

Hawaii Retail Grocer

SPRING 2018

the magazine of the hawaii food industry association

UP FOR GRABS

Hawaii's challenge to boost
state's SNAP participation

INSIDE

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Delivery Services

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Hawaii Retail Grocer

The Magazine of the Hawaii Food Industry Association

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Publisher
Lauren Zirbel

Editor
Stacy Yuen

Writers
Stacy Yuen
Mari Taketa
Lauren Zirbel
Desirée Rose
Jesse Cooke

Design
Davin Iyamatsu
Darrell Ishida

Photography
Aaron Eskaran

Advertising
Charlene Gray

Printer
Trade Publishing



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Please address all correspondence to:



1050 Bishop St., PMB 235
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Phone: 808-533-1292
www.hawaiiifood.com



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2018 Session in Full Swing

BY LAUREN ZIRBEL

This year, HFIA started off the 2018 State Legislative Session with another successful Capitol Day which included our first Government Relations Committee meeting of the year and the Legislative Talk Story panel. During the GRC meeting, which was open to all members, we set clear and actionable legislative goals and priorities to guide HFIA in 2018.

The Legislative Talk Story was once again co-sponsored by the Hawaii Restaurant Association and is a valuable part of our proactive approach to achieving positive legislative results for our members. During the panel, industry members were able to share with legislators some crucial insights about how legislation like unnecessary warning labels and bans can cause real problems for our industry.

The legislators on the panel made a point to let us know how important it is for them to hear from constituents during the legislative session, and shared the big impact that it can have to receive communication from those who will be positively or negatively affected by bills.

We followed up the Legislative Talk Story with the Pau Hana with Legislators on February 22nd. The Pau Hana is another event designed to connect our industry with decision makers, and because it takes place while the legislative session is happening it's an important time to touch base. As always, this year's Pau Hana was a lot of fun, and a great chance to get some face-to-face communication with our legislators. We had a record turn out of over 30 legislators!

The State Legislative Session is now in full swing, and HFIA has had some early success on a number of important bills, but still faces some significant challenges. One of the biggest issues being pushed at the legislature this year is paid sick leave and family leave. Six separate bills on either family leave or sick leave or both, have received hearings. HFIA has



HFIA's first Government Relations Committee meeting of the year kicked off Capitol Day.

testified on all six in an attempt to let legislators know how expensive these mandates could be to our businesses, our industry, and our economy. Many bad labor bills have been successfully deferred, but the others remain and we'll continue to fight to share our members' points of view as session moves forward.

Other problematic labor related bills include proposals to raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour. We've been opposing wage mandates by testifying about the economic thresholds that exist for certain jobs. Two bills requiring employee schedules to be made in advance have received hearings, one has been deferred and HFIA continues to oppose the other. Both the House and the Senate are also currently moving bills that would prohibit employers from enquiring about a prospective employee's salary history during the interview process. HFIA has provided comments on these measures.

Unfortunately, bills attempting to ban the majority of chemical sunscreen products and food containers continue to advance. HFIA has been active at both the state and county level on these issues.

In regards to labeling bills, HFIA has been very successful this year. We opposed a state level menu-labeling bill which was defeated in its first hearing. We submitted comments pointing out some problems with a bill pushing the use of new standard

terminology for use-by dates and freshness dates, and it was deferred. We also drafted opposition testimony against a bill for warning labels on sugar-sweetened beverages, and it was deleted from the agenda before its first hearing.

At the County level, we've been opposing bills to create a .5% GET surcharge, similar to the surcharge already in place in Honolulu County. Kauai passed their surcharge already, and the Hawaii County surcharge is currently moving. HFIA submitted testimony in opposition to both of these measures because it would raise the prices of groceries. A Maui version was proposed, but has not moved.

HFIA has been supporting a bill that would expand liability protection for businesses wishing to donate food. HFIA also supported bills funding the various activities of the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation.

As the Legislative Session moves into its later stages, HFIA will keep working hard on these important issues for our members. We strongly encourage everyone to respond when Action Alerts are sent out asking for testimony. As our legislators themselves pointed out during the Talk Story panel, direct communication from constituents is one of the most important and effective tools we have to fulfill our mission of achieving positive legislative results for our businesses and being the voice of our industry at the capitol.

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Aloha!



I hope you are all enjoying a great start to the new year! HFIA began 2018 with an event-filled calendar: HFIA Legislative Talk Story at the Capitol, General Membership and Board Meeting, and the sports-themed annual social at Honolulu Country Club. As with all of HFIA's events, the annual social provided a terrific opportunity for connections to be made and strengthened both in the business community and the community at large. And what a tremendous turnout we had! I can confidently say a fun time was had by all! I want to extend my warmest thanks to all the folks at HFIA who worked so hard to make these events possible and to all of you who attended them. It is your support that enables HFIA to continue the great work in representing the interests of all businesses related to the food industry.

Speaking of which, with the opening of the 2018 Hawaii State Legislature, there are a number of legislative bills that HFIA has been tracking due to their potential impact on our business community. Perhaps the bill that garners the most attention from all quarters is the minimum wage bill. If the bill passes, Hawaii's minimum wage will increase to \$12.25 an hour in 2019 and to \$15.00 an hour in 2020. How businesses prepare for such a change will be key to their success.

Just as important are the tax credit bills that HFIA is monitoring. One is the tax credit for employers who hire a person with a disability and another is the tax credit for those who hire an elderly person; both tax credit bills are included in the Hawaii State Association of Counties (HSAC) Legislative package. Given that many companies in Hawaii regularly employ personnel in both of those demographics, this bill is worthy of more than casual attention.

