

HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY MAGAZINE

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WINTER 2024

HOLIDAY SPIRITS

PASSION FOR LILIKOI

LOCAL VOICES
FOR SUSTAINABILITY

ONSITE ENERGY

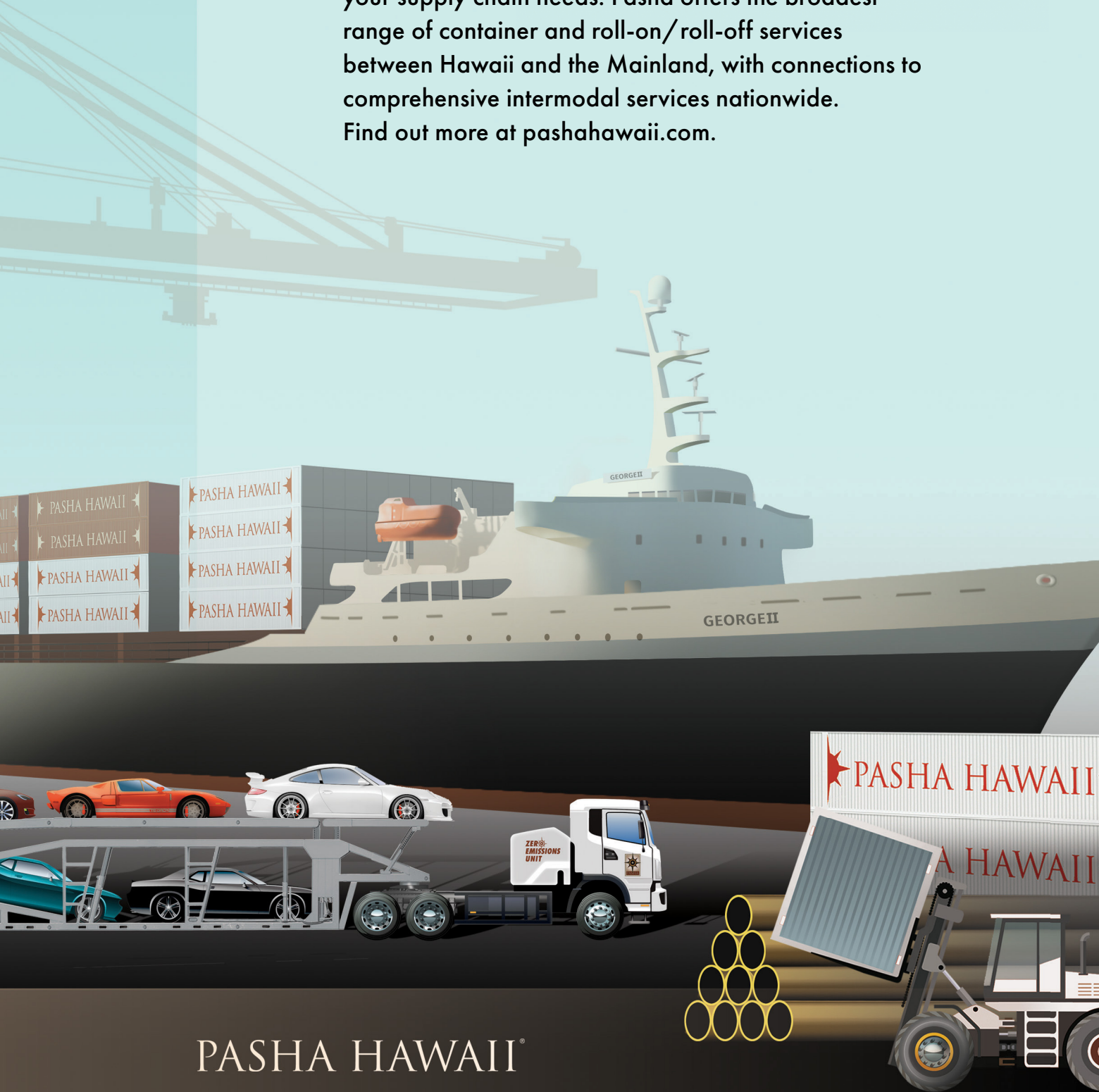


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PHOTOS BY ANTHONY CONSILIO

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HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY MAGAZINE

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**A strong
agriculture
economy
is a more
resilient
one.**



PHOTO BY SEAN MARRS

As our islands work toward greater sustainability and resilience, Ulupono Initiative is actively partnering to invest and advocate in support of locally produced food, renewable energy, clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources for Hawai'i's communities.

Learn more about our commitment at
ulupono.com



*Committed to a sustainable,
resilient Hawai'i*

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CRANBERRY**

**OWN THE
HOLIDAY
SEASON**



Coca-Cola HAWAII
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A SUBSIDIARY OF THE ODOM CORPORATION

**OBEY
YOUR
THIRST.**

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Happy Holidays HFIA Ohana!

