



Kona Community Hospital became the first hospital Blue Zones Project Approved™ on Hawai'i Island in April 2018. Blue Zones Project® is a community-led well-being improvement initiative designed to make healthy choices easier through permanent changes to lifestyle, environment, policy, and social networks.

Beyond Green Sustainable Food Partners worked with Kona Community Hospital to revamp their cafeteria menu by increasing fresh ingredients grown in Hawai'i, expanding vegetable forward dishes, and improving flavor for scratch cooked meals. The dietary initiative named `Ai Pono, Ho'omaka ana translates to Eat Healthy, New Beginnings. The name reflects the meaning of "made from scratch" in Hawaiian.

Founded in 1914, Kona Community Hospital is a 94-bed full-service acute care hospital with 24-hour emergency department designated as a Level III trauma center supporting the west region of the island of Hawaii.

WHERE TO START?

Kona Community Hospital wanted healthier, better tasting food for their patients and staff. We reviewed the inventory in the pantry, cooler,

and freezer and developed a replacement plan. For example, we took out pre-cooked, frozen breaded chicken and replaced the item with fresh chicken and breadcrumbs.

In making menu changes, we initially transitioned from four processed lunch options daily to two fabulous scratch-cooked meals – one meat and one vegan. We identified ways to reduce production time and increase teamwork. Instead of time spent filling containers with canned fruit, the team started serving fresh fruit from a single serving piece. And instead of having two people separately make sandwiches for patients and staff, they joined together and made the sandwiches in half the time.

TRAINING FOR SUCCESS

Beyond Green Partners brought in a chef specialized in vegan food to develop a plant-based menu. Cafeteria staff who also had never eaten vegan food quickly adapted to the recipes such as broccoli Alfredo with cashew nuts serving as the base for the sauce, Mexican lasagna, and roasted veggies with vegan gravy and mashed potatoes. Patients and hospital staff who had never eaten vegan food began asking for the recipes to make the dish at home.



In the end, the kitchen team worked together better. They learned how to communicate with each other to increase productivity and have more fun. The purpose driven team committed to healthy and delicious food for patients and hospital staff. During the 6-month project period:



Local farm food peaked at 25% injecting \$6,000-\$8,000 into the local economy every month.

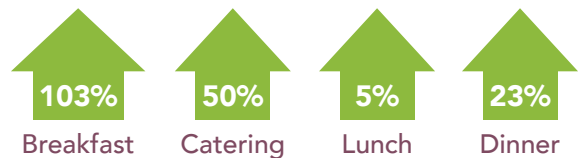
With the goal of delicious food that patients and staff were excited to eat, Beyond Green Partners trained the cafeteria staff how to manage production for just-in-time cooking. Instead of food sitting for hours in warmers, the food came off the stove and went straight to the serving line.

“We inspire healthy eating amongst staff and patients by serving delicious, creative, locally sourced food prepared daily with personal care from the heart of the hospital.”

GETTING RESULTS

Making the switch to scratch-cooking with local food required no additional labor or food costs. From more efficient kitchen operations and a reduction in menu variety, the time emerged to cook from scratch. Lowering the food costs came from minimizing individual packaging and high-priced processed foods, and more accurate participation forecasting.

MEAL COUNT INCREASES



FOOD COSTS REDUCTION



Is your organization looking to green things up?

WE CAN HELP!