The sheer number of bills that get introduced every Legislative session is mind-boggling in and of itself, and to try to discern which ones impact our respective businesses is even more of a challenge. Thankfully, HFIA members can rely on Lauren and her team to provide timely and insightful updates on pertinent legislative bills to help them stay informed.

As HFIA focuses on government relations and advocacy during this legislative session, it also continues to promote industry and community relations. Make sure you check out Lauren's Legislative Update in this issue of Hawaii Retail Grocer for more details.

What's coming up? There's the annual HFIA golf tournament on March 30, and the annual convention at Disney's Aulani Resort from June 1-3. I hope you have these events calendared as they have proven to be outstanding networking events in the past and I'm sure will be again this year.

Mahalo nui loa for your continued support of HFIA!

Aloha,
Beau Oshiro

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Tax Reform Marks Landmark Victory for Supermarkets

BY THE NATIONAL GROCERS ASSOCIATION

After more than three decades since the last major fix to our broken tax system, at the end of December lawmakers passed once-in-a-generation tax reform legislation that will help Main Street grocers grow their stores, expand offerings, and create American jobs. For independent supermarket operators competing on a one to two percent profit margin, that translates to significantly more resources to better serve as the backbone of communities across the country.

The National Grocers Association (NGA) fought tirelessly to ensure the independent supermarket industry would experience the full benefits of tax reform just as much as other businesses. Below are several of the most important provisions affecting the independent supermarket industry that NGA was successful in securing in the new law:

Lowering tax rate across the board

The legislation permanently lowers the corporate rate from 35 percent to 21 percent for C-corporations. Pass-through entities with eligible joint income up to \$315,000 are offered a 20 percent tax deduction, with capital and wage tests to broaden the scope of businesses eligible.

Preserving the use of Last-In, First-Out method of accounting (LIFO)

The LIFO method of inventory accounting has been allowed since 1939 and is broadly used in the food wholesale and retail industry. LIFO helps protect against inventory price shocks that can result from inflation and is an important tool that aids the industry in long-term planning.

Doubling the estate tax exemption threshold. Well over half of the assets of a typical supermarket—the highest of any other industry sector—are not liquid, so the death of an owner creates a serious obstacle to the continuation of the business. The estate tax exemption threshold was increased to \$11 million for single filers and \$22 million for joint filers.

Eliminating the corporate alternative minimum tax (AMT)

The AMT has only served to create complexity in the tax code and stymie tax reform's pro-growth effects. The new tax law eliminates this burdensome part of the tax code.

Allowing full expensing for business equipment

Immediately expensing capital investments will be a shot in the arm to an industry that requires constant reinvestment in equipment and machinery. Businesses can fully and immediately expense 100 percent of the cost of qualified property acquired and placed in service after September 27, 2017.

Maintaining the advertising expense deduction

Advertising is often one of the supermarket industry's highest business expenses. The legislation preserved its deductibility as a key piece to robust competition within the industry.

The results of tax reform were felt almost immediately, including in the supermarket industry. While Comcast, AT&T, and many other larger corporations handed out bonuses to employees, Kenny Family ShopRites also gave \$150 bonuses to 1,000 non-management and union represented employees, as well as investing \$150,000 in employee training and development programs. The greatest impact will be felt in the long term, with independent grocers being better able to serve their customers and differentiate in a rapidly-changing marketplace.

It's an honor for NGA to spend the association's time fighting on behalf of the independent supermarket industry. In Hawaii alone, independent grocers account for nearly \$855 million in sales and are responsible for creating over 5,590 jobs. With such a large economic impact in both the state and the country, your voice matters!



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Front Row: Victor Lim, Sen. Donna Mercado Kim, Lauren Zirbel, Rep. Richard H.K. Onishi, Rep. Della Au Bellati, Sen. Glenn Wakai
Top Row: Rep. Aaron Ling Johansen, Paul Kosasa, Derek Kurisu, Jason Higa, Joe Carter

Legislative Talk Story at 2018 Capitol Day

PHOTOS BY KAREN BERRY

Moderator Derek Kurisu led a panel discussion at the Hawaii State Legislature on January 4 as part of Capitol Day. HFIA panelists Joe Carter, Jason Higa, Paul Kosasa, Victor Lim and Beau Oshiro joined Sen. Glenn Wakai and Rep. Aaron Ling Johanson for a lively discussion on the issues affecting the food industry in the 2018 legislative session.



Jim Cremins and Stevette Kuulei Santiago



Eddie Asato, Bill Atherton, Johnny Romero



Wendy Fujio and Neil Ishida



Jan Hori, Rep. Lei Learnmont, Desirée Rose



Elaine Miyagi, Reena Manalo, Laurence Laforga, John Schilf



Beau Oshiro, Lauren Zirbel, Rep. Takashi Ohno

Latest trends in coupon use

BY STACY YUEN

HFIA members gathered at the Honolulu Country Club, January 9, for the first General Membership & Board Meeting of the year.

Guest Speaker Patsy Dye, president of S.E.A. Enterprises, gave a presentation on keeping up with changes and trends in the coupon promotion industry.

Dye presented the latest statistics on coupon usage, including:

- **89 percent** of consumers used coupons in 2016 and 2017 (up from 78 percent in 2011)
- The **top distribution methods** of coupons are **newspapers, online and store circulation**
- **97 percent** of all coupon redemptions are paper coupons

- **3 percent** of redemptions are digital or electronic

- **84 percent** of shoppers are more likely to select stores that accept paper coupons and offer loyalty cards

- Coupon users spend **24 percent more** than other shoppers

“In the past, income was an issue when it came to coupon usage,” said Dye. “However, more affluent people are redeeming coupons today.”

She said this can be attributed to the fact that top retailers can now personalize content and offer coupons based on a customer’s browsing behaviors, offering more targeted deals to consumers.

