



State of Hawaii Department of Agriculture – Farm To School Program Executive Summary: Farm to School Locally Grown Survey

A. OVERVIEW

In April 2016, the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) conducted a Request for Information (RFI) to gather local food production and distribution information for anticipated upcoming Farm to School (F2S) initiatives. The RFI was released with instructions to share it with farmers, distributors, wholesalers, brokers, processors, and aggregators of locally grown food (food grown within the State of Hawai'i). The purpose of the RFI was:

- To gather direct local food supply information from farmers and distributors to develop a more specialized understanding of local food supply;
- To better inform local food buying strategies for our schools and other institutions;
- To better inform State entities on local food purchasing and community networking opportunities;
- To access F2S proposal ideas from across the state.

The information gathered from the RFI will be considered in upcoming F2S program solicitations, assist the State with future F2S initiatives such as increasing locally grown food in school food programs, and support the growth of community connections with local farms.

The RFI was conducted by HDOA and promoted by:

- Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawai'i;
- Lieutenant Governor's Farm to School Information Session and Farmer Mixer Event;
- Direct press release announcements;
- Announcements to stakeholders at Hawaii Farm Bureau's 2016 Ag Awareness Day;
- Discussions with elected leaders of the Hawaii Farmers Union United;
- Numerous listservs of agricultural programs and organizations; and
- Numerous direct email announcements with requests for responses.

B. RESULTS

The RFI contained 33 questions, and garnered a total of 37 responses from 46 respondents (not more than 37 answered any one question). Responses varied from individuals interested in policy and very small production to larger specialty producers and smaller island distributors. Generally, there appears to be great interest in contracting with the State amongst smaller producers. However, there is a gap between the willingness to work with the State and the current capacity to become a viable vendor for the state. Specifically, compliance and basic understanding of government contracting requirements such as food safety and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification, insurance requirements, and registration with the State's Hawaii Compliance Express (HCE) are sporadic.

While responses were generated from all major islands, the small sampling makes inferential statistics difficult for statewide supply information. More outreach will be necessary on each island to capture potential distribution of locally grown food for government opportunities.



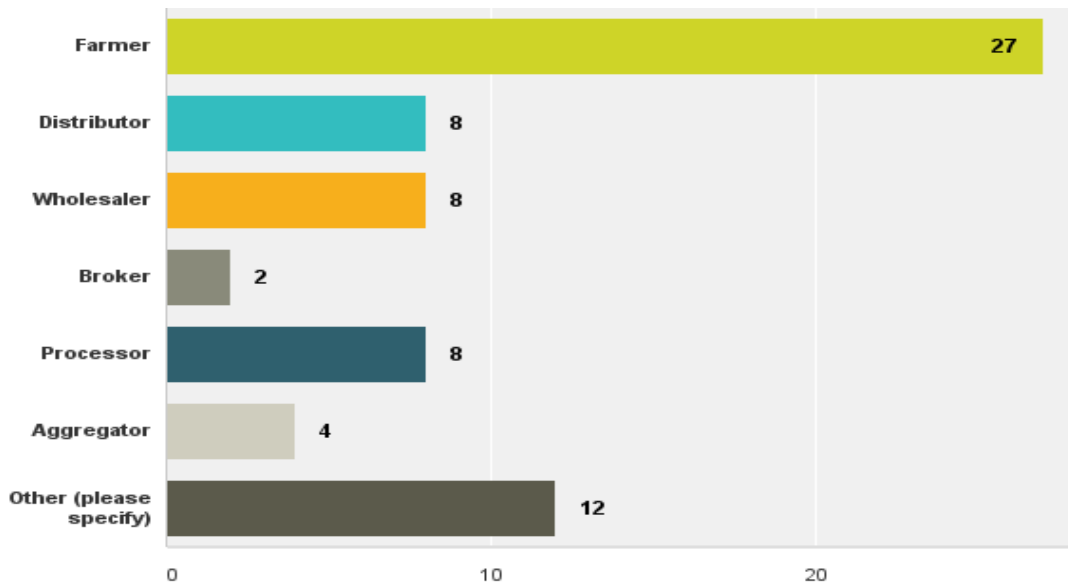
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1) PARTICIPATION

There were 37 active participants in the RFI, (not more than 37 answered any one question), from across the six most populated islands (Kauai, Oahu, Lanai, Molokai, Maui, and Hawaii Island). 34 businesses offered their contact information, with the majority operating as an LLC. The majority of respondents listed organic, sustainable, and diversified farming methods as their production specialties. Most participants listed membership with agricultural support organizations.

TYPE OF BUSINESS:

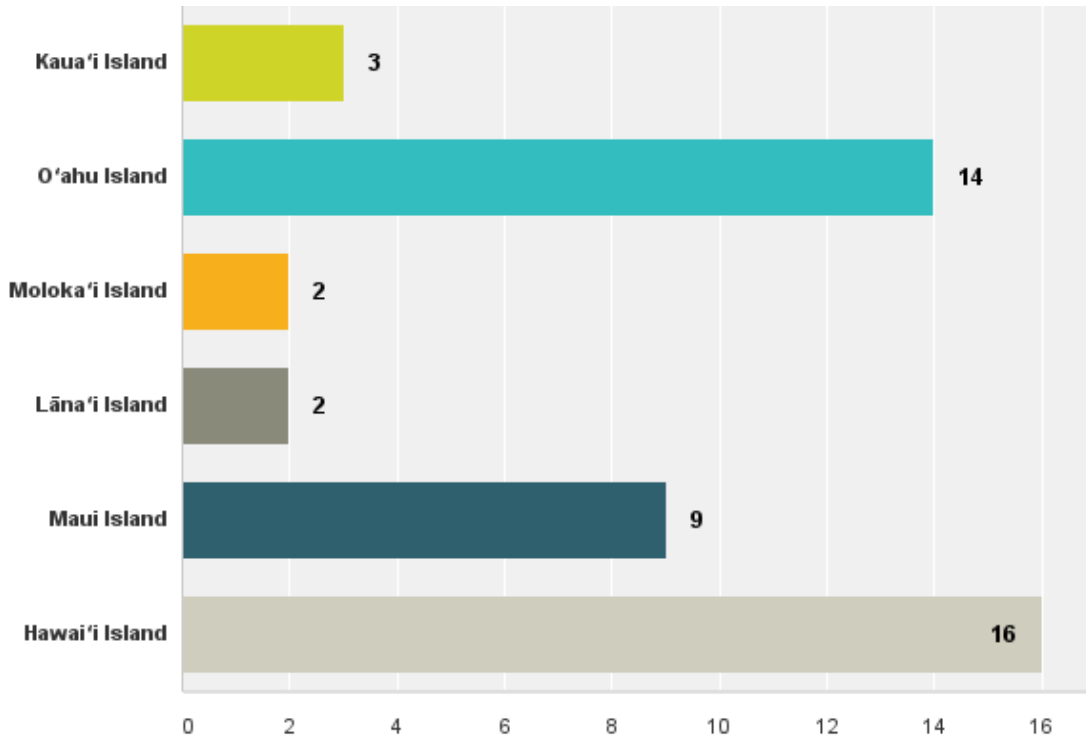


Answer Choices	Responses
Farmer	72.97% 27
Distributor	21.62% 8
Wholesaler	21.62% 8
Broker	5.41% 2
Processor	21.62% 8
Aggregator	10.81% 4
Other (please specify)	32.43% 12
Total Respondents: 37	



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HAWAIIAN ISLANDS OF OPERATIONS:

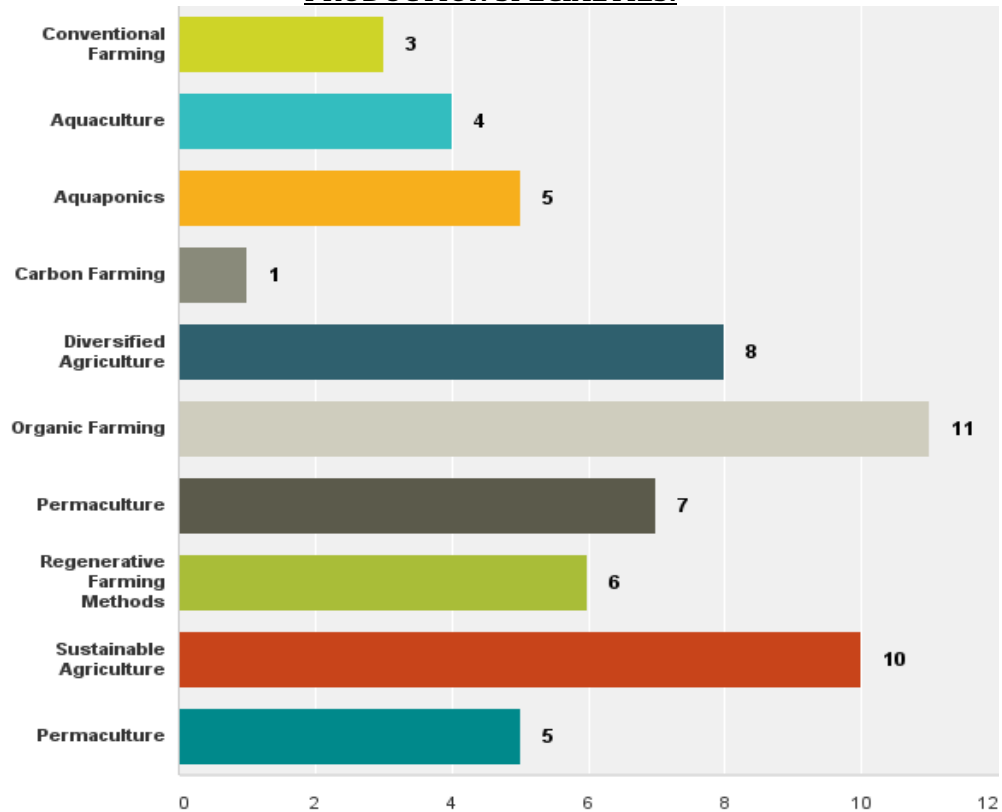


Answer Choices	Responses
Kaua'i Island	8.11% 3
O'ahu Island	37.84% 14
Moloka'i Island	5.41% 2
Lāna'i Island	5.41% 2
Maui Island	24.32% 9
Hawai'i Island	43.24% 16
Total Respondents: 37	



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PRODUCTION SPECIALTIES:

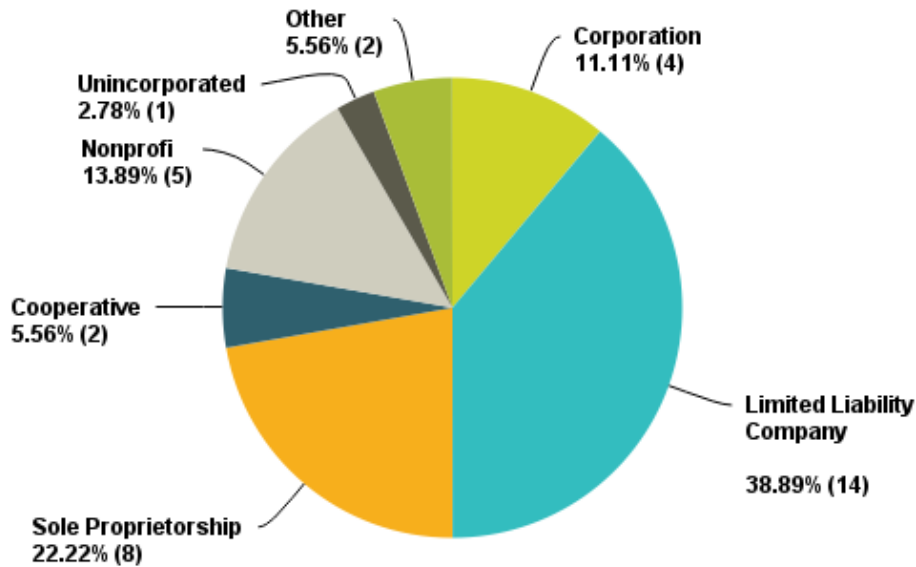


Answer Choices	Responses
Conventional Farming	21.43% 3
Aquaculture	28.57% 4
Aquaponics	35.71% 5
Carbon Farming	7.14% 1
Diversified Agriculture	57.14% 8
Organic Farming	78.57% 11
Permaculture	50.00% 7
Regenerative Farming Methods	42.86% 6
Sustainable Agriculture	71.43% 10
Permaculture	35.71% 5
Total Respondents: 14	

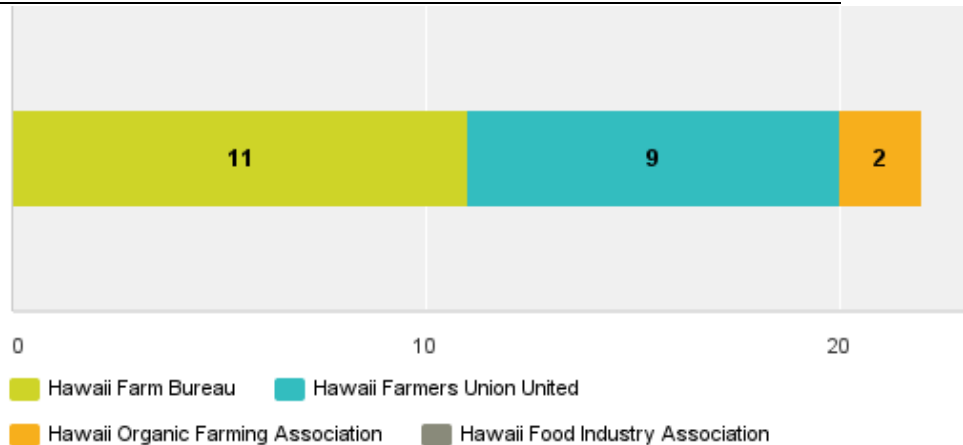


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TYPE OF LEGAL ENTITY:



MEMBERSHIP WITH AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY ORGANIZATIONS:



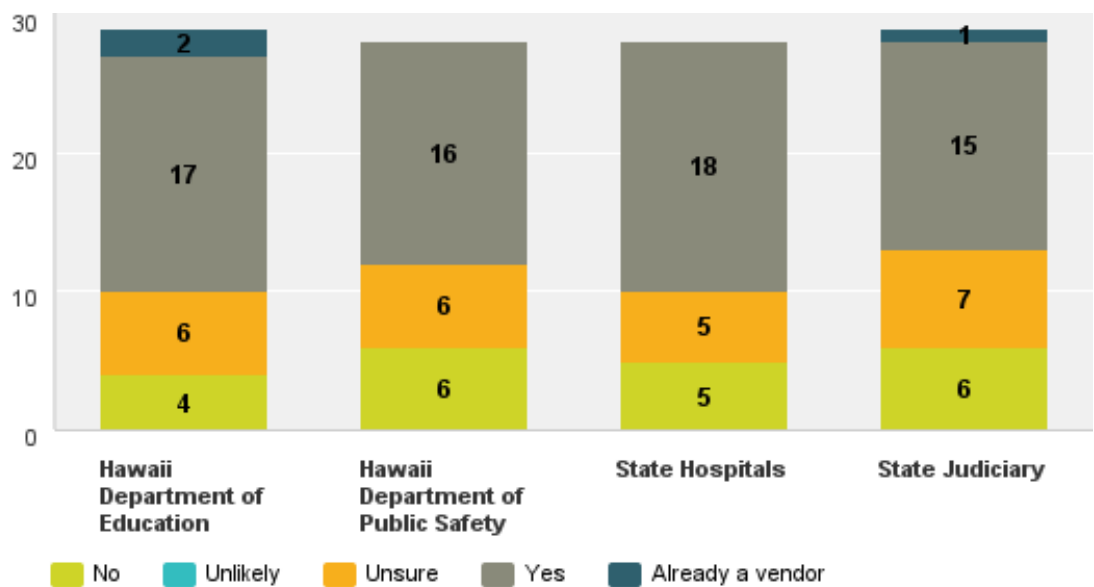
2) **COMMENTS:** Generally, the comments of the respondents were enthusiastic, supportive, and excited about figuring out a way to provide Hawaii’s Keiki with local food - an endeavor which they held to be an outstanding and important cause. Respondents were grateful to be asked for input as several expressed interest in providing the State with guidance. Others expressed a desire to simplify procedures for working with the State, and a hope that farms of all sizes could be included.



