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HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY MAGAZINE

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Candice Marrs and her son visit the sustainable crops at Kualoa Ranch, O'ahu.

Featured Sustainable Crops:



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CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Aloha HFIA Team,

I've been a fan of the Made in Hawai'i Festival (MIHF) for as long as I can remember. The mix of so many different types of products, the entertainment, and knowing that everything there is truly local really creates an event that is like no other.

This year was a very special Festival for me. I attended as the Chair of HFIA and of course as a representative of Safeway, the official Grocery Store of the 2023

Made in Hawai'i Festival. For Safeway sponsoring MIHF is not just about supporting all these amazing local makers, it's about creating connections. The Buyers Hours and the sponsorships by organizations like Safeway, Mahi Pono, CPB, HTDC, Hawaiian Airlines, The Odom Corporation, JPG, Island Distributing, Matson, Hawaii Volcanic Beverages, Hawaiian Air Cargo, ALTRES Staffing are part of what makes the MIHF unique. MIHF is not just a festival, it's a small business incubator. It creates opportunities for these small local businesses to connect not just with their customers but also with retail buyers and potential partners in the financial, HR, agriculture, manufacturing, advertising, distribution, and technology sectors. These are the connections that can enable our small local businesses to grow and thrive and I'm proud to be a part of that as HFIA's chair and COS for Safeway.

So much of what HFIA does is about creating networks in our industry. Our annual Convention is a chance to catch up and reconnect in person with our colleagues from across the industry. It's a lot of fun, and also a time to reflect on where

we want our industry and our Association to go in the future. Our panel discussion this year, which is covered on page 22, was an important look at what resiliency for Hawai'i's food industry looks like in the present and future. We also got a chance to learn about our new member management platform and HFIA app, hear about the new magazine (see more below), and give some feedback for the positive proactive legislation HFIA will be championing in 2024.

The Annual Convention, our August 10 Membership Meeting (covered on page 22), and the MIHF are great examples of the ways that HFIA creates connections within our industry, and reaches out to the larger community. It's been great to be a part of these events and I'm looking forward to everything we have coming up.

Mahalo,

Gary Okimoto
HFIA Chairman
COS, Safeway

EDITOR'S NOTE



Welcome to your new Hawai'i Food Industry Magazine!

The Hawai'i Retail Grocer Magazine has been a part of HFIA for several decades and we're excited to be updating the magazine to bring it into the future.

WHAT'S NEW:

The new name of the magazine, "Hawai'i Food Industry Magazine" is a reflection of the diverse nature of HFIA's member

businesses. The new name also enables us to broaden the scope of topics we're covering, provide a deeper look at certain industry stories, and reach a wider audience.

Select magazine articles will now be available live on HawaiiFood.com. These will also include live links to the businesses covered in the stories.

WHAT'S THE SAME:

We are committed to continuing to feature compelling stories that are informative for food industry insiders as well as the wider Hawai'i business community and the public.

The Hawai'i Food Industry Magazine will still feature our departments including the NGA Update, New Members, Member News, and Legislative Update.

The full PDF of each issue of the magazine will be available on HawaiiFood.com.

WHAT'S NEXT:

In addition to the magazine ads which are featured in the print magazine and PDF, in the future we may offer online banner

ads for those stories which are posted online.

We're looking forward to growing our online readership and providing a wider audience for our coverage of the topics that are important to Hawai'i's Food Industry.

As Director of Operations for HFIA it's a great pleasure to get to know our member businesses and what makes them each such an important part of our industry, our communities, and our state. As the Editor of your Hawai'i Food Industry Magazine, I want to cover the stories that are most important to you. The Hawai'i Food Industry Magazine is an opportunity to highlight your businesses to our readers, and cover the stories that impact your businesses and our industry. If you ever have news to share, or stories you want us to cover please reach out to me at Alexis.Chapman@HawaiiFood.com and let me know how we can make our Hawai'i Food Industry Magazine the best that it can be for our Hawai'i Food Industry Association.

EDITOR'S NOTE

On Behalf of HFIA's Executive Committee and Staff,

Like all of you we are absolutely devastated by the tragic loss of life and destruction caused by the August fires in Lahaina, Kula, and other parts of Maui and the Big Island. We would first like to extend our most sincere condolences to all those who have been touched by this monumental tragedy.

We would also like to thank the first responders and all those providing assistance to people in need in Maui.

The HFIA and Made in Hawai'i Festival Communities have been impacted in a variety of ways. Loved ones have been lost. Homes and businesses have been destroyed and damaged.

In the immediate aftermath of these events the outpouring of support and aid from our HFIA Members and the Made in Hawai'i Festival community has been overwhelming and truly inspiring. We greatly appreciate everything they have done. Our friends at the Hawai'i Foodbank have been vital in securing food donations from around the state and the country and supporting the Maui Food Bank. So many of our members sprang into action and have been using all their resources, connections, skills, and experience to ensure that food and other essential items get to those in need. HFIA has been working to share vital information and resources for member businesses that have been impacted, and those who want to contribute. The HFIA Executive Committee decided to donate 10% of profits from Made in Hawai'i Festival ticket sales and 100% of profits from Made in Hawai'i Festival HILife t-shirt sales to Hawaii Community Foundation's Maui Strong Fund. We are deeply grateful for the work that the Maui Strong Fund has already done.