S.E.A. Enterprises, Inc. was selected as the preferred coupon redemption vendor for the Hawaii Food

Industry Association because of its “No extra fee” policies, complete coupon audit trail system, collection services and reports.

For more information, go to the HFIA website at www.hawaiiifood.com/our-members or contact Patsy Dye, President, S.E.A. Enterprises Inc. at pdye@coupon-redemption.com or (425) 313-0996, ext. 102. Toll Free (877) 477-6671.

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THE Delivery DILEMMA

Impact of food delivery services on restaurants

BY MARI TAKETA

5:07 on a weeknight: *The Bitesquad tablet at Ngon Vietnamese Restaurant rings with the dinner hour's first delivery order—two summer rolls and a beef brisket pho. Owner Anh Dao Huynh sets the pickup time for 5:17. "I just want them to know we can make it fast so they send out the driver faster. I want the customer to receive the order faster," she says.*

5:21: *A uniformed driver arrives. He checks the order Huynh has packed in a Bitesquad logo bag, signs off on the receipt, packs the food in a Bitesquad cooler and heads off to deliver it in a Bitesquad minivan.*

This is the face of the newest trend to hit Hawaii restaurants. By early March more than 300 across Oahu were signed on with Minneapolis-based Bitesquad, which acquired Room Service in Paradise and Aloha 2 Go; around 80 were listed with San Francisco-based Uber Eats. A good number were dealing with both. (Postmates, a restaurant-and-store delivery service headquartered in San Francisco, showed about 80



eateries in Honolulu, but several of the restaurants said they hadn't been contacted.) The pace hasn't let up: Eateries are still signing up, even as Chicago-based Grubhub, the country's largest restaurant delivery service, announced plans to launch in Honolulu in March.

The results vary by restaurant. Many are happy with the gains in business and exposure; others have quit the services, citing speed bumps in the rapid rollouts; still others see minimal gains but no disincentives. Those participating run the gamut from McDonald's and Teaspresso to neighborhood eateries, small local chains and even a few fine-dining spots like Chef Chai and 3660 on the Rise.

Just off Ward Avenue in Kakaako, Ngon is a family-owned operation with seven tables and scant parking. Its mainstay is lunch, when nearby workers fill the seats and a stream of Bitesquad and Uber Eats drivers arrive for pickups. Huynh estimates the delivery services have boosted business by 15 to 20 percent since she signed on last fall, with Bitesquad accounting for twice the volume of Uber Eats.

"We're getting so busy with Bitesquad now. We're making less because we pay fees, but it's still extra for us so I don't mind. Instead of our kitchen staff having nothing to do, I'd rather get orders and keep them busy," she says. "If we don't have any orders, it doesn't cost us anything. There's no out-of-pocket cost. That's why we signed up."

At La Tour Café, CEO Trung Lam likes the built-in marketing. The services display all restaurants in a user's vicinity on their websites and mobile apps, with links to each one's full delivery menu. Bitesquad brings in less than 5 percent of orders at La Tour's five Oahu locations, but "we're always looking for ways to grow. A lot of customers say I love your place but I don't live super close or I don't have time to come in," Lam says. "We could open more restaurants, but it's so expensive. OK, so how do we reach customers who can't come to our store? The obvious solution is a delivery service. The demand is on. It's growing. We're seeing our numbers increase with delivery."

Chai Chaowasaree agrees. On Mondays, his only day off, he often stays home and orders from Bitesquad. Early on, he put in an anonymous order for lobster bisque and miso Chilean sea bass from Chef Chai, his own restaurant. The dishes, \$14 and \$40 on his delivery menu, arrived reasonably hot and in good shape. "As a business owner, I wanted to know. We are not a \$5, \$10 dinner. When people pay our prices, I think they have more expectations," he says. "For us it's additional business and it's a great service for the customer."

5:53 at Ngon: The Bitesquad tablet rings with two orders totaling nine dishes. Huynh puts in a pickup time of 6:13. The restaurant's tables sit empty.

6:02: As Ngon's two cooks prep the food, the Uber Eats tablet rings with an order for spring rolls and pork chops with broken rice. Expected arrival time for Mia, the driver, is 6:14. Two tables have customers; another is at the counter waiting to order takeout.

6:09: Bitesquad rings with two more orders. Now the restaurant is juggling four from Bitesquad, one from Uber Eats, one takeout order and two tables. Mia shows up on schedule, signs off on the order and is out the door in less than a minute. The Bitesquad driver arrives for the two large orders at 6:15; all but one of the dishes is ready.



6:16: *Uber Eats again, this time for a single order of chicken pho. “Mild, please,” the customer has noted. “For child.”*

6:20: *The two large Bitesquad orders are ready. The driver checks them, signs off and heads out.*

This is the reason La Tour’s Lam doesn’t want to sign on with more than one service. His restaurants, exponentially bigger than Ngon, are also exponentially busier during lunch rush. Lam tries to prioritize dine-in orders, but sometimes there are glitches. “Bitesquad will let giant orders through,” he notes. “Some days we’ll get orders for 30 or 40 people, for pickup in an hour. Other services, you have to put in large orders in advance.”

For him and Square Barrels’ Hideo Simon, there’s also the issue of manually typing delivery service orders into their own systems. “First of all, the tablet needs wifi access, and a lot of times kitchens are in a concrete shell so you have to install a hub,” Simon says. “The tablet’s supposed to simplify things, but every kitchen already has its own systems in place. To incorporate a whole nother avenue of info coming in, it doesn’t make a lot of sense.”

Still, he says, Bitesquad charges no activation fee (Uber Eats does), it provides menu management and online support, and he can turn off the service when the restaurant is slammed with a rush or event. (Uber Eats is much the same but the tablets show drivers’ and customers’ phone numbers so restaurants can contact them directly if there’s a problem.) The fees cut into Simon’s margins, especially when a customer wants a single burger delivered, but “to find that happy medium, for us it’s such a small sliver we just don’t really take the time to dissect it,” he says.