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3) INTEREST IN CONTRACTING WITH THE STATE: 30 respondents answered questions about their interest in contracting with the State (Department of Education, Department of Public Safety, State Hospitals, State Judiciary) to provide local food. Over 50% of those who answered were interested, with about 20-25% unsure, and 20-25% uninterested. Two were already a vendor for the Department of Education, and one for the State Judiciary.



	No	Unlikely	Unsure	Yes	Already a vendor	Total	Weighted Average
Hawaii Department of Education	13.79% 4	0.00% 0	20.69% 6	58.62% 17	6.90% 2	29	3.45
Hawaii Department of Public Safety	21.43% 6	0.00% 0	21.43% 6	57.14% 16	0.00% 0	28	3.14
State Hospitals	17.86% 5	0.00% 0	17.86% 5	64.29% 18	0.00% 0	28	3.29
State Judiciary	20.69% 6	0.00% 0	24.14% 7	51.72% 15	3.45% 1	29	3.17



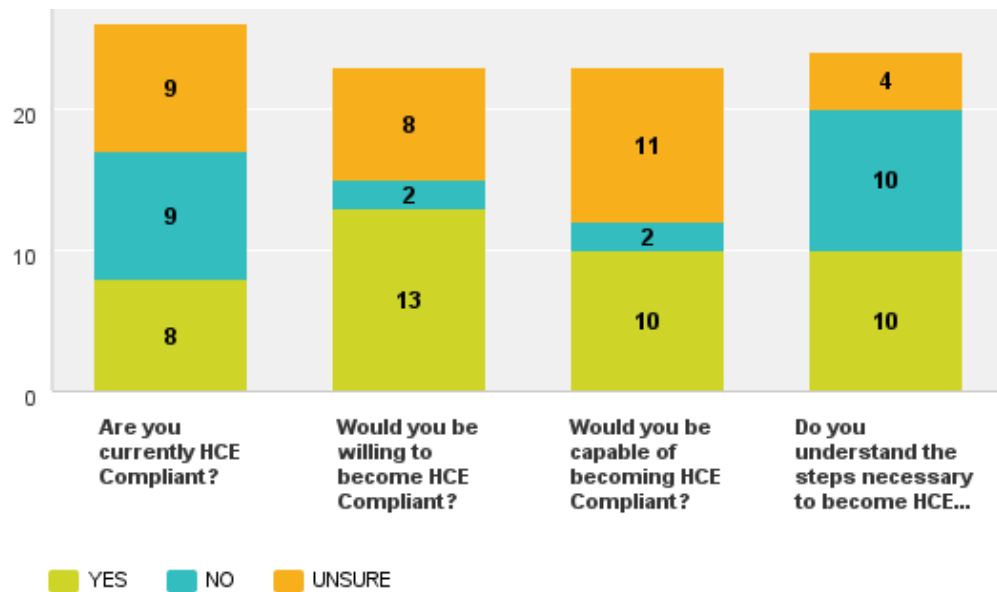
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5) **ABILITY TO CONTRACT WITH THE STATE:** the RFI looked at key indicators to see if potential vendors had the current technical requirements and capacity to contract with the State. These questions draw on current contracting requirements from the DOE, including:

- a) HCE Compliance
- b) Delivery Capabilities
- c) Storage Capacity
- d) Insurance
- e) Certifications (GAP and HACCP)

a) **HCE Compliance:** 25 respondents answered questions about Hawaii Compliance Express (HCE). 7 respondents were currently compliant, and 13 were willing to become compliant. Only two respondents were unwilling and/or incapable of becoming HCE compliant. Most respondents did not know if they were compliant or capable of it, and did not understand the steps required to become compliant.