We know that the impacts of this tragedy will be enduring. So much of what was lost can never be replaced.

As we move into the future we know that our HFIA Members, our Made in Hawai'i Festival community, and HFIA itself will continue to do whatever we can to provide support and assistance.

NEW FEES AND RESTRICTIONS ON SNAP WOULD STIFLE EFFORTS TO HELP THE FOOD INSECURE

**BY GREG FERRARA, PRESIDENT AND CEO,
NATIONAL GROCERS ASSOCIATION**

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, commonly known as SNAP, is a public-private program that works as it was designed, to help feed the food insecure. And in many rural and urban areas, where independent community grocers are often the only convenient source of fresh groceries and other essential goods, SNAP has been an effective tool to ensure that folks who need help the most get fed.

However, proposals that would make it more difficult and costly for grocery retailers to serve SNAP customers would undermine the positive impact that the program is having on the folks who need it most.

Independent grocers historically operate under tight margins, and like the people in the communities they serve, they too face challenges of high costs of goods and services necessary for do-

In Hawai'i, it's estimated that SNAP is responsible for more than 1,200 jobs across grocery and supporting industries, including agriculture, manufacturing, transportation and municipal services. The jobs required to administer SNAP at the grocery store level in Hawai'i generate upwards of \$50 million in grocery industry and related wages.

ing business, as well as fees for things like processing credit card transactions.

That's why NGA worked with U.S. Rep. Shontel Brown (D-OH-11) to introduce the Ensuring Fee-Free Benefit Transactions (EBT) Act, a bill that would prohibit processing fees on electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards used by SNAP participants.

Independent grocers have made significant investments in software, equipment and training to provide SNAP benefits for their communities. That's why we appreciate Brown's cooperation in finding a permanent solution to prevent processing fees on SNAP transactions, which could result in limited access to SNAP for beneficiaries and negatively impact the retailers who are indispensable to the program.

Fees on EBT transactions would be cost prohibitive for many community and family-owned grocers that service urban, rural and high-need areas. In addition to banning SNAP processing fees, this bill would ensure that retailers are only responsible

for their own costs as USDA works to modernize EBT with chip cards and mobile payments. The modernization will increase costs for all participating parties – including the federal government, states, EBT processors and retailers – but each party must pay their share of the costs.

In Hawai'i, it's estimated that SNAP is responsible for more than 1,200 jobs across grocery and supporting industries, including agriculture, manufacturing, transportation and municipal services. The jobs required to administer SNAP at the grocery store level in Hawai'i generate upwards of \$50 million in grocery industry and related wages. While SNAP purchases are not subject to sales taxes, sales helped generate additional tax activity at the federal, state and local levels. In Hawai'i, SNAP sales and administration at the grocery store level are responsible for about \$10 million in state and local tax revenues and about \$7 million in federal tax receipts.

As Congress works toward a new Farm Bill this year, Brown's legislation would at last make permanent a temporary ban on SNAP processing fees included in the 2018 Farm Bill, which expires this year.

Congress and the USDA have historically gone out of their way to ensure retailer participation in SNAP was incentivized. From the inception of EBT for SNAP, stores were protected from transaction fees and were provided with government-funded equipment including installation and operation. In the 2014 Farm Bill, retailers chose to streamline the customer experience and integrate EBT payments with other payments, like credit or debit. They agreed to cover all the associated costs to ensure the government did not underwrite the cost of commercial activity in stores. But the wording of the 2014 Farm Bill inadvertently left retailers open to new processing fees, a loophole temporarily closed in 2018.

It is critical that these fees are prohibited to ensure that SNAP retailers can remain SNAP retailers to support their communities.

Meanwhile, additional legislation would imperil privacy for grocers and their customers. U.S. Rep. Josh Brecheen (R-OK) and Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) have introduced the "Healthy SNAP Act," which would turn SNAP into a WIC-like program and require SNAP data reporting from retailers.

Such a requirement would turn grocers into the food police, forcing retailers to disregard their own privacy as well as that of their customers. These changes would add administrative burdens for retailers and frustrations for their customers. There's already a pilot for these provisions in the 2024 House Appropriations bill.

Rather than creating any meaningful public health improvements, restricting SNAP choice would end up increasing costs for businesses as well as the government and reduce the flexibility that has made SNAP such a successful program up to now. Additionally, USDA already receives data from third-party data collecting agencies.

NGA looks forward to working with policymakers and helping them better understand the realities of doing business, the successful role of SNAP in boosting food access to Americans in need, and the challenges faced by independent grocers feeding their communities and enhancing local economies.

We encourage independent retailers to remind their representatives in Congress how important local grocers are to the health and success of their communities. For more information on how to get involved, visit <https://www.nationalgrocers.org/government-relations/action-center/>.



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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

BY LAUREN ZIRBEL

Though the legislature is currently in recess until 2024, this fall HFIA has been continuing to advocate on several important issues, while actively preparing for next year, and keeping our members up to date on regulatory changes that may impact them.