Neither does Hyun Kim of O’Kims in Chinatown. Like Square Barrels,

she attributes less than 1 percent of orders to Bitesquad—seven in six weeks, to be exact. But for her tiny shop, whose seating consists of several stools at a counter and which delivers without charge to nearby addresses, it means the occasional customer from Waikiki can get her food.

6:22 at Ngon: *A Bitesquad driver arrives for the second pair of orders. Ngon’s phone has been ringing with takeout orders. The Bitesquad orders aren’t ready.*

Different factors can create delays on both sides: a rush of orders, traffic, weather, availability of drivers—the last due in no small part to Honolulu’s low unemployment. Sometimes delivery orders can get backed up at restaurants prioritizing dine-in orders. At Bitesquad, orders are processed through a dispatch center

in Minneapolis, whose algorithms weigh factors including a restaurant’s average cook time. Bitesquad’s goal is delivery within an hour of ordering, but La Tour’s Lam says it can sometimes take an hour to receive an order. Once, an order came in to Ngon after it had closed—30 minutes after it stopped taking orders. With Uber Eats, orders come in directly, but just as with the ridesharing app, a driver has to then accept the assignment. Restaurants see this in real time; they can also see when a driver accepts and his estimated time of arrival.

“We found we were making the orders, but drivers weren’t picking them up. They said we just have a lack of drivers right now,” Agu Ramen’s Keith Nakaganeku says. “One time we had four sets of orders sitting on the counter. And nobody came to pick them up. Customers don’t see it as an Uber Eats thing. They see it as an Agu Ramen thing.”

That was enough for Nakaganeku to quit Uber Eats at all seven Oahu locations. He’s more optimistic about Bitesquad and Grubhub, which deliver only food, not passengers. He



reached out to Bitesquad; Grubhub dropped off an info packet. “Grubhub, I definitely will not sign up with them when they first come here. Because of my experience with Uber Eats,” he says. “I definitely will wait and talk to some other businesses about their experiences. I’ll process that and decide if it’s worth it for me to partner with these guys.”

out lunchtime delivery to the downtown area in March. “I’m expecting it to be pretty busy because a lot of our clients are the downtown lunch crowd. We’re thinking we would have to have multiple drivers just for that three-hour period.”

At Bitesquad, media relations manager Liz Sniegocki sees the same dynamics playing out in markets across

“The obvious solution is a delivery service. The demand is on. It’s growing. We’re seeing our numbers increase with delivery.”

There is another option: Restaurants can start their own delivery services. It makes more sense if a restaurant already has one or two vans for catering. “I understand that every service is going to cost something. But for us to have to increase the price for our customers, I couldn’t do that to them. It made more sense to do it ourselves,” says Elizabeth Hata-Watanabe of Pauoa’s Burgers and Things, which planned to try

the country. In St. Petersburg, Florida, the restaurant delivery service Sniegocki ran with her husband was acquired by Bitesquad last August. Since then, Uber Eats and Grubhub have also arrived. “We’re still seeing double-digit growth,” she says. “In other markets as well, smaller players are being acquired and large players are able to compete. There’s so much demand for delivery, everybody can have a little piece of the pie.”

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Leaving MONEY on the TABLE

More outreach needed to boost SNAP participation

BY JESSE COOKE
ULUPONO INITIATIVE VICE PRESIDENT

When it comes to food and feeding our population, a big issue is affordability. Many in our community have to rely on government assistance. In fact, a U.S. Department of Agriculture-funded study reported that about 50 percent of children across the nation have been on food stamps at some point by the age of 20. You can count me as one of those who received this benefit in my childhood.

Food stamps are now known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, which offers nutrition assistance to eligible, low-income individuals and families via an

Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card that can be used at grocery stores and farmers' markets, to name a few. It's a hotly debated federal program, even coming under scrutiny by the current White House administration, which (as of this article's printing) proposed cutting back on providing a discretionary budget for participants and substituting with packaged food deliveries.

Everyone who earns a wage pays a tiny portion to support the SNAP program. For example, a person making \$50,000 a year will pay only about \$36 per year in federal taxes for SNAP. In my opinion, this seems better than a fair trade. When I was in need, I got help, and now that I'm gainfully employed, I'm happy to help others who now need assistance.

What doesn't seem fair is that a dis-

proportionate share of my tiny contribution is going outside of Hawaii to Oregon, Illinois, Michigan, New Mexico, Delaware, and Washington. The reason why those states are receiving more federal tax dollars is that they have all reached 100 percent SNAP participation. How can we get a piece of that pie?

100 Percent Participation – Mission Possible?

If all SNAP-eligible Hawaii residents participated in the program, the state would receive an additional ~\$100 million from the federal government, according to a 2017 study by the Crossroads Research Center



If all SNAP-eligible Hawaii residents participated in the program, the state would receive an additional ~\$100 million from the federal government.

(Hawaii's Food System: Food for All). That's a lot of money for Hawaii, especially for local agriculture. What's more, we are already paying federal taxes to receive this money - the money has already been paid for - but we just aren't collecting. This alarming fact has caught the attention of some notable community members, including Barry Taniguchi of KTA Super Stores, who wrote a great opinion piece about this topic published last November in the Hawaii Tribune-Herald.

While it may seem daunting, it is possible for every single eligible person in Hawaii to participate. What's reassuring is that five of those six states historically had participation rates similar to ours. In 2008, two of those six states (New Mexico and

Delaware) had participation rates nearly equivalent to Hawaii's participation rate. By 2012, only four years later, New Mexico had a 90 percent participation rate, and Delaware boasted a 98 percent participation rate, while our participation rate fell to 66 percent.

