

Due to the closure of hotels and restaurants, Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers are suffering a 50% decline in sales on average. Estimated sales losses for local food producers alone average \$2MM per week. Other agricultural sectors have been heavily impacted as well - in the nursery/floriculture sector, for instance, sales have likely decreased by more than 80%, meaning average weekly losses of \$1.5MM.

Food Producer Sales (\$s in thousands)						
	Avg. Annual Sales	Avg. Weekly Sales	Food Factor	Avg. Weekly Adj. Sales	Sales Decline	Avg. Weekly Lost Sales
Vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes	\$85,211	\$1,639	100%	\$1,639	50%	\$819
Fruits, tree nuts, and berries	\$144,161	\$2,772	66%	\$1,830	25%	\$457
Livestock, poultry, and their products	\$146,733	\$2,822	66%	\$1,862	50%	\$931
Local Food Producer Sales	\$376,105	\$7,233		\$5,331		\$2,208

Source: 2017 Census of Agriculture and Agricultural Response & Recovery Working Group

Simultaneously, as unemployment has exceeded 35%, food insecurity and community feeding needs have skyrocketed as island families contend with the loss of employment. A robust agricultural sector is essential to enduring through and recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Strengthening our food and agricultural system now is also critical to ensuring our readiness and resilience to future disasters.

As a broad coalition of agricultural stakeholders, we have articulated a plan to:

- direct resources to keep farmers and ranchers economically viable,
- mobilize local food production to address immediate community feeding needs,
- contribute significantly to Hawai'i's economic recovery,
- build lasting capacity to grow a more resilient and equitable food system for Hawai'i.

Our plan for agriculture tracks the three phases of the State of Hawai'i's Recovery Navigator:

1. **Stabilization:** *Address the immediate economic needs of Hawai'i's producers and ensure community food security.*
2. **Reopening & Recovery:** *Promote new markets and invest in critical infrastructure so producers can efficiently pivot to new wholesale and retail opportunities while restoring Hawai'i's food system.*
3. **Resilience:** *Build a resilient food and agricultural economy with strong businesses, job growth, food secure households, robust networks, food system planning, and food safety.*

Details for this plan are found in the attached matrix, which outlines a set of food and agricultural initiatives to support Hawai'i's economic, social, cultural, and ecological vitality.

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Working Group members are participating as individuals with specialized expertise, and are not serving as official representatives of their respective organizations.



1 Stabilization

★ Existing farmers are farming, ranchers are ranching, everyone in Hawai'i has sufficient access to nutritious food.

2 Re-Opening & Recovery

★ Public and private sector commit to ongoing investment in local agricultural capacity and infrastructure.

3 Resilience

★ Agriculture is a core component of Hawai'i's diversified and resilient economy and local community.



ADDRESS IMMEDIATE NEEDS!!
INCREASE FOOD SECURITY!!

INVEST RESOURCES SO
PRODUCERS CAN PIVOT!!

BUILD & ENABLE!

- ▼ Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers suffering a 50% decline in sales
- ▼ estimated sales losses for local food producers alone average \$2MM per week.
- ▼ nursery/floriculture sector decreased by more than 80% with average weekly losses of \$1.5MM.
- ▼ unemployment has reached 37%, food insecurity and community feeding needs have skyrocketed

- direct payments to food producers to address immediate community feeding needs
- emergency grants and loans for producers, aggregators & distributors
- expand SNAP and grow double buck programs for local produce
- loan and rent deferrals
- workforce and volunteer initiatives
- emergency feeding needs assessment and mobilization

- fund farmer-community feeding org partnerships
- farm tax credit for food bank donations
- create favorable loan and grant programs
- local purchasing minimums at state institutions
- subsidies for inter-island cargo
- expand SNAP and grow double bucks programs
- DOA and CIP shovel-ready ag industry projects
- public campaign to support local ag industry
- consolidate and grow access to diverse markets
- workforce development for farmers and laborers
- apprenticeships to transition unemployed workers
- agritourism and local purchasing in visitor industry
- enhance emergency food preparedness
- assess losses, food price and availability, and opportunities for import substitution
- resource, network, and gap analysis

- farmer access to capital
- strategic processing, aggregation, storage, and delivery infrastructure
- farmer training, apprenticeships, and scholarships
- public and private positions to support food system
- local food purchasing programs through public and private channels