DA BUX

The Double Up Food Bucks program, known as DA BUX, is part of the Department of Agriculture's Hawai'i healthy food incentives program. DA BUX doubles the purchasing power of those using the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to purchase locally grown food. DA BUX is administered by The Food Basket in partnership with the Hawai'i Good Food Alliance. Funding for DA BUX comes from the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program, state funds, and funds matching programs. Many HFIA retailers participate in this important program that is a win for local farmers, SNAP users, and those selling locally grown food.

Unfortunately, DA BUX was not funded at the State level this year. The Food Basket has been able to extend the program to December of this year. HFIA, Ulupono Initiative and others have been working to secure funds for the program through the Governor's discretionary budget or other means. We're also planning on including DA BUX funding as part of our positive proactive legislative package for 2024 and we look forward to continuing to educate our legislators on why this is such a valuable program.

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU LAND USE ORDINANCE

In February of 2022 Bill 10 an omnibus measure to revise and update a wide range of land use ordinances was introduced at the Honolulu City Council. The Bill was initiated by the Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP). Since its introduction there have been two approved versions and six drafts of the measure. The most recent approved version is over 200 pages long.

HFIA is working with the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii and a range of other stakeholders who support the intent of the measure, to improve and update the County's land use ordinances, but who believe that this measure may not be the best vehicle for that process. This coalition of stakeholders will be submitting comments during the next hearing outlining some of the issues with Bill 10. The measure has become unwieldy and difficult to understand for anyone but a land use expert. The Council Member and DPP employee who were the driving forces behind the bills introduction are no longer in the Council or DPP respectively and the DPP is under new leadership.

In the comments the coalition is also suggesting that hiring a third party expert as a possible alternative solution. A third party could help ensure that the public is engaged with the process in a meaningful way and provide oversight of land use ordinance updates. This approach has been used successfully by other counties around the country. HFIA will continue to work with the coalition to communicate to our Council the need the need to update our land use ordinances in a way that is cooperative and functional for all stakeholders, including our food industry. We'll keep members updated on the Status of this measure in our Weekly Update emails.

MAUI COUNTY GENERAL EXCISE TAX SURCHARGE

In July Maui County Passed Bill 49 to create a .5 percent surcharge in addition to the State's 4 percent General Excise Tax (GET.) As the bill moved through the Council hearing process HFIA reached out to Council Member Yuki Lei Sugimura, Chair of the Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee, to discuss the possibility of exempting SNAP eligible groceries from the surcharge. However, after review of the state laws governing the GET it was determined that a county surcharge cannot exempt transactions if they are subject to the GET.

This October HFIA's Board will be meeting in person at the Honolulu Country Club to discuss HFIA's priorities and direction for the coming year. The meeting will feature an interactive session with Jeff Berlin.

DEPOSIT BEVERAGE CONTAINER PROGRAM CHANGES

In 2022 Act 12 was signed into law, it "Requires the Department of Health to implement the Auditor's recommendations for the Deposit Beverage Container program, including developing a risk-based selection process to select reports submitted by certain distributors and redemption centers for audit."

One of the changes that this makes for deposit beverage retailers is that they will have to file certain reports and forms with the Office of Solid Waste Management. HFIA has scheduled Kimberly Tamao, Environmental Health Specialist with the Office of Solid Waste Management speak at to our September 26 Online Membership Meeting to provide additional information and answer questions from members about the forms and the program.



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COFFEE LABELING CHANGES

On July 5th of this year Governor Green signed into law Act 211, SB746. The Department of Agriculture (DOA) provided this summary of the bill:

"Expands the coffee labeling and advertising requirements to include ready-to-drink coffee beverages and the inner packages and inner wrapping labels of roasted coffee, instant coffee, and ready-to-drink coffee beverages. Specifies that the coffee labeling and advertising requirements apply if the applicable products are produced in whole or in part from Hawai'i-grown and Hawai'i-processed green coffee beans. Requires disclosure on the label of coffee blends of the respective geographic and regional origins and per cent by weight of the blended coffees. Prohibits use of the term "All Hawaiian" in labeling or advertising for roasted coffee or instant coffee not produced entirely from green coffee beans grown and processed in Hawai'i."

HFIA asked DOA if there are components of this legislation that apply to retailers or is it just related to coffee product manufacturers such as growers, roasters, packers, bottlers etc. This is their response:

The retailers should understand that they could be held accountable if they knowingly sell Hawaii coffee products that were intentionally mislabeled or fraudulent. Such was the case in the Kona Coffee Lawsuit, 2019-2023 where large retail chains were sued along with the packagers and manufacturers of the products.

The Act does not take effect until July 2024 to give companies time to adjust to the labeling requirements which would include

ready to drink beverages and inner packaging and labels for multi-packs of roasted and instant coffee. It mainly affects the producers and packagers of the product, but like I mentioned above retailers should be aware of the consequences of selling product that may violate the law."

We believe that components of the measure related to advertising would also apply to retailers advertising covered products.