Hawaii can achieve 100 percent SNAP participation - it's not going to be easy, but the road map is there.

Money on the Table

SNAP is big business, according to recent articles about both Amazon's and Walmart's strategies to get SNAP customers approved for their online businesses. In 2012, a Walmart executive stated that Walmart takes in 18 percent of all food stamp spend-

ing in the U.S., equivalent to ~\$13 billion in revenue or about 4 percent of Walmart's total sales in the U.S. This is a significant percentage for a retailer that sells a lot more stuff than just food.

The latest SNAP numbers from fiscal year 2016 show Hawaii received ~\$480 million in SNAP funding, had a monthly average of 176,729 participants, and had a participation rate of 83.7 percent. Based on these numbers, we would need to sign up 34,417 more eligible people to reach 100 percent participation. These additional participants would result in \$93.5 million of additional federal SNAP funds entering the state. The extra money goes beyond the food industry, but also gets circulated and recirculated within the broader state economy. This creates an economic multiplier effect estimated to be 1.8X, meaning that every \$1 of SNAP benefits creates a \$1.80 of economic activity in the state. If you do the math, that's \$93 million - the benefit we already pay federal taxes for but have decided to leave on the table - is actually \$168 million in total state economic activity.

Pay-to-Play

Would you be willing to pay someone for every eligible person they sign up for SNAP benefits to get the 100 percent participation? While it may seem absurd, this type of arrangement has been very effective for the state of Washington in its efforts to increase SNAP participation. In 2013, the Washington State-approved SNAP outreach partners were paid \$160 for each completed SNAP application and an additional \$100 for each approved application. In actuality, the state of Washington only paid for half these costs. That tiny portion of your taxes already going to SNAP also helps to fund the administration of the program at the state level. The federal government pays for 50 percent of all state expenses needed to administer SNAP benefits. It's a good deal for the state of Washington as SNAP participation has hovered near 100 percent participation since 2010. It seems like it would be an even better deal for us. In Hawaii, using the participation numbers above, each of the

34,417 eligible people could bring the state \$4,881 of additional economic activity on average each year. Even if you don't count the "fuzzy math" 1.8x multiplier, this translates to \$2,716 of additional purchase power per new participant to the state each year.

Looking at the Road Map

There are three common themes present in the efforts of states that have achieved high participation rates: workflow restructuring, policy simplification, and broad outreach/community support.

A common workflow restructure used by other states has been the creation of statewide call centers, with responsibility for answering client questions and processing changes. In doing so, these states have reduced the burden on eligibility workers, enabling them to focus on conducting interviews and evaluating cases. Another strategy implemented by other states has been to outsource SNAP eligibility workers in regions where underserved populations have been identified. These workers are stationed one or two days a week at satellite offices located within community health centers, senior centers, and other local community partner sites in areas not readily accessible to local state offices.

Policy simplifications are designed to reduce both barriers to access,

and burdens on staff time. One key policy change that has been adopted by numerous states has been widely implemented involves a combined application process for multiple federal benefit programs. For example, some states automatically enroll elderly and disabled SSI recipients in SNAP without even requiring them to complete an application. Another policy simplification has been to reduce SNAP application forms to four pages or less—Hawaii's application form stands at 18 pages total, made up of 12 pages of fillable form and six pages of instructions.

Outreach can take on many operational models and can be either formal or informal partnerships with the state. As discussed earlier, the state of Washington has formal contracts with designated outreach partners that receive payment for completed and approved applications. Other states provide cost reimbursement for outreach partner activities. Outreach partners are often food banks and

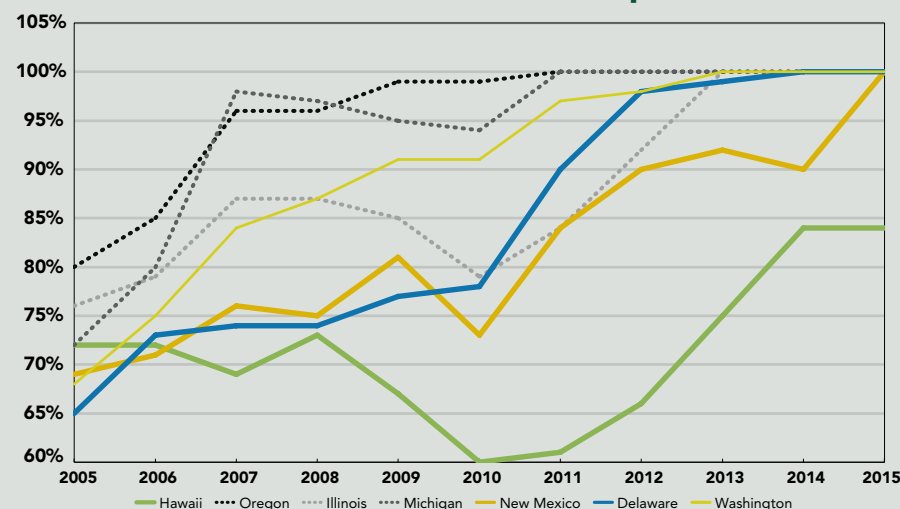
non-profit organizations, but have also included regional and national grocery chains. In Pennsylvania, Pathmark Grocery Stores and Save-A-Lot Grocery Stores in partnership with anti-hunger organizations helped to identify underserved areas and conducted outreach and eligibility screening in stores. In New York, the Korean Grocers Association publishes and distributes SNAP information in Korean. Washington State recently launched a new program with Safeway called "Complete Eats," where shoppers who buy \$10 worth of qualifying fruits and vegetables using their SNAP card and their Safeway Club Card get \$5 off their next purchase.

