



Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE) services meal programs for 256 schools which translates to 100,000 meals daily, making HIDOE the 9th largest school district in the nation. From physical activity to nutrition programs, their wellness efforts are designed to make students healthy and active, which sets the stage for engaged, effective learning.

The 'Aina Pono Hawai'i State Farm to School Program began in the Kohala School Complex, located on Hawai'i Island. As an ideal "learning and menu creating lab," a single kitchen serves three schools in the complex: Kohala Elementary, Kohala Intermediate and Kohala High Schools. As a rural community, they are committed to increasing their local food production.

WHERE TO START?

In 2015, Lt. Governor Shan Tsutsui convened the Hawai'i Farm to School Advisory Group to develop a path to bring fresh, local food to schools state-wide to reinforce the vision that Hawai'i exists as a perpetual reminder of finite resources, fertile lands, and communities who are committed to the wellbeing of their keiki.

'Aina Pono is a public-private collaboration to bring this vision to life. Program partners include Beyond Green Sustainable Food Partners (BGP), the Office of the Hawai'i Lieutenant Governor, the Hawai'i State Department of Education, and The Kohala Center with support from private funders.

IDENTIFY PRIORITIES

After an assessment conducted by Chef Greg Christian in the summer of 2016, the 'Aina Pono leadership team and key stakeholders laid out four main goals:

Systematically increase HIDOE's purchasing of local food for school breakfast, lunch, and snack programs. **Target: 40% locally sourced food.**

Increase student participation in nutrition programs, i.e., increase the number of students that eat school meals. **Target: participation increases by 5%.**

Increase student consumption of healthy foods in school meals. **Targets: Processed food shall not exceed 40%; food waste declines by 10%.**

The Initiative will be cost-neutral over time, i.e., implementation costs will be covered by cost-savings generated by decreased waste and increased efficiencies. **Target: Overproduction shall not exceed 5%.**

ACCOUNTABILITY

BGP dedicated a full time employee to tracking data in the areas of local food, student participation, fresh food, and food waste (both in the kitchen and in the cafeteria). Through monthly reports and quarterly meetings with program partners, BGP kept the partners informed about progress in reaching the outlined goals.

GETTING RESULTS

Kitchen efficiencies and waste reduction strategies implemented in the 'Aina Pono program at the Kohala School Complex led to an increase in local food purchases from the baseline of 20% to an average of 42.5% during the first semester of the farm to school program. Additionally, the amount of fresh foods increased from the baseline of 27% to 92% in May at the end of the first semester of the new program. The first semester of fresh and local foods coincided with a money savings of 30% that included weighing waste daily.



TRAINING FOR SUCCESS

The 'Aina Pono leadership team identified eight areas of focus to implement the farm to school initiative including:

Kitchen Training

Included team building, production planning, time management, smarter lunchrooms, knife skills, cooking and baking skills, just-in-time cooking, leadership development, and jump meetings

Menu Development

Data Tracking

Waste Management

Supply Chain Development

Procurement Innovation

Community Outreach

Nutrition Education

While Kohala School Complex continues to build upon their initial success, the 'Aina Pono team started piloting the program at Mililani High School, which services 2,500 students, in January 2018 while developing a plan to roll out the program to all schools in Hawai'i.



Is your organization looking to green things up?

WE CAN HELP!