We have invited representatives from DOA to come to speak with HFIA Members and answer questions on the new regulations at an upcoming event. We're waiting on confirmation and will update members via the Weekly Update if and when a speaker is confirmed, or with any additional information on the new rules.

OCTOBER BOARD RETREAT

This October HFIA's Board will be meeting in person at the Honolulu Country Club to discuss HFIA's priorities and direction for the coming year. The meeting will feature an interactive session with Jeff Berlin. During the retreat the Board will determine the best ways to implement and advocate for HFIA's positive proactive legislative platform for 2024:

Food Security and Resilience: Support legislation to allocate funding for Da BUX and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), ensuring efficient and accessible assistance to those in need. Advocate for Tax Reduction for Groceries, aiming to ease the financial burden on individuals and families when purchasing essential food items. Propose Tax Reductions, Regulatory Relief, and Grants for Food Supply Chain Companies to reduce operational costs, consequently lowering food prices and ensuring a stable food supply. Collaborate with the Hawai'i Foodbank, food supply chain companies, and State Agencies to develop and endorse Resiliency efforts, such as disaster preparedness plans and efficient distribution networks.

Food Industry Initiatives: Advocate for Grants to support food production, agriculture, and other sustainable initiatives. These grants would encourage the adoption of eco-friendly practices and technologies within the food industry, promoting growth while safeguarding the environment. Support the development of educational programs and training opportunities in sustainable practices to foster a skilled and knowledgeable workforce capable of driving positive change within the food industry.

Workforce Development for the Food Industry: Lobby for the allocation of Workforce Development grants, specifically targeted towards supporting the growth and training of the future food industry. Promote public-private partnerships to create internship and apprenticeship programs, offering hands-on experience and mentorship for individuals interested in pursuing careers in the food industry. Advocate for incentives for companies to invest in their employees' professional growth, such as tuition reimbursement or skill development programs, to attract and retain a talented and motivated workforce.

During our 2023 Convention Membership Meeting members voted these issues as their top legislative priorities for 2024. We're excited to advocate for legislation and programs that will have a positive impact for our food industry in these areas. We'll continue to keep members up to date via Legislative Updates in our Weekly Updates and online in your info hub.

For questions or additional information please reach out to us at Info@HawaiiFood.com.

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WHY IS SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE ESPECIALLY RELEVANT FOR JAPAN AND HAWAII?

BY CAROLINE JULIAN-FREITAS

Hawaii and Japan are nearly 4,000 miles away from each other and have the vast Pacific Ocean separating them. Despite the geographic distance between these two groups of islands, there are many similarities, specifically in issues surrounding sustainable agriculture.

The commonalities were discussed last July during the Hawaii-Japan Sister State and Sister City Summit, convened in Honolulu by the State of Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism and the Japan-America Society of Hawaii. The summit's theme was "The Ties that Bind," and it was attended by Hawaii's state officials and county mayors, including Gov. Josh Green, and mayors and governors of the six prefectures and 16 cities and towns from Japan. In addition, leaders from Hawaii and Japan in the fields of sustainable agriculture, sustainable energy, business and economic development, sustainable tourism, and education discussed possibilities for future collaboration.

During one panel devoted entirely to sustainable and profitable agriculture, an intriguing question was asked: "Why is sustainable agriculture especially relevant for Japan and Hawaii?" Answering this question requires an understanding of the important similarities between agriculture in Japan and in Hawaii.

The average size of farms in Hawaii and Japan are small in comparison to oth-

er areas with more land mass. The average size of a farm in the continental United States is 445 acres, compared to 10.2 acres in Japan and 155 acres in Hawaii. Although Hawaii's average farm size is much larger than Japan's, about 66% of Hawaii farms are between 1 and 9 acres, and 23% are between 10 and 49 acres.

Both areas also face the challenge of an ageing workforce. In 2015 the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF) found that those primarily engaged in agriculture in Japan were 65 years or older. According to Hawaii's 2017 Census of Agriculture, the average age of a farmer in Hawaii is 60.

As a result of an aging workforce and competition with other industries for workers, the farm labor supply is decreasing. The number of Japanese farmers has been decreasing sharply. The 2020 Census of Agriculture and Forestry in Japan reported that the country had 1.52 million agricultural workers. In 2015, the number of agricultural workers was 1.97 million, representing a 20% decline in five years. The workforce loss is even more stark when compared with the Japan's farm workforce in the past, in 1985 it stood at 5.42 million.

Hawaii's agricultural sector also faces worker shortages. "The lack of farm labor has consistently been one of the top three challenges in Hawaii agriculture," said Jesse Cooke, vice president of invest-

ments & analytics at Ulupono Initiative. "It is tough for farmers to compete with other industries when it comes to salaries."

According to the USDA, gross wages for Hawaii's farm field workers was \$14.30 per hour in January 2018 and \$18.40 per hour in January 2023, almost a 30% increase. Even with that increase, Hawaii farmers are still having substantial problems finding farm labor.

Both Hawaii and Japan also produce little to no row crops (corn, wheat, soybean, etc.). According to World-Grain.com, "Although it is self-sufficient in rice production, Japan imports 90% of its wheat needs, 80% of its flour and 100% of its corn." Hawaii's production of row crops for local consumption or as ingredients for local livestock operations is almost non-existent.