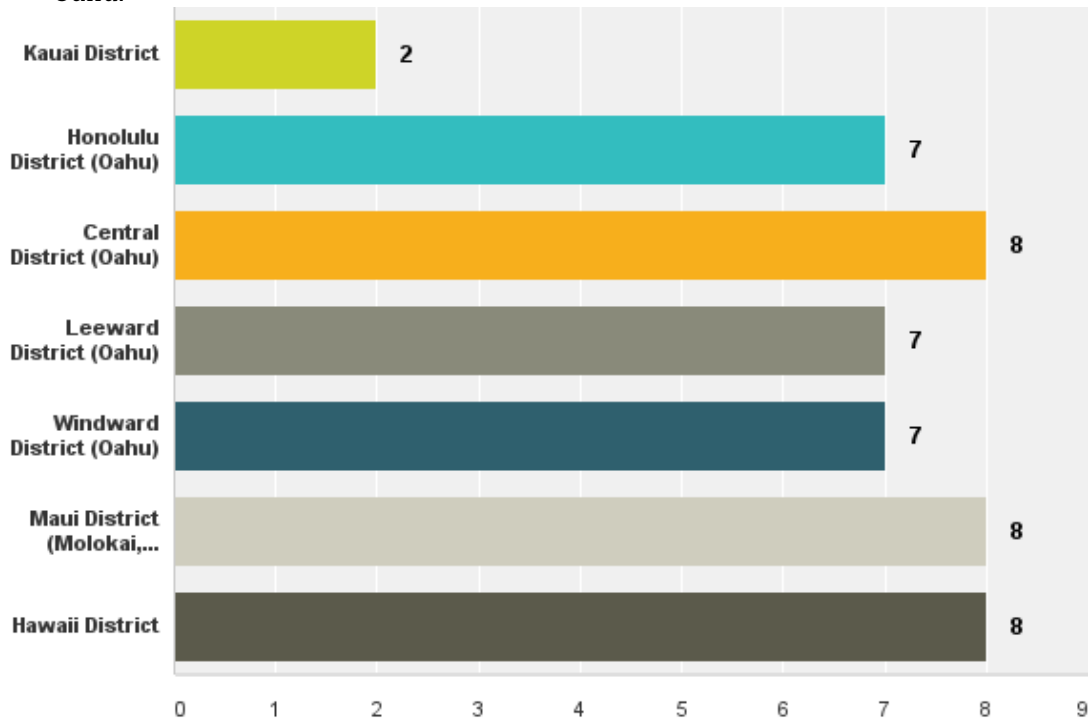
	YES	NO	UNSURE	Total	Weighted Average
Are you currently HCE Compliant?	30.77% 8	34.62% 9	34.62% 9	26	2.04
Would you be willing to become HCE Compliant?	56.52% 13	8.70% 2	34.78% 8	23	1.78
Would you be capable of becoming HCE Compliant?	43.48% 10	8.70% 2	47.83% 11	23	2.04
Do you understand the steps necessary to become HCE Compliant?	41.67% 10	41.67% 10	16.67% 4	24	1.75



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b) **DELIVERY:** 20 respondents indicated that their delivery capability was within 24-48 hours of the produce being picked or prepared in the case of dried/processed products, with shorter times available for customers in their immediate areas. Five respondents were willing to deliver island wide, 1 to multiple islands, and 6 were limited to certain areas on Oahu.

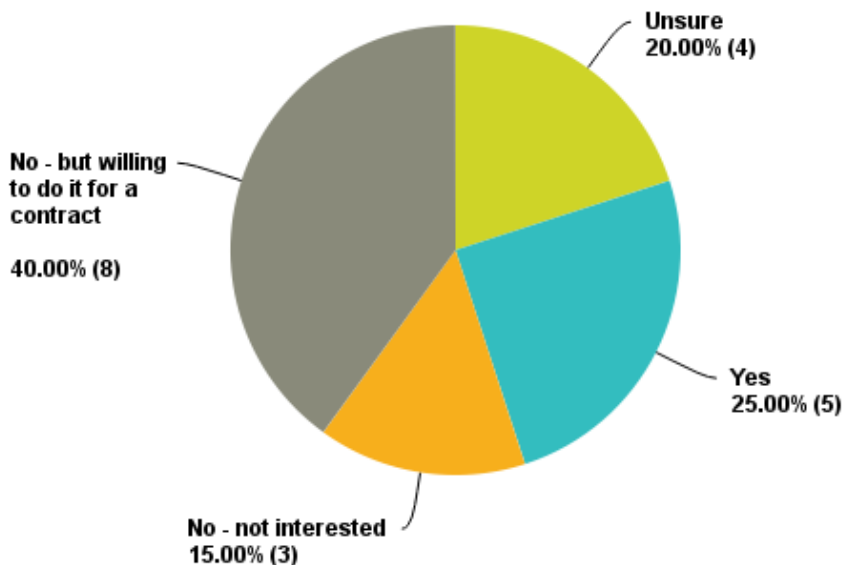


Answer Choices	Responses
Kauai District	8.00% 2
Honolulu District (Oahu)	28.00% 7
Central District (Oahu)	32.00% 8
Leeward District (Oahu)	28.00% 7
Windward District (Oahu)	28.00% 7
Maui District (Molokai, Lanai, & Maui)	32.00% 8
Hawaii District	32.00% 8
Total Respondents: 25	



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- c) **STORAGE:** Only 10 respondents reported having refrigeration capacities, while 14 had some sort of storage facility.
- d) **INSURANCE:** Of the 20 respondents who answered questions about whether they are insured or bonded for contracting, only 25% were insured, but 40% were willing to become insured in order to obtain a state contract.



- e) **CERTIFICATIONS:** Of the 22 respondents who answered certification questions, 15 had a food safety plan, 9 had hazard analysis capabilities, 14 had preventative controls with oversight and management of those controls, 20 had traceability and verification processes, 20 had GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) certifications, 10 had some form of Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), and 1 had a Group GAP certification but 4 were in the process of obtaining one. One company mentioned that because they sell direct, an organic certification is not worth the cost even though they do produce organically.

