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Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor

SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEXTER KISHIDA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
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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 Legislture. 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,

Sharon Hurd

Sharon Hurd
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

Attachments

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 Heaivilin, 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 Heaivilin, 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 ⅓ 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** –fFarms 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 Kauaʻi Agricultural Economic Development Plan (2024). The Hawaiʻi Food Access Plans 2030 provide a multi-county approach to improving food access and security, reinforcing the goal of increasing Hawaiʻi'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 Hawaiʻi

Hawaiʻi County has a resident population of just over 200,000 people (2020 Census). Agriculture holds a crucial role in Hawaiʻi 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 Hawaiʻi County producers contribute 65% of the state's total revenue (USDA NASS, 2022).The *County of Hawaiʻi Agricultural Development Plan* (2008) provided county-specific strategies to strengthen local agriculture, focusing on land access, water infrastructure, and workforce development

Hawaiʻi County residents face the highest rate of food insecurity among Counties in Hawaiʻi, with two in every five households (40%) reporting being food insecure in 2023 (Hawaiʻi Food Bank, 2023). Hawaiʻi County also faces a number of risks from natural hazards including volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, floods, severe storms, and tsunami which affect access to food resources (County of Hawaiʻi, 2021). Key challenges for producers in Hawaiʻi 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 Hawaiʻi (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 Hawaiʻi 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 Hawai'i 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 **housin**g 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 HIDOE 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 **housin**g 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

7. Support Inter-Agency coordination for **Phase 2: Commercialization and scaling of Oʻahu regional kitchen in** 2025-2026 in collaboration with HiDOE, DBEDT, ADC, HDOA and others by 1) supporting **connectivity** between kitchens, centers and HIDOE 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 Hawaiʻi. - 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 Oʻahu 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.

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 Oʻahu 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 ʻāina-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 Hawaiʻi. 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 Hawaiʻi, County of Maui, Malama Kauaʻi, 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 Hawaiʻi (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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https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/op/sustainability/hawaii_2050_plan_final.pdf

HOPSD Ten Year Measurement Update of the Hawai‘i 2050 Sustainability Plan (2018)
https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/op/sustainability/2018_hawaii_2050_measurment_update.pdf, pages 39- 43

HRS Act 144 https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2022/bills/GM1245_.pdf

NELHA HOST Park 2022-2023 Annual report https://nelha.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Annual-Report-2021-2023.rev4_.9.24.pdf

NELHA (2013, 2011) Master plan updated https://nelha.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/NELHA_Master_Plan_Final_Nov11.pdf

NELHA “NELHA Distributed Energy Strategy: Building a Foundation for Future Growth”
https://nelha.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/NELHA-Distributed-Energy-Strategy-March-2013.pdf

OHA “Mana i Mauli Ola: OHA’s 15-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2020-2035”

OPSD “SOIL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS & USE IN REGULATING AGRICULTURAL LANDS STUDY Interim Report” https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/annuals/2023/2023-opsd-soil-classification-systems.pdf

THFST National Policy Recommendations Database
https://ellageismar.notion.site/48c4e234b939449ba6b86fb7969d0230?v=3accfbafc63f42b9aaddf3912eb120ca

THFST Food Systems Plan Catalog
https://transforminghawaiifoodsystem.org/landscape-analysis/databases/plan-catalog/

THFST Food Systems Plans‘ Recommendations visual
https://transforminghawaiifoodsystem.org/landscape-analysis/recommendation-analysis/

THFST Visual of Hawai‘i Food Systems Goals
https://nexial.co/maps/hfsm/#/?open=Map,Matrix,HawaiiFoodSystem,Biosphere,Welco

me&open=FullMap&unoInfo=Welcome&wpane=0&epane=0&d=3&gotoz=FullMap&panx=2970&pany=2245&zoom=1.00

UH CTAHR (2018) Final Report on a Coordinated Framework of Support for Preschool Through Post-Secondary (P-20) Agriculture Education in Hawai'i (Senate Resolution 80, 2015) https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2019/bills/DC149_.pdf

- Hawai‘i Farmers Union United Policy Priorities (December 2022)
- Food Plus Policy 2023 Priorities (Purple Mai‘a) (December 2022)
- Hawai‘i Farm Bureau Legislative Priorities (2022 and 2023)
- AgHui Recommendation Matrix (May 2020)
- Hawai‘i Farm to School Hui (December 2022)
- Hawai‘i Cattleman’s Council Legislative Topics (2023)
- National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) 2022 Policy Priorities [pdf] ● Lt Gov Green on economic diversification (Civil Beat 7/26/22)
- HH mega list of policy ideas for 2023
- REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP CONVENED IN RESPONSE TO SENATE RESOLUTION 246, HOUSE DRAFT 1 (December 2021)
- Hawai’i Food Summit 2023

Other works reviewed

Plans described in ADC Hawai‘i Agribusiness Plan 2021:

- 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

Federal

- USDA Strategic Plan FY 22-26
- USDA Agroforestry Strategic Framework FY19-24
- National Food and Agriculture Incident Annex to the Response and Recovery Federal Inter-Agency Operations Plans | FEMA