Because livestock feed is made from row crops, the livestock industries in both Japan and Hawaii have to deal with significantly higher imported livestock feed costs.

"The cost of feed is one of the primary reasons why Hawaii's livestock sectors are struggling," Cooke said. "Hawaii's strongest livestock industry is cattle. This livestock sector survives because it minimizes its use of imported feed and depends on grass grazing. However, this means Hawaii's beef industry is highly sensitive to drought, which can significantly decrease grass production."

Because of their geographic isolation, being sustainable and self-reliant is especially important for both Japan and Hawai'i. Both depend on food imports, especially from North America, for the majority of their populations' caloric needs. According to a 2023 International Agricultural Trade Report, as Japan's top agricultural supplier, the United States exported \$14.6 billion of agricultural products in 2022. That roughly translated to 23% of Japan's caloric needs. Similarly, most of Hawai'i's food imports are from the U.S. mainland.

Geographic isolation, low food production, and dependence on food imports make it challenging to achieve food security, improve resilience, or manage supply chain disruptions like those experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. For Japan and Hawai'i, these disruptions have the potential to become emergencies.

The United Nations' Food and Agricultural Organization defines food self-sufficiency as "the extent to which a country can satisfy its food needs from its own domestic production." The food self-sufficiency rate of certain food items is calculated by dividing the amount of domestic

production by supplies needed for domestic consumption. According to MAFF, Japan's food self-sufficiency rate on a calorie basis was 38% in 2021. In 2018, MAFF calculated the calorie-based food self-sufficiency rate for other countries including the United States at 132%, Canada at 266%, and France at 125%. Referring to this estimate, MAFF has repeatedly expressed its concern about Japan's low food self-sufficiency rate.

With Hawai'i importing an estimated 80-90% of its food, its leaders need to recognize the risk to Hawai'i's residents when it comes to food supply chain disruptions. "Unlike the other 49 states, Hawai'i's geographic isolation creates so much food security risk for Hawai'i's residents that Hawai'i state government support of local food production should not be viewed as subsidizing an industry, but as supporting a public safety tool such as a police department or fire department," Cooke explained.

The Japanese government has long recognized the security risk that is present because Japan is not food self-sufficient. "Japan has reduced support for agriculture in recent decades, but even so, 41% of farm-

ers' revenue still comes from government subsidies, more than double the average of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) group of wealthy nations," according to an article by Daniel Leussink, titled "Insight: On Japan's farms, a weakening yen adds to slow-burning discontent." Meanwhile, according to Global Trade Magazine, the U.S. subsidizes its agriculture industry by only 12%.

While there are of course more shared connections and challenges relating to sustainable agriculture between Japan and Hawai'i, the few discussed here illustrate the value of innovative collaboration. For instance, tech and machinery developed for massive mainland farms is often not the right size for Hawai'i farms. During the 2023 Hawaii legislative session, a proposed bill would allow farmers to utilize farming equipment from Japan, with specific emphasis on small tractors.

With the bonds strengthened and fruitful discussions at the "Ties that Bind" summit, the shared challenges in the area of sustainable agriculture will provide a positive path forward towards innovative collaboration for present and future generations.



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Pop Culture Artisan Pop's mission is to redefine the traditional ice pop. Our relentless dedication has led us to create contemporary, unique, and mouthwatering culinary creations. By combining innovative flavor profiles with our artisanal craftsmanship, we have created a treat that brings joy to people of all ages. At Pop Culture we focus on using premium as well as local ingredients to bring you the best flavor experience possible. We want our pops to bring you back to your nostalgic childhood days of fun, sun, and care-free times while taking you on a one-of-a-kind flavor adventure!



HAWAIIAN ELECTRIC

Our vision is to empower our customers and communities with affordable, reliable, clean energy, and provide innovative energy leadership for Hawaii. By 2025, our company will be one of

the most progressive and forward-thinking energy companies in the world. Our employees are dedicated to you, our customers. Taking care of you is our top priority.

