture / land access; municipal food toolkits	RI municipal food systems toolkit / statewide agriculture planning. (Rhode Island Planning)

Seattle (city)	Urban agriculture / land access (P-Patch); waste reduction; farm-to-childcare	Seattle P-Patch community gardens; Seattle food waste & farm-to-childcare efforts. (Seattle)
Colorado	Farm-to-School / nutrition; school meal & local purchasing activity	Farm to School network / state participation and resources. (farmtoschool.org)
New Hampshire	Regional coordination / networks; statewide strategic food & agriculture plan	NH Food Alliance / new NH Food & Agriculture Strategic Plan (statewide). (nhfoodalliance.org)

Exploring Act 239 Options

Report to Co-Chairs
October 2025

Act 239 Background

Establishes statewide interagency food systems coordination team & working group (housed in ADC).

- **Purpose:** Build a sustainable, resilient, and equitable food system; reduce imports; improve food security.
- **Leadership:** Co-chaired by HDAB & DBEDT, supported by ADC, with legislators and invited experts.
- **Tasks:** Governance protocols, county/community coordination, communications, funding, implementation plans, policy analysis.
- **Funding:** \$100,000 (FY 2025–26) + annual reporting to Legislature.

Learning from Other States

- **Vermont:** Farm to Plate - measurable statewide plan - linked to more than \$11.3 billion in food system economic output, supporting 64,000+ jobs and 11,500+ farm/food businesses
- **New Mexico:** Food Charter - food access, sovereignty, infrastructure, institutional purchasing through Economic Development Department's [Food, Hunger & Agriculture Program](#) and [New Mexico Farmer's Marketing Association](#)
- **Los Angeles** - focus on equity, recovery, urban ag - LA county also hosts a [Office of Food Systems](#), an official partnership agreement between Los Angeles County and local philanthropic organizations.
- **Other states/cities reviewed:** Colorado, Iowa, Washington, Nevada, Maryland, New York City, North Carolina, South Carolina, San Diego, Virginia, California, Oregon, New England, Rhode Island, Seattle, Colorado, and New Hampshire.

Act 239: Key Tasks

- Develop governance and operating protocols
- Coordinate with counties and community groups
- Identify and mobilize resources to support efforts
- Develop communication processes
- Create time-bound implementation plans
- Use policy impact analysis tools such as economic impact analysis



Governance

- **Membership:** HDOA, DBEDT, Legislature, experts
- **Decision-making:** majority, consensus, or modified consensus
- **Operating protocols** guided by Hawai'i Sunshine Law

OPEN MEETING PROCEDURES

1. Gather agenda items

Collect agenda items, including from co-chairs

2. Co-chairs set agenda

Draft agenda shand with co-chairs for review, input, and discussion

Optional short planning meeting

3. Agenda posted

Post agenda on Governor's calendar
Email agenda to LG

4. Board packet shared

Distribute full board packet to members

5. Materials due

Receive all meeting materials for the board packet

6. Minutes posted

Post approved minutes and previous agenda on website

County and Community Coordination

Map and engage agriculture, health, planning, and emergency agencies and community partners

Options:

- Assign liaisons, invite updates, gather local priorities
- Include community organizations via testimony, data, expertise

Goal: bridge state, county and community plans, action and implementation



Resources for Implementation

State/County: cost-sharing, in-kind resources, appropriations

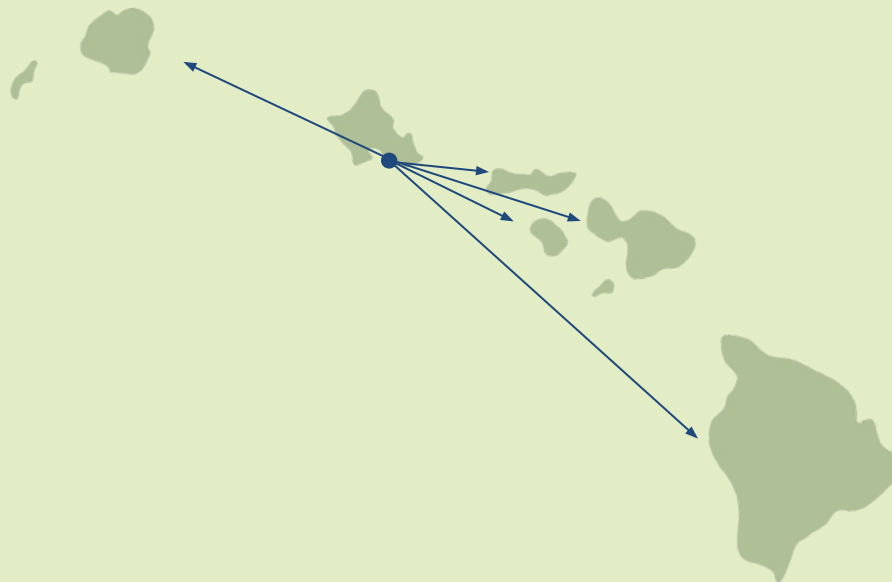
Federal grants for food systems grants and more for infrastructure USDA LAMP, AFRI, etc.