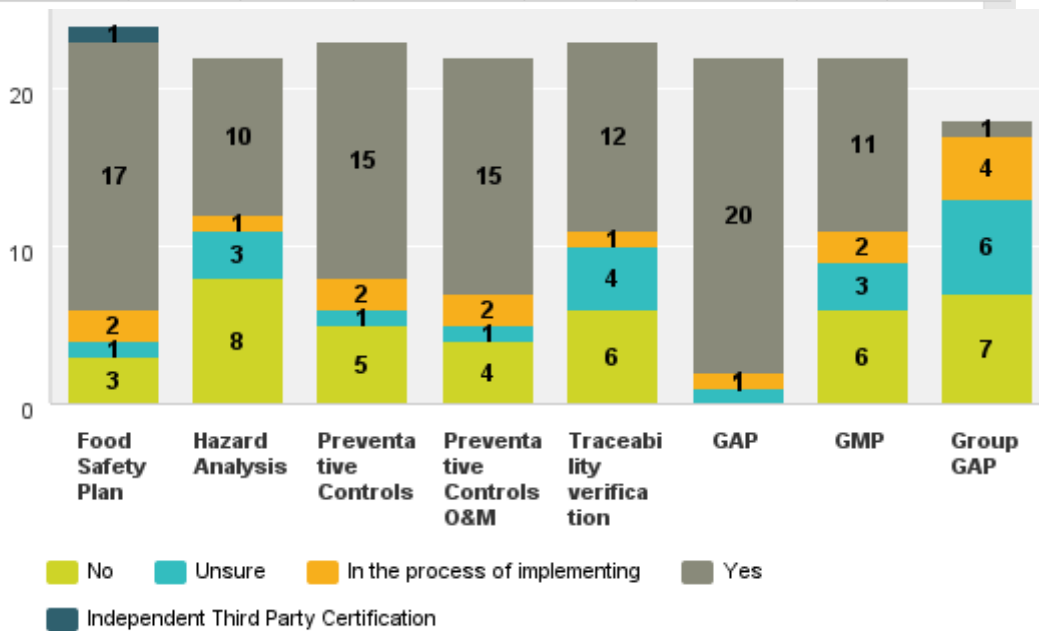


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CERTIFICATIONS AND TYPES OF FOOD SAFETY CONTROLS

	No	Unsure	In the process of implementing	Yes	Independent Third Party Certification	Total	Weighted Average
Food Safety Plan	12.50% 3	4.17% 1	8.33% 2	70.83% 17	4.17% 1	24	3.50
Hazard Analysis	36.36% 8	13.64% 3	4.55% 1	45.45% 10	0.00% 0	22	2.59
Preventative Controls	21.74% 5	4.35% 1	8.70% 2	65.22% 15	0.00% 0	23	3.17
Oversight & Management of Preventative Controls (Monitoring, Corrective Actions, Verification)	18.18% 4	4.55% 1	9.09% 2	68.18% 15	0.00% 0	22	3.27
Traceability verification	26.09% 6	17.39% 4	4.35% 1	52.17% 12	0.00% 0	23	2.83
Good Agricultural Practices	0.00% 0	4.55% 1	4.55% 1	90.91% 20	0.00% 0	22	3.86
Good Manufacturing Practices	27.27% 6	13.64% 3	9.09% 2	50.00% 11	0.00% 0	22	2.82
Group GAP	38.89% 7	33.33% 6	22.22% 4	5.56% 1	0.00% 0	18	1.94

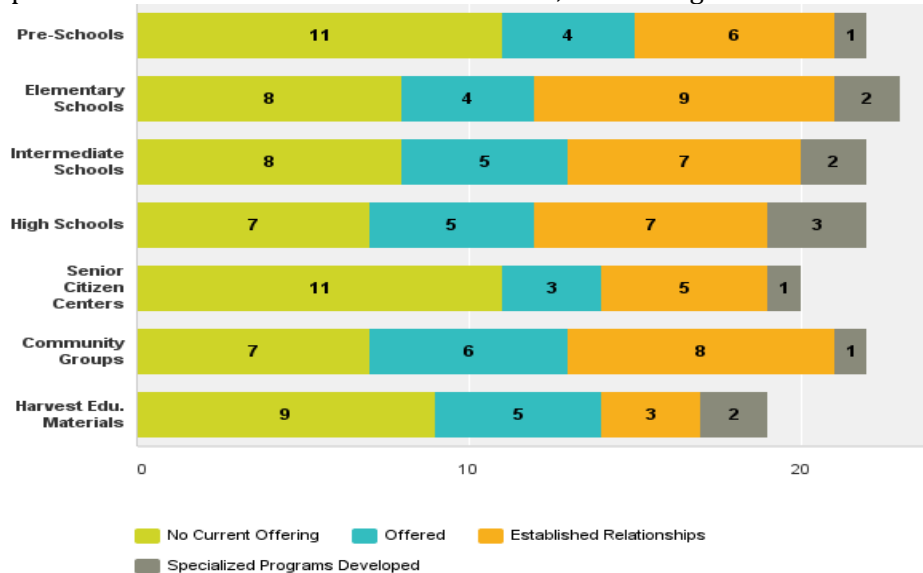




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6) COMMUNITY OUTREACH: 21 respondents answered questions about their community outreach programs which reached pre-schools and primary schools, as well as senior citizen centers and other community groups. Many worked through established relationships, a few through specialized programs, and some included harvest educational materials. One program offers classes in aquaponics and farming for approximately 50 Mid Pacific Institute Students. Another respondent affirmed education and outreach as an essential part of its vision, and offers STEM curriculum materials for elementary schools. One respondent had 3,200 public school students tour its farm in 2015, with a target of 5000 students for 2016.