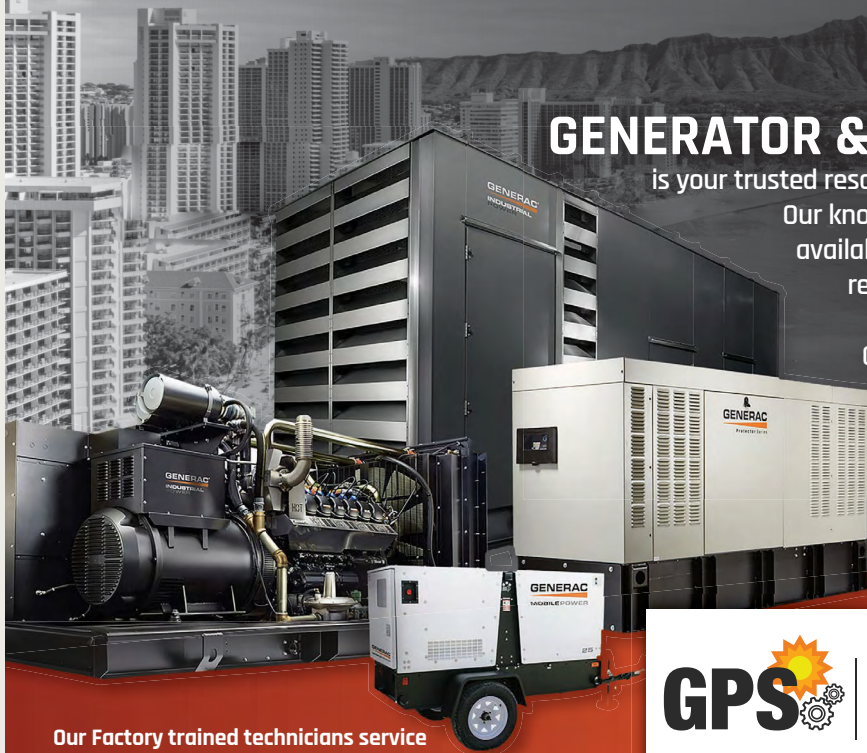


KINGS TRANSPORT REFRIGERATION

Pacific Van Liners LLC (aka Kings Transport Refrigeration & Bus AC Services DBA) is a small family business founded on Oahu in 2011 by master technician, Santos Gomez. We specialize in transport refrigeration systems for vans, trucks, trailers, buses and other industrial vehicles including tour busses and shuttles. Our shop is located in Honolulu and has expanded with mobile service on Kauai and the Big Island. We have proudly provided expert, factory-trained service to all the Hawaiian Islands for the last 12 years. Our dedicated team has a great reputation for providing quality parts and service to our customers. Kings Transport Refrigeration is here to help you find exactly what you need to make sure you and your products (and tourists) stay cool!

Our goal for 2023 is to be Hawaii's go-to "dealership" for refrigerated cargo vans. Hopefully this information helps you get an idea about us. We look forward to speaking with you!

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MEMBER NEWS



FOODLAND LAUNCHES RETAIL MEDIA NETWORK

Foodland recently announced that they are partnering with CirtruAd on the new retail media network. Sheryl Toda, VP of marketing and corporate communications explained how the network will benefit shoppers, "Foodland is committed to better shopping experiences. As a part of the GroceryOne network we will utilize CitrusAd's retail media platform to tailor shopping experiences for each member of our shopping community in real-time, through our privacy-protected, first-party data for improved relevancy."



SHE IS PEPSICO

On July 13 PepsiCo Beverages North America (PBNA) held a special ceremony to unveil three custom delivery trucks, each wrapped with an image of 'She is PepsiCo' honorees and local Hawaii women: Berta Guzman, Moani Moniz, and Shirrell Ford. The 'She is PepsiCo' program recognizes and celebrates frontline women associates across the company, as an example of PepsiCo's ongoing commitment to empower women while reinforcing its supply chain through a more diverse workforce.



IGA COCA-COLA INSTITUTE EXPANDS TRAINING ON NATURAL FOODS

The Retail Learning Institute (RLI) and IGA Coca-Cola Institute announced a partnership with LearnNatural to enrich the Institute's online courses library with natural and organic food education tailored to independent food retailers worldwide.

RLI serves more than 15,000 of the leading retailers across the globe and offers over 600 industry-specific blended learning courses for onboarding, compliance, department operations training and more. They selected LearnNatural, a leader in natural products education, as an expert partner to offer retailers their new six-course series of online courses.

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HFIA 2023 BEACH PARTY ANNUAL CONVENTION

Mahalo to Our Sponsors!

Our 2023 sponsors are the life of the party and their generosity made this Convention possible!
Huge Mahalo to all our 2023 Beach Party Convention Sponsors.
Go to hawaiiifood.com for the full list of Sponsors whose support made this event a success!

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PHOTOS: ANTHONY CONSILLO

CONVENTION PANEL DISCUSSION

Resiliency is always an important topic for Hawai'i's food industry, and this year's Convention panel revisited this conversation. Our panelists included government, business, and NGO experts in food and energy and touched on how resilient our State is now, and what's needed to improve our resiliency.

Panelists:

- Amy Marvin, *CEO*, Hawai'i Foodbank
- Jennifer Walter, *Deputy Director*, Department of Emergency Management City and County of Honolulu
- Maile Miyashiro, *Sr. Director, Customer Experience*, C&S Wholesale Grocers and incoming HFIA Vice Chair
- Ryan Day, *Account Executive*, Hawaii Gas
- And our Moderator Caroline Carl, *Executive Director* of Hawaii Energy.

Caroline started off the discussion with an important note on the definition of resiliency, "The ability to withstand adversity and bounce back from difficult events." For Hawai'i, this ability is not just an advantage, it is a necessity. As a geographically isolated island community that is currently dependent on imports, Hawai'i's food supply chain is vulnerable to disruption due to natural disasters and other crises. Much of our critical infrastructure is aging. Other infrastructure is located in the likely inundation zone during a hurricane or tsunami. Estimates about how much food is located in the state at any given time vary from a weeks' worth to much less, depending on the levels of bulk buying and hoarding before a disaster strikes. These challenges mean there is an

added sense of urgency for those working to make our state more resilient. As the businesses that feed our state, HFIA's members, and the association itself, play an important role in creating more resilient food systems for Hawai'i. Our panelists explored this vital topic and offered some valuable insight into key aspects of the resiliency discussion.