In Hawaii, the Food Basket and KTA rolled out the "DA BUX" program, which received a \$500,000 USDA Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive grant. SNAP customers at select KTA Super Stores can purchase up to \$20 in participating Hawaii Island grown produce and receive an equivalent amount of participating produce for free.

Where We Are Now

The latest numbers show that Hawaii's SNAP participation rate is at 83.7 percent, which places us firmly in the middle of the pack nationwide at 24th place. This is quite a significant improvement from seven years ago when Hawaii was ranked 48th and had a participation rate of 61 percent. In 2011, average monthly participation was 159,644 people and total SNAP funding was \$412.6 million. Since 2011, SNAP participation has increased by about 17,000 people (approximately 23 percent increase in the participation rate), resulting in ~\$68 million more of your federal taxes returning to the islands. Again, progress has been and is being made, but to achieve 100 percent participation (and \$93.5 million), more has to be done and not just by the state government alone. The roadmaps are consistent in the need for broad community support and partnerships.

Estimates of State SNAP Participation Rates



Pasha Hawaii's "Horizon Spirit" completes Puerto Rico relief effort

Pasha Hawaii has announced that the U.S. Jones Act vessel Horizon Spirit has returned to the U.S. West Coast after providing service in the Puerto Rico market to support extraordinary volumes of cargo for use in hurricane relief and rebuilding efforts.

"This partnership of domestic carriers coming together quickly to serve the needs of the country is a testament to the strength and necessity of the Jones Act," said George Pasha, IV, President and CEO. "We are grateful to be able to help our fellow Americans in time of crisis, and continue to hold the people of Puerto Rico in our hearts as they continue to recover and rebuild."

The Horizon Spirit set a world record for the largest single commodity shipment on a containership, delivering over 800 containers filled with over 15 million bottles of water on its initial humanitarian relief voyage to Puerto Rico.

Since cargo volume can now be handled by the U.S. Jones Act vessels customarily serving the Puerto Rico market, the vessel will serve as a dry-dock reserve ship in Pasha Hawaii's container business between the mainland and Hawaii. It will relieve the Horizon Reliance which will undergo regulatory dry-dock maintenance at a U.S. West Coast shipyard.



Ship sets world record for the largest single commodity shipment on a containership, delivering over 800 containers filled with over 15 million bottles of water on its initial humanitarian relief voyage to Puerto Rico.

Since October 21, 2017, Pasha Hawaii contributed capacity to support fellow U.S.-flag domestic carriers Crowley Maritime and TOTE Maritime's shipments of cargo for relief and rebuilding efforts in Puerto Rico following the devastation of Hurricane Maria.

In her initial relief deployment to the Port of San Juan, the Horizon Spirit delivered FEMA-sponsored, Lipsey Mountain Spring Water from the Port of Los Angeles, setting a world record

for the largest single commodity shipment on a containership.

The Horizon Spirit made a total of eight roundtrip supply and equipment deliveries between Jacksonville, FL and San Juan, bringing 8,000 containers to Puerto Rico on behalf of Crowley and TOTE, utilizing the vessel's 170 refrigerated and its dry containers' capacity. Additionally, Pasha Hawaii supported the two carriers in returning a total of 5,300 empty containers to the mainland.



Employees of Rainbow Sales & Marketing are all smiles as they celebrate the company milestone on January 12, 2018.

Rainbow Sales & Marketing Celebrates 50th Year

PHOTOS AND STORY
BY DESIRÉE ROSE

HFIA was honored to join Rainbow Sales and Marketing (RSM) at their Nimitz Highway office in Honolulu to help celebrate the company's 50th anniversary on Jan. 12, 2018.

RSM, an HFIA member since its inception in 1972, is one of Hawaii's leading foodservice and retail consumer goods brokers representing more than 80 food and retail brands in Hawaii.

"Today is a monumental milestone. Not many companies in Hawaii can say they are 50 years old!" said RSM President, John Schilf, speaking to staff as they gathered to celebrate the occasion.

With 26 staff members, the RSM office culture is characterized by a spirited sense of ownership throughout the organization. Schilf gives credit to his staff for carrying the torch passed on to them by RSM founder Bill Prideaux, who started the company on January 12, 1968.

"Bill was always pushing to look ahead," says Schilf. "RSM owes its success to this man, whose vision we carry forward to this day as a team. We work

"Today is a monumental milestone. Not many companies in Hawaii can say they are 50 years old!"

– John Schilf, RSM President

together as a team, and we all win. From IT to Retail to Marketing . . . all of us carry the torch. Hopefully we can keep it going for another 30-50 years."

Prideaux was an avid supporter of HFIA and served as HFIA president from 1984-1985. During his tenure, Prideaux presided over the establishment of the University of Hawaii's Rainbow Fever Scholarship program, which was organized under the auspices of HFIA. The scholarships assist UH-Manoa athletes who are not eligible for financial assistance after their fourth year. The program dramatically improved graduation rates for fifth year athletes, while providing HFIA members an effective promotional tool to build sales, with a portion of their proceeds being donated to the



RSM President John Schilf addresses the staff.

scholarship fund. The program has raised \$1-million in scholarship funds. In 2012, the endowment was turned over to the University of Hawaii.

After Schilf addressed staff with a commemorative speech, RSM staff gathered in the newly renovated conference room for the remainder of the morning to enjoy food and refreshments, and, of course, photo opportunities to remember the occasion. Everyone received a commemorative coffee mug and T-shirt to mark the day. "With these shirts we will now have 'Casual Friday,' every Friday for the rest of the year, (unless you're on a sales call)," joked Schilf.