	Phase 1 Stabilization	Phase 2a Reopening	Phase 2b Recovery	Phase 3 Resilience
DIRECT PRODUCER SUPPORT Staying Afloat	Create a Food Security Subsidy Fund/Program to directly fund local food producers that provide food to the community through local non-profits that provide free or discounted fresh produce or prepared meals.			
DIRECT PRODUCER SUPPORT Getting Back to Business	Official statement supporting and re-opening of farmers' markets across the State that comply with health restrictions to protect vendors and customers.(1) Allow plant nurseries to continue operations under appropriate protective health restrictions, or to conduct sales via curbside pickup or by delivery. (2)	Invest in public campaigns to highlight the importance of supporting the local agricultural industry. Build on crisis-driven consumer interest in local food. Consolidate gains of local producers with new markets, including direct to consumer channels, such as farmers markets and CSAs, food banks, and institutional buyers.	Continue building local producer access to a diversity of channels, including consumer outlets like farmers markets and CSAs, food banks, institutional buyers, and re-emerging visitor industry.	
DIRECT PRODUCER SUPPORT Loans & Investment	Loan forgiveness/forbearance to give farmers, ranchers, and floriculturists a window to adjust their operations. A suggested strategy is a 6 month period with an option to renew for an additional 6 months. This includes loans with HDOA, USDA agencies, and others. Increase funding for HDOA's loan program.	Availability of philanthropic and low interest rate loans for agricultural producers.	Availability of philanthropic and low interest rate loans for agricultural producers.	Ensure sufficient capital and ease of access for agricultural producers to scale operations. (3) Encourage investment in agriculture using tools such as Investment Tax Credits, Family Farm Tax Breaks, Agriculture Workforce Housing Tax Credits, and Donated Agricultural Products Transportation Credit, and Energy Conservation Financial Assistance and Incentive Programs
DIRECT PRODUCER SUPPORT Grants	Micro-grants for up to \$50,000, depending on need and the scale of the applicant's operations. Provide direct funding to local producers, including floriculturists, for farm inputs and other production costs that include, but are not limited to, feed, water fees, land lease/rents, energy costs, and transportation costs.	Grants to support direct food distribution strategies for increasing the targeting of produce to individual consumers.	Incentivize the adoption of conservation farming practices through enhanced support for conservation planning, organic certification, and EQUIP-related practices. Enact Payment for Ecosystem Services Program (PES) for Hawaii farmers, thus tying incentives for conservation farming practices to state sustainability goals.	Provide carbon off set support to producers putting carbon back into the soils with their farming practices. Rebuild the vitality of our soils through cover crop conservation initiatives. Create a cover crop seed industry on state agricultural lands. Develop on farm demonstration program to implement cover crop strategies.
DIRECT PRODUCER SUPPORT Cost Reduction	Elimination, reduction, or deferral of payments owed to State/County agencies for land, water, irrigation, GET taxes, and facility leases and licenses.	Subsidize inter-island transportation for livestock and crops from neighbor islands to Oahu.		
DIRECT PRODUCER SUPPORT Livestock	Grants to incentivize the donation of food waste to local livestock farmers for feed. Subsidies for inter-island transportation costs and for livestock feed supplies disrupted during the shutdown.	Incentivize and support livestock production for local markets and support small livestock producers through market access, forage and feed development resources, and technical support.	Invest in modernization and expansion of existing livestock processing capacity on each island, including small animal processing.	Maintain livestock processing capacity on each island.