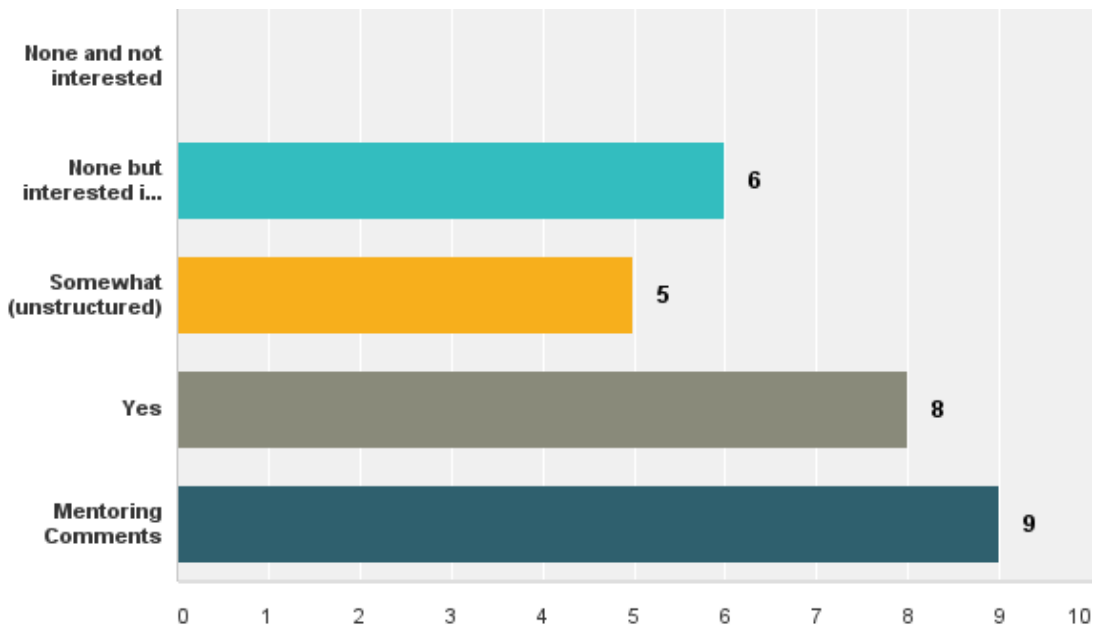
	No Current Offering	Offered	Established Relationships	Specialized Programs Developed	Total Respondents
Pre-Schools	55.00% 11	20.00% 4	30.00% 6	5.00% 1	20
Elementary Schools	38.10% 8	19.05% 4	42.86% 9	9.52% 2	21
Intermediate Schools	40.00% 8	25.00% 5	35.00% 7	10.00% 2	20
High Schools	35.00% 7	25.00% 5	35.00% 7	15.00% 3	20
Senior Citizen Centers	55.00% 11	15.00% 3	25.00% 5	5.00% 1	20
Community Groups	33.33% 7	28.57% 6	38.10% 8	4.76% 1	21
Harvest Educational Materials	47.37% 9	26.32% 5	15.79% 3	10.53% 2	19



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7) **MENTORING PROGRAMS:** Two thirds of the respondents had agricultural workforce mentoring program in place, varying from WwOOFF and Future Farmer programs to internships and classes. The other third was interested in creating programs. Respondents recognized and valued the need for hands-on training.



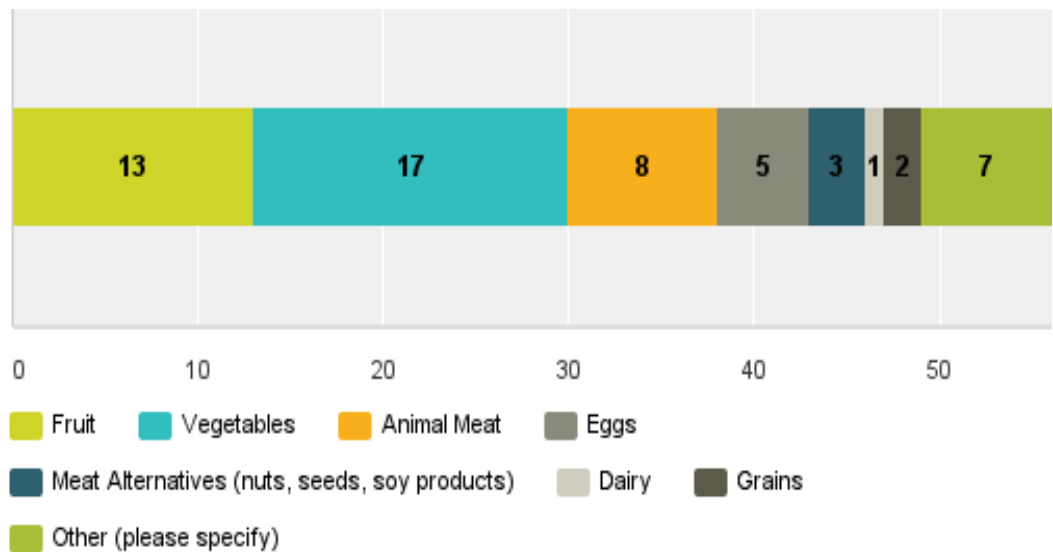
Answer Choices	Responses
None and not interested	0.00% 0
None but interested in connecting	28.57% 6
Somewhat (unstructured)	23.81% 5
Yes	38.10% 8
Mentoring Comments	42.86% 9
Total Respondents: 21	



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- 9) **CROPS GROWN:** 24 respondents answered questions about the type of food they produce/distribute.
- Fruits and vegetables were the most commonly grown products, at 50% and 60% respectively, with the largest reported crops being: lettuce, bananas, avocados, mangoes, lemons, limes, beans, tangerines, cabbage, cucumber, herbs, luau leaf, taro, sweet potato, barley sprouts, pumpkin, longon, and macadamia nuts.