NEW MEMBERS

Climate Pros Hawaii

Member Type: Associate

Joined: February 1, 2018

About: Climate Pros Hawaii is a commercial refrigeration and HVAC service company that has been servicing grocery stores of Hawaii, big and small, since 2012. They pride themselves on honesty, integrity, relationships, growth, and the "WHATEVER IT TAKES!" mentality.

Contact Information:

Hideo Simon, Business Development
808-284-7016 | hsimon@climateprosinc.com
www.ClimateProsHI.com



DE.HI Foods

Member Type: Supplier

Join: January 22, 2018

About: Three friends set out to revolutionize the snack food industry creating a new standard for beef jerky—one with a flavorful crunch. The company's moral capitalist vision believes in treating people right, not cutting corners, creating a healthy product and limiting its carbon footprint.

Contact Information:

Justin Enright, CFO
808-797-5274 | justin@dehifoods.com
www.dehifoods.com



Grandville Printing Company

Member Type: Associate

Joined: December 29, 2017

About: GPC created a niche in variable data on-demand retail printing which changed the way retailers advertise at shelf level. Our program offers retailers highly organized, sorted signs packaged in planogram order, ready to hang, all from a compact box – reducing in-store labor by 43 percent.

Contact Information:

Chris Nunez, VP of R&D
616-915-0513 | chrisn@gpco.com
www.gpco.com/nexgen-overview



Hawaiian Pie Company

Member Type: Supplier

Join Date: 11/29/2017

About: Built on the idea of merging the past with the future, the Hawaiian Pie Company traces its roots to the original Holy's Bakery, founded in the 1930s on the Big Island. Today, the three-generation Hori family creates and sells a wide variety of artisan pies and baked goods at its Kalihi location.

Contact Information:

Jan Hori, Co-Founder/Owner
808-224-9982 | jan@hawaiianpieco.com
www.hawaiianpieco.com



New food safety products from Hygeia



Make the same effort to protect ice from contamination as you would food with EcO₃Ice. This product uses a unique, diamond-based technology to continuously treat incoming water used by ice machines, helping keep the water and ice path clean from beginning to end.

The Hygeia Activated Oxygen Sanitizing Spray Bottle (SB100) offers a water-based alternative to traditional cleaners and sanitizers. It turns potable water into aqueous ozone that kills many common pathogens found on hard,

non-porous surfaces and destroys organic odors. The environmentally friendly, all-natural solution safely kills 99.9 percent or more of many common pathogens. Both products are available at **HNK, Inc. dba Koha Foods, 500 Alakawa St., #104, Honolulu, Hawaii. Phone: (808) 845-4232. www.kohafoods.com**



Earth-conscious food packaging

Today's consumers expect packaging to be recyclable while being easy to use. The organic consumer wants less plastic that not only is recyclable, but ideally compostable. Earthcycle™ is a line of smooth moulded pulp packaging that protects and displays delicate fresh produce while speaking to consumer demands.

From trays and punnets to pulp-packaging trays and lids, Earthcycle™ products are recyclable, made from sustainably sourced raw materials, compostable, microwaveable and food-grade compliant. Earthcycle™ products speak to all consumers' growing desire to support local economies and are manufactured in North America. A wide variety of Earthcycle™ products are available through **KYD, Inc., 2949 Koapaka St., Honolulu, Hawaii. Phone: (808) 836-3221. www.kydinc.com**



Exciting new, tasty products

An array of new products are now available, including Davidson's Safest Choice Pasteurized Shell Eggs which are safe to eat raw, non-GMO, free-range, cage free and culinary quality. Simply Potatoes Steakhouse Diced Potatoes, made with fresh potatoes and never frozen with a bold seasoned steak flavor. Other products include Daisy Squeeze Light Sour Cream, Born Sweet Zing Organic Stevia Sweetener Packets, Newman's Own Organic Pasta Sauce, and Newman's Own Pasta Sauce (regular, not organic). These new products and more are available through **Rainbow Sales and Marketing, 888 N. Nimitz Hwy., 3rd Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii. Phone: (808) 487-6455 or email: customerservice@rsmhawaii.com. Website: www.rsmhawaii.com**

Bold, new, fun drinks join Pepsi's 2018 lineup

An invigorating new drink – Mountain Dew Ice is made with real lemon fruit juice and charged with caffeine. It's packed with all of the right ingredients to revitalize your senses and keep you exhilarated throughout the day.

With its cheerful packaging, bubbly is a new sparkling water brand that delivers on taste while celebrating fun and the craving for playfulness. Add a happy burst of fizzy flavor to your day, while keeping it real – no artificial anything. No calories, no sweeteners, all smiles! It comes in eight flavors: lime, strawberry, orange, lemon, apple, grapefruit, cherry and mango. For more information: **Pepsi Beverages Company – Hawaii Market – (808) 484-1777.**



America's No. 1-selling zero calorie drink enters a new era

Don't worry, Diet Coke is not being reformulated, but with an updated look, sleek new packaging and the debut of four bold, new flavors, it's recasting its brand for a new generation. After a two-year innovation process, Coca-Cola has developed and tested more than 30 Diet Coke flavor combinations featuring tropical, citrus and even botanical notes. Ultimately, Diet Coke landed on four flavors that received the most positive consumer responses. Ginger lime, Feisty Cherry, Zesty Blood Orange and Twisted Mango are ready to launch in the Hawaii market this month.