	Phase 1 Stabilization	Phase 2a Reopening	Phase 2b Recovery	Phase 3 Resilience
CAPACITY BUILDING Community Feeding	Fund community organizations to purchase locally produced food to meet community feeding needs. Activate FEMA resources. Increase allocation for Double-Up Bucks to all Hawaii SNAP households.	Fund community organizations to purchase locally produced food to meet community feeding needs.	Fund community organizations to purchase locally produced food to meet community feeding needs. Create farm tax credit for donations to food banks.	Fund community organizations to purchase locally produced food to meet community feeding needs. Establish/maintain funding for Food Access Coordinators on each island.
CAPACITY BUILDING Technical Assistance	Provide/fund technical assistance to access federal supports (e.g., grants, loans, reimbursement of transportation cost payment program, etc.).	Increase support to public and private sector partners to provide technical assistance to producers.		
CAPACITY BUILDING Purchasing	SNAP expansion: increase support for SNAP Double Up Food Bucks local food purchasing program; make SNAP application process less onerous.	SNAP expansion: continue efforts from phase 1; support and encourage grocers and others who sell directly to consumers to offer SNAP and double bucks for local produce; provide assistance to upgrade payment system and overcome other barriers.	Coordinate with visitor industry to increase demand and purchasing of local, sustainable, and cultural foods.	Develop and implement local "Good Food Purchasing" program to encourage state institution purchasing, including setting of goals, development of mandates, and use of contracting tools.
CAPACITY BUILDING Workforce Development	Facilitate volunteer support on farms, including gleaners to harvest for donation.		Align with Hawaii 2.0 economic diversification. Support and expand training programs and apprenticeships, for both farm owners and laborers. Transition unemployed into agriculture.	Incentivize youth to enter higher education tracking students into food and agriculture careers emphasizing food system resilience and disaster preparedness via scholarships, stipends, etc. Fund scaling of training and apprenticeship programs to multiple sites on each island. Scale related incubation programs and launch new enterprises into enterprises and cooperative businesses. Build justice and equity priorities into state agricultural programs (e.g. California Farmer Equity Act).
CAPACITY BUILDING Marketing, Aggregation & Distribution	Grants to Organizations Facilitating Direct Farm to Consumer Delivery. Help to secure additional labor and infrastructure, including transportation, cold storage, leases and utilities, etc.	Support, strengthen and expand existing food hubs, aggregators, and distributors and marketing services for Hawaii's farmers to gain entry into new markets.	Expand role of agritourism in Hawai'i 2.0 visitor industry. Provide training programs for farmers to diversify into agritourism as appropriate.	Create regular state support for food hubs, aggregators, and distributors so they can help facilitate local food for public programs.
CAPACITY BUILDING Data & Analysis	Needs Assessment: determine emergency feeding requirements statewide, what can be sourced locally, and how expansion take place	Assess impact and losses by sector. Assess greatest opportunities for import substitution.	Fund tools to assess food price and availability. Conduct an agricultural sector social network analysis to understand resources and connection gaps	Identify, assess, and measure key food system vulnerabilities with respect to pandemics, severe weather events and longer-term climate change impacts on critical infrastructure. Utilize data to inform the development of a State Food Policy and food system resilience planning process. Develop key criteria and metrics for tracking food system resilience via the HGG/Aloha+ Dashboard.
CAPACITY BUILDING Preparation & Mitigation			Develop comprehensive outreach, education and financial incentive programs to achieve the recommended 14-day supply of food and water for target % of Hawaii residents.	Fund and position complementary professional food system sustainability and resilience human Resource Staff Across the State of Hawaii: Island Food Access Coordinators (modeled after Hawaii County); emergency food planner at HIEMA; food system planner in the State of Hawaii Office of Planning; food system planner in the City and County of Honolulu Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency; Fund endowment for UH undergraduate and graduates student scholarship program in the area of Food System Resilience and Disaster Preparedness.

	Phase 1 Stabilization	Phase 2a Reopening	Phase 2b Recovery	Phase 3 Resilience
INFRASTRUCTURE Facilities	Allow use of state and other underutilized facilities, kitchens, and cold storage, to support community food programs.	Inventory existing facilities, assess capacity/utilization and need for facilities. Repurpose and refurbish underutilized facilities to serve food producer, processor, aggregator, and distributor needs.	Fund State DOA and other CIP shovel ready projects that support the ag industry, including the Oahu feed mill, Kamuela Vacuum Cooling Plant, etc.	Fund CIP GIAs that support agricultural producers statewide, including food hub/aggregation site development, cold storage, packaging and processing, livestock harvesting, and delivery services. Relocate/build commercial food storage facilities outside of known storm surge/inundation zones (e.g., 1-2 m tsunami, category 3 hurricane storm surge and/or 1-2 m sea-level rise). Incentivize commercial food distributors to hold larger volumes of non-perishable, staple, and emergency foods on each island via PPPs. Articulate emergency food plans involving commercial food distributors and city, county, state, and federal Emergency Management Agencies through PPPs.
INFRASTRUCTURE Irrigation				Fund irrigation projects, including work in East Maui, Galbraith, Kahuku, Molokai, Waimanalo, Waimea, Honokaa-Paauilo, and Waiahole

FEDERAL PROGRAMS	Influence the USDA to increase support for (a) grant, loan, and reimbursement programs within FSA and RD, and technical assistance services to support access to government programs; and (b) Agricultural Research Services, including the Pacific Basin Agricultural Research Center in Hilo.	Grow resources for the specialty crop block grant given our unique farm geography, demography, and culture. Increase funding for the Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment (RTCP) Program. As Hawaii's producers innovate new markets to recover from the COVID pandemic, this program will become increasingly important.	Modify SNAP payment rules to allow food banks and hubs to retain SNAP information for SNAP customers. Work with USDA to develop rules for the new micro-grants for Food Security Program (2018 Farm Bill). USDA-RD grants - redesign to aid development for all (including small) producers. USDA-NRCS ex. EQIP - tweak terms to allow more money to go to the producer for a wider range of uses. More food system type programs such as FMPP, LFPP, and producer-oriented grants such as REAP and VAPG.	Build in flexibility to ensure applicability of federal programs for Hawaii producers, given unique seasonality and geography exceptions. Increase support for land grant universities to augment outreach and support for producers.
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Notes:

- 1 Addressed by Gov. Ige's sixth supplemental proclamation of 4/25/20 amending and restating prior proclamations and executive orders related to the COVID-19 emergency
- 2 Addressed by Gov. Ige's seventh supplemental proclamation related to the COVID-19 emergency
- 3 Some initiatives/recommendations may require further appropriations or legislative action