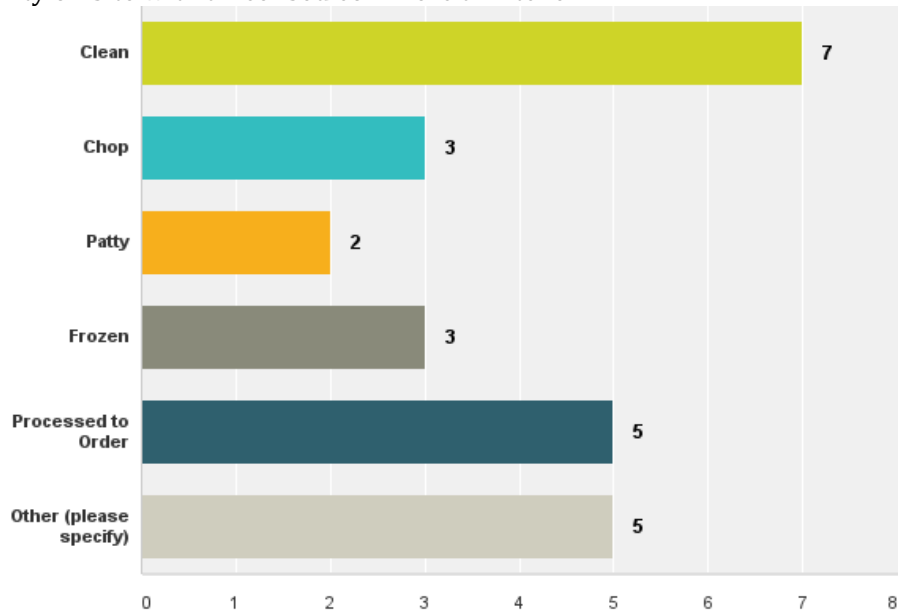
Answer Choices	Responses
Fruit	52.00% 13
Vegetables	68.00% 17
Animal Meat	32.00% 8
Eggs	20.00% 5
Meat Alternatives (nuts, seeds, soy products)	12.00% 3
Dairy	4.00% 1
Grains	8.00% 2
Other (please specify)	28.00% 7
Total Respondents: 25	



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11) **PROCESSING CAPACITY:** 13 respondents offer a number of different processing options, with 5 processing to order, 3 offering frozen or chopped, and 7 are capable of providing their products clean. One offered baked and dehydrated, one has a packing and processing facility on site with a licensed commercial kitchen.



Answer Choices	Responses
Clean	53.85% 7
Chop	23.08% 3
Patty	15.38% 2
Frozen	23.08% 3
Processed to Order	38.46% 5
Other (please specify)	38.46% 5
Total Respondents: 13	



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C. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM RESPONDENTS

Respondent's Recommendations to help accomplish the objectives of DOA F2S (to positively influence keiki's relationship with their food and the aina):

- **School Exposure: (1) more farm/ag field trips and partnerships with farms to create those opportunities (2) more farm to school programs/gardens (3) more school ag programs.** Respondents recommended early exposure to agriculture for kids through the use of demonstration and actual gardens at school, curriculum teaching soil preparation and compost methods, and hands-on experiences. Parent participation in school gardening/backyard gardening, and teaching healthy food prep were also mentioned as helpful. A participant suggested the F2S program create a program which awards contracts to farms to host field trips. The Ag Program at Papaikou Elementary School was mentioned as a good model program.
- **Assist Farmers. (1) Preserve and prepare land and water.** Farmers want more Affordable Farm Land Trusts, and help developing ag land once it is purchased or leased as it is extremely economically draining to develop the land to the extent it can be sustainably farmed. Farmers also wanted support for nutrient cycling programs to lower farmer's input cost. **(2) Better communication between farmers and users.** Farmers want consumers to communicate about their needs, so farmers can advise what product is best/has a good shelf life for their needs, and so farmers can plan their crops according to what crops are desired, far in advance. **(3) Create agricultural workforce.** Farmers want more support of workforce development for agriculture, and to create more F2S programs to help create an agricultural workforce. **(4) Help small farmers create consortiums/food hubs to meet school needs.** Small farmers want organizational help so they can pool produce and deliver a consistent healthy product on a large scale to meet the large buying needs of schools and the State in general. Specifically, farmers want food hubs for crop aggregation, processing and distribution, with large central storage facilities and tight transportation schedules.
- **Other systemic changes.** Necessary systematic changes to create a system between producers and consumers that addresses the challenges of getting local foods onto local school tables. **(1) In house preparation:** an understanding that utilizing fresh local produce requires more in-house preparation capabilities than pre-packaged prepared foods do, and a willingness on the part of consumers to do more in-house preparation. **(2) Availability:** consumer-schools/entities must be willing to work with seasonal products and availability in general. **(3) Change contracting procedures:** allow vendors regional supply (rather than county wide supply) to better accommodate volume and logistical challenges, and allow individual schools to enter into local food purchasing agreements. **(4) Purchase off grade produce:** commit to buying the products which have cosmetic or size issues preventing it from being otherwise sold. **(6) Protect "Brand Hawaii":** create verifiable audit trails of local branded products so that cheap imports are not sold as local.