Philanthropy: local & national foundations - Support for pilots, engagement, evaluation



Internal and External Communication

- **Internal:** shared workspace, project management, templates
- **External:** website, newsletters, public dashboard
- Annual legislative report + public summary
- Media outreach to highlight success



Example Implementation Timeline

2026	Governance, land assessment, procurement engagement
2027	Cold storage, local purchasing, resilience programs
2028	Market linkages, expanded operations
2029	Diversification, resilience, climate readiness
2030	Consolidation & scaling, 5-year evaluation

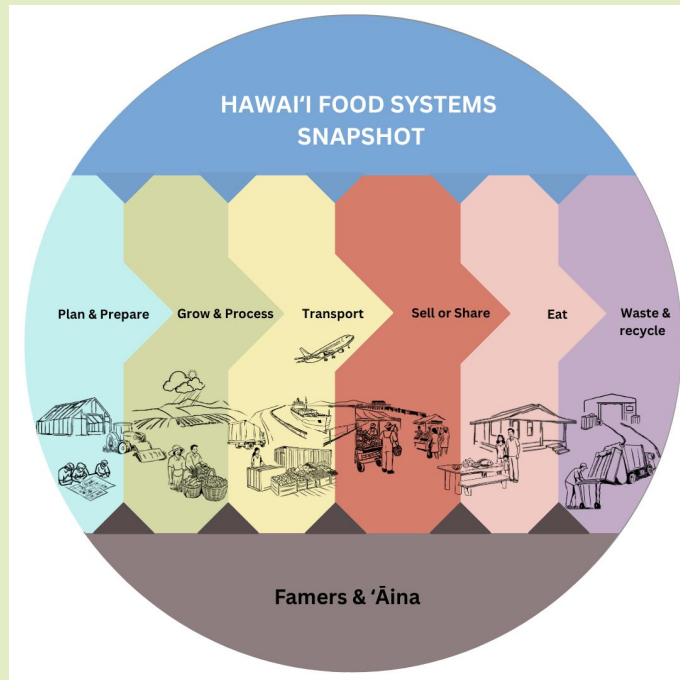
Tracking Progress

Objective	Label	Value	Target
Obj 1.1	Local Food in Institutions	6%	2030 → 30%
Obj 1.2	System Resilience	20%	2035
Obj 1.3	Local Consumption	10%	2050 → 30%
Obj 2.1	Prevent Worsening	100%	2029
Obj 2.2	Reduce Food Insecurity	33%	2040 → 23%
Obj 2.3	Kupuna Crops Access	15%	Ongoing



Policy Impact Tools

- **Regulatory Impact Assessment** - cost/benefit analysis
- **Economic Impact Modeling** - jobs, income, multiplier effects
- **Equity/Social Impact Assessment** - impacts on communities
- others



Conclusion

- Legislated food system planning works best when backed by **funding, legal authority, and stakeholder engagement** (examples: Vermont, New Mexico, Los Angeles; New Zealand, Canada, France, Brazil).
- Government processes bring credibility, policymaker access, public policy influence, and federal funding opportunities.
- Opportunity to enhance and extend existing departmental missions and mandates



Mahalo

Contact:

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808 429 5310

Aloha Chairs and Members of the Interagency State Food System Working Group,

Mahalo for hosting and facilitating the first meeting. I appreciate everyone's dedication and continued commitment to advancing Hawai'i's food system transformation.

After reflecting on the discussion, I would like to **formally submit the following proposal for next steps** to enhance coordination, transparency, and impact across agencies and partners:

1. Engage an Independent Facilitator

To ensure neutrality and avoid potential conflicts of interest among participating agencies, I recommend engaging an **external facilitator**, such as **AG Stewardship Hawai'i** (formerly *ORCD*), to guide this process. Their proven experience in systems facilitation and multi-sector collaboration will help foster an equitable and solutions-oriented environment for all stakeholders.

2. Shift from Issue-Based to Systems-Level Planning

Rather than addressing challenges in isolation, I propose that this Working Group adopt a systems-level approach that identifies the structural and policy changes needed to achieve statewide impact.

Key objectives include:

- **Developing a comprehensive State Food System Plan** that aligns agency efforts and establishes shared priorities.
- **Identifying clear action leads and accountability measures** for each strategy area to ensure follow-through.
- **Establishing a coordinated timeline and reporting framework** to track collective progress across sectors.

This approach will help move our efforts from discussion to coordinated action, ensuring measurable outcomes that advance Hawai'i's food security, resilience, and sovereignty.

Mahalo nui for considering this proposal. I look forward to continued collaboration and to collectively charting a unified path toward a sustainable, equitable, and resilient food system for Hawai'i.

With appreciation,
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