FOOD SECURITY AND RESILIENCY

The Hawai'i Foodbank has proven time and again that they are indispensable when hurricanes or other natural disasters strike the state. Their extensive network of food industry partners, including many HFIA members, and other agency partners makes them uniquely prepared to step up in times of crisis. Of course, for the many Hawai'i residents experiencing food insecurity the Hawai'i Foodbank is indispensable every day, not just when the state is experiencing an emergency.

Providing food to residents who can't afford it on a regular basis and coordinating mass feedings during a disaster are distinct but interconnected tasks. Amy discussed the lessons from past efforts to provide some unhoused residents with food prior to a potential natural disaster. When pre-packaged meals were handed out with the intention that they be saved, many recipients instead ate them right away. Jennifer also touched on the challenges that food insecure and economically challenged families have in maintaining the recommended two-week supply of food.

What this underscores is that when it comes to food supply chains food security is the foundation of resiliency. Improving Hawai'i's food security is likely one of the most important steps to take to make the state more resilient over all.

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

Hawai'i's food, energy, and transportation sectors are inexorably linked. Our panelists touched on some of the most complex challenges faced in mass feeding events during and after a natural disaster. Much of the language that is often used around resiliency is focused on the quantity of food available. While ensuring that the state has enough food is step one, making sure that the food can be transported, stored, refrigerated, cooked, or otherwise prepared is just as important.

In order to improve resiliency, the state needs to plan ahead for where food will likely be needed and make sure that it is stored in accessible locations. Flexibility and diversification in the ways that we move food and the types of energy we use to prepare it are also important. Most important, and perhaps most relevant for HFIA is that leaders and essential businesses will have to continue to plan, communicate, and work together.

At the end of the meeting one of our audience members asked what businesses in Hawai'i can do right now to improve resiliency. Jennifer replied that making a plan for employees and making sure that they were prepared and ready for a potential disaster is one of the most important first steps. HFIA members employ thousands of businesses around the state and creating company cultures of preparedness is a great resiliency tool.

HFIA members have long demonstrated that they are invested in supporting their employees, their communities, and the state during times of disaster and crisis. We look forward to continuing this conversation with leaders in our industry, government agencies, and other partners to build a more resilient Hawai'i.



BEACH PARTY CONVENTION PHOTOS





SURF N' TURF

and Major Bragging Rights

BY ALEXIS CHAPMAN
CONVENTION PHOTOS BY ANTHONY CONSILIO

On Friday June 2 those lucky enough to find themselves at Aulani's Kipuka lawn were greeted with a mouth-watering array of smells and flavors. Flames licked the sides of giant woks as contestants prepared a variety of perfectly seared meats, grilled shrimp, sous vide squid, delicately seasoned poke, and a unique array of accompaniments. The occasion was the famed HFIA Cooking Challenge, sponsored by Hawaii Gas, and it was a cooking contest like no other.

The competition was fierce; teams were HFIA members with decades of food industry expertise and access to the best ingredients imaginable. The judging was intense; overall and category winners were determined by audience votes and the audience was made up of food industry pros and their families. And the stakes could not be higher; winners were entitled to bragging rights as Hawai'i Food Industry's Cooking Challenge Winner for a full year, commemorated with custom made prizes provided by Hawaii Gas.

In keeping with the Beach Party theme for the 2023 Convention, the Cooking Challenge theme was Surf n' Turf and required teams to use one ingredient from the land and one from the sea. Keeping the requirements broad was an opportunity for Challenge cooks to flex their creative skills as well as their culinary prowess, and competitors did not disappoint.

The 2023 teams included last years' four contestants: returning champs Pasha Ha-

waii; second year Challenge heavyweights Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii a Subsidiary of the Odom Corp.; also for the second year Challenge sponsors and open flame cookery experts, Hawaii Gas; and longtime participants and foodie favorites Koha Foods. The 2023 Cooking Challenge newcomers were Safeway and JPG Hawaii. After an extremely close Challenge in 2022 a new judging method was introduced this year to ensure teams were rewarded in the areas where they excelled. Audience members received HFIA Bucks in different denominations that they could use to vote for an Overall Winner, Best Use of Local Ingredients, Booth Presence, and Best Service. Chad Cohen of Island Distributing, and frequent HFIA front man, once again served as emcee of the event.

All the teams truly excelled, and the vote counts were close, but in the end first year contestants JPG Hawaii were the overall winners with their Poke Moco. It featured spicy ahi poke on a bed of sushi rice with a sous vide Waialua Fresh egg on top, and finished off with a light drizzle of Kabayaki, rayu chili oil, bubu arare and micro shiso. We like to think that this proves that all HFIA members, even the Associate Members are food experts, but it's also worth noting that Mark Gedeon, JPG Director of Operations was the executive Chef at Outrigger Canoe club for six years before joining the brothers at JPG.