Diet Coke and the new flavors will be packaged in sleek 12-oz. cans and sold as on-the-go singles and in eight-packs. Diet Coke will also continue to be offered in all existing packaging sizes. The sleek cans will give Diet Coke a more contemporary feel. Contact: Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii – **The Odom Corporation, 949 Mapunapuna St., Honolulu, Hawaii. Phone: (808) 839-6711. www.odomcorp.com**



Shaka Tea unveils new look

A new look features a distinct, 14-oz glass bottle, with additional formats to launch later this year. Shaka Tea, the first line of Hawaii-grown, mamaki iced teas that launched in 2016 and distributed by Paradise Beverages, also has reformulated, tuning up the flavors and now sweetened with monk fruit, which results in a healthier, lighter refreshing taste. It's a tad bit sweeter, yet lower in fruit sugars than the previous recipe. The new Shaka Tea flavors range from 0-70 calories per bottle and 0-3 grams of fruit sugar, depending on the flavor. March 2018 also sees the introduction of one new flavor, Lemon Lokelani Rose, joining customer favorites Guava Gingerblossom, Mango Hibiscus and Pineapple Mint. **Shaka Tea, Phone: (808) 375-9381. www.shakatea.com**



Beau Knows Sports

PHOTOS BY AARON ESKARAN

HFIA's Annual Social kicked off the year on January 19 with a sports-themed event at the Honolulu Country Club. Members and guests donning sports jerseys of their favorite athletes won special prizes and the evening's festivities included a delicious buffet dinner, games and psychic readings.

The HFIA Social Committee once again did a fantastic job planning this much-anticipated annual event which brings the membership together for an evening of socializing, networking and fun. A special mahalo goes out to our sponsors and prize and product donors.



Top Row: Nelson Moku III, Chong Pak, Donna Yano, LinAnn Chang, Frank Nakamine, Michael Nakamura. Bottom Row: Jennifer Moku, Lucy Hwa, Terri Ishii, Randi Tsushima



Larry Ishii and Lauren Zirbel



Denise Sasaki, Kensie Sasaki-Rapoza, Mike Kaya



John Kugisaki, Ryan Day, James Donnelly, Dennis Steward



Henry Lee, Tricia Beaman, Ed Treschuk, Nathan Okinaka



Layne Kaita and Brian Christensen



Dean Nakama, Chris Villanueva, Dwayne Fujitani, Keith Kiyotoki, Michael Ohashi



Ross Matsumoto, Paul Tokuda, Ross Baechle, June Yamamura, Stephen Reyes, Leilani Pollard, Peggy Abella



James Baloaloe and June Yamamura



Top Row: Carl Fukushima, Craig Higa, Layne Kaita. Bottom Row: Terri Luna, Jackie Saito, Joni Marcello



Top Row: Tracy Ide, Kevin Chung, Scott Shimogawa, Vincent Fong. Bottom Row: Terri Min, Jacky Uesato, Terry Abreu, Susan Kosasa



Top Row: Andrea Johnson, Ambar Blake. Bottom Row: Bruce Yokochi, Miles Matsumoto, Alison Matsumoto



Top Row: Len Isotoff, Dean Matsuoka, Paul McCully. Bottom Row: Dave Oshita, Karen Okinaka, Derwin Okinaka, Bryan Gomes

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Bottom Row: John Erichson, Miyuki Hirano-Hollingworth



Ronald Espinosa, Nadine Nakamura,
Dominique Espinosa



Rep. James Tokioka, Derek Kurisu,
Sen. Brian Taniguchi



Rep. Ryan Yamane, Luella Costales, Rep. Henry Aquino

HFIA and HRA team up for Pau Hana with Legislators

PHOTOS BY AARON ESKARAN

The Hawaii Food Industry Association (HFIA) and the Hawaii Restaurant Association (HRA) joined together on February 22, for a Pau Hana with Legislators at the Hukilau Bar & Grill at the Executive Centre in downtown Honolulu.

It was the third year the two groups played host to the event bringing together industry professional and state legislators for a casual networking mixer.

The event was a unique opportunity to build relationships in a casual setting with delicious food and drink.



Sen. Brian Taniguchi and Bonny Amemiya



Mathew Rose, Joe Carter, Todd Oda



Andrew Ling, Tyler Roukema, Gregg Fraser



Top Row: Barry Redmayne, Charlene Gray, Mike George.
Bottom Row: Bill Lane, Chris Nunez



Rep. Chris Todd, Chris Yankowski, Raymond Orozco, Derek Conselva



Rep. Matthew LoPresti, Rep. Chris Todd, Rep. Nadine Nakamura, Rep. Tom Brower, Rep. Daniel Holt, Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates, Rep. Romy Cachola



Kelvin Takushi, Gulle Chong, Jay Yoshizawa



Alexis Chapman and Desirée Rose

New Ways to Shop

BY LAUREN ZIRBEL

Nationally, the industry is evaluating how technology can contribute to expanding service options. It remains to be seen how different demographics will react to reductions in personal interaction and heavy use of technology. Technology is an important part of the shopping experience and that keeping up with the latest grocery trends now means keeping up with



the latest tech trends.

Some of our members are offering grocery delivery for their customers who value convenience. Many of our members have apps, which drive consumers to their

stores and highlight specials.

Convenience is shaping the way people shop. Meal kits, which include all the premeasured ingredients shoppers need to prepare a home cooked meal are increasing in popularity. Some stores have picked up on the potential of this trend and have partnered with chefs and meal kit companies to sell them in store. Meal kits are a way for those who are short on planning time to still get to cook, and they often feature healthy, whole ingredients.

Knowing exactly what's in the food we buy is a high priority for many shoppers. Today's shoppers are short on time. Scouring tiny ingredient lists can be inconvenient. The answer to this is clean labels. Manufacturers are changing labels to be less cluttered. Ninety-one per cent of U.S. consumers believe food and beverage options with recognizable ingredients are healthier. Campbell Soup, Kellogg, Nestle and many other major food and beverage companies have committed to removing artificial ingredients from popular products in the past year.

HFIA members are committed to providing food that is safe, convenient and affordable. Together we can continue to provide the best selection and nutrition to Hawaii's consumers.

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