The other category winners and runners up also found ways to go above and beyond,

bringing some truly memorable dishes to the table. Challenge sponsors Hawaii Gas made a special trip to Kahuku to get local shrimp for the surf portion of their dish and it paid off as they took the win for Best Use of Local Ingredients.

The battle for Best Booth Presence was tight with Pasha Hawaii and Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii both bringing eye catching displays to the Challenge as always, but ultimately Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii's signature style took the win in that category.

In what was no surprise to Safeway customers, their team earned the award for "Best Service" as HFIA's new Chair Gary Okimoto and his team handed out premium steak and poke bowls with big smiles. Koha Foods showcased their top-level ingredient knowledge and technical expertise with remarkably tender sous vide squid and prime rib that earned them a line of repeat booth visitors. While there were prizes for all competitors the general consensus was that the real winners were everyone in attendance who got to enjoy these amazing dishes.

The Convention Cooking Challenge really captures so much of what HFIA is all about, all different types of members coming together to connect and share their passion for food. We'd like to thank all those who made this year's challenge so special, everyone who voted, the HFIA Social Committee who plan this event, emcee Chad Cohen, all our skilled competitors, and Cooking Challenge Sponsor Hawaii Gas.



BEACH PARTY CONVENTION PHOTOS (CONT.)





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Retailers and their clerks must:

- Post legal signage at or near the point of sale where tobacco products or electronic smoking devices are sold.
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The Festival this year was a huge success and would not be possible without your support!

BY ALEXIS CHAPMAN
CONVENTION PHOTOS BY ANTHONY CONSILIO

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THE LAST WORD

BY LAUREN ZIRBEL

This Summer and Fall we've been pleased to shift many of our events back to our usual schedule. The Convention was back on the first weekend of June, Made in Hawai'i Festival was back at Statehood Weekend in August, and we're back to in person membership meetings at the Honolulu County Club. But of course, we embrace positive change too. We're keeping some of our Membership Meetings as online events to enable attendance from anywhere. We also had a new home for the 2023 Made in Hawai'i Festival at the Hawai'i Convention Center. This was the perfect venue for this year, we were able to accommodate over 450 vendor booths.

Vendors and attendees alike gave us very high marks for the 2023 festival! Vendors has amazing sales and attendees enjoyed the excellent selection of high quality vendors, award winning artists and chefs, as well as beautiful fashion shows. Founder Julie Morikawa was one of the speakers at our August Membership Meeting to give members information on what ClimbHI does and how it can help connect them to potential future employees. Recently we also touched base with

Cherie Phipps, the Founding Retail Management Certificate Program Director. The Retail Management Certificate is an industry-led certification program to help build expertise and knowledge depth in the retail sector. HFIA Member employees are eligible for valuable tuition reimbursement through the HFIA foundation. We're exploring new ways to help HFIA members take advantage of this program to advance their workforce.

We're also working on forming new partnerships to help connect members with beneficial sustainability programs. HFIA recently met with partners from the Hawaii Green Business Program, Zero Waste Oahu, and the Chamber of Commerce to discuss possible sustainability initiatives. Gail Suzuki-Jones, is the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Program Manager at the Hawai'i State Energy Office - Coordinator of the Hawaii Green Business Program in the Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Branch and she was a featured speaker at our September 26 online meeting to talk to members about how this can benefit their businesses.

During our Annual Membership Meeting at Convention this year our members voted on the three priorities that HFIA



will be proactively advocating for at the Legislature in 2024, Food Security and Resilience, Sustainable Food Industry Initiatives, and Workforce Development. We anticipate a wide variety of positive measures aimed at making progress in these areas. We also know that non-legislative solutions can often be efficient and effective ways to advance the food industry's interests related to these priorities. We're excited to be building partnerships and working inside and outside the Legislature to benefit our members and accomplish our mission, "to improve conditions in the Hawaii food and beverage industry by actively promoting the strength, sustainability, and resilience of Hawaii's food and beverage retailers and suppliers through highly effective advocacy, networking, education, and industry and community relations."

The graphic features a dark teal background with yellow and white geometric shapes and pineapple icons. At the top left is the HFIA logo (HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION). A large yellow banner in the center reads "BECOME A MEMBER". Below it, in white brush-stroke font, is "THIS IS A CALL TO ACTION!". At the bottom, it says "JOIN HFIA ONLINE TODAY! HAWAIIFOOD.COM/MEMBERSHIP".

WHY JOIN?

Because, HFIA is....



Your Liaison Between Government and Industry.

Many of the 2-3K bills proposed by the Hawaii State Legislature each year could significantly affect our industry. Members receive timely legislative updates each week, and we make sure your voice is heard. HFIA has a long track record of successful advocacy on priority policy issues. This is why our members find HFIA so valuable to their company.



Your Professional Networking Hub

HFIA hosts several low-cost membership events throughout the year. Our quarterly & annual events provide valuable education & resources, while facilitating strong industry connections that help members grow their business. As an added bonus, our events are downright fun.

That's why HFIA members share a unique connection and camaraderie that makes this association unlike any other in the state!

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