As we near the end of 2024 I think we have a lot to celebrate. We enjoyed tremendous success at the legislature this year and were able to help bring millions of Federal funding into Hawaii's food systems in programs that fight food insecurity in keiki, support local agriculture, and promote nutritious eating. We had an out of this world Social, a great golf tournament, and a winning Convention.

This was truly a historic year for HFIA's signature public event, the Made in Hawai'i Festival! 2024 was the 30th Annual Made in Hawai'i Festival. It was the biggest Festival ever hosting over 700 vendor booths and close to 70,000 shoppers. I was honored to be part of the opening ceremony for this historic event, and it was such a treat to join fellow HFIA members and other buyers to meet the vendors and connect with so many Made in Hawai'i businesses during Buyers Hours. I know that the Made in Hawai'i Festival team got busy planning the 2025 Festival as soon as this year wrapped up and I'm

already looking forward to it too.

We have a lot to be excited about in our Association and our industry in the coming year. The Local Food Coalition, which HFIA is a member of, has just resumed their meeting schedule and is looking at positive legislation that can help strengthen our local food systems. HFIA's Government Relations Committee is finalizing our own Legislative Platform for 2025. Lauren and Alexis are continuing to work closely with FEMA and HI-EMA and our member businesses to find solutions to improve the disaster preparedness, response, and resiliency of Hawaii's food systems. And of course, I'm excited for all our wonderful HFIA events. Our amazing Social committee is already hard at work planning a fabulous Social, our golf tournament will be at the newly remodeled Pearl at Kalauao, and I'm happy to announce that in response to vast majority of our member survey responses, we will be keeping the 2025 Convention at Aulani.

The Holiday season is such a wonderfully busy time of year for our industry. So



many of our celebrations and traditions revolve around food. It's a time when I feel really proud and grateful to be a part of this amazing industry. This year I'm also very proud and grateful to be part of HFIA as your chair, celebrating all our Association's accomplishments from the past year, and so excited for everything we have happening in the year to come.

Mahalo!

Maile Miyashiro

HFIA Chairman

Sr. Director Customer Experience,
C&S Wholesale Grocers



"With great aloha, five generations later, the Tamura ohana continues to take pride in the family tradition of serving you."

- Clifford Tamura, Owner & CEO



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LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP: A SURGE OF PRO-CONSUMER CHANGE ON THE HORIZON

BY LAUREN ZIRBEL

CREDIT CARD COMPETITION ACT (CCCA)

Welcome to the wild west of credit card fees, where every swipe costs a small fortune. Each time you pull out your card, a fee averaging 2.26%—and soaring to 3% or 4% for those premium rewards cards—gets siphoned from the transaction. It's a little-noticed tax on your everyday latte or gas fill-up, quietly pocketed by the Visa-Mastercard duopoly that commands 80% of the market. Merchants get no say in who's processing their payments and are left footing the bill, with the cost trickling down to consumers in higher prices. The Credit Card Competition Act aims to shake up this status quo, finally giving merchants a choice in processing networks and pushing swipe fees down without touching the rewards programs everyone loves.

The credit card industry, naturally, has launched an all-out campaign to discredit the bill, tossing around scare tactics like confetti at a parade. But the facts are clear: this legislation won't kill rewards, which are set by banks, not networks, and it won't sacrifice security. In fact, a boost in competition could spark innovations that keep our data safer. The act targets the big boys—giant financial institutions—not your local community bank or credit union, and your credit card stays the same. The real prize? Lower swipe fees that could mean real savings for consumers, just like the benefits we saw after similar debit card reforms in 2011. And no, despite industry horror stories, free checking accounts actually thrived post-reform.

That's why the Hawai'i Food Industry Association (HFIA) is making waves on Capitol Hill, standing up for the CCCA and fighting for Hawai'i's families and businesses. With swipe fees on the chopping block, HFIA sees a brighter, more affordable future for the islands' local businesses and food industry. The mission is clear: championing policies that make Hawai'i's economy fairer and more accessible for everyone.

HONOLULU SELF-CERTIFICATION BILL

In an effort to reduce delays and red tape for businesses looking to adopt solar power and other energy-efficient technologies,

the Honolulu City Council passed Bill 40, 2024. This legislation expands self-certification eligibility to include solar, energy storage, and efficiency projects for multi-family and commercial buildings, helping local food industry businesses and other enterprises pursue sustainable projects more smoothly.

HFIA supported this measure, viewing it as an essential step toward bolstering resilience and sustainability for Hawai'i's food industry by simplifying the approval process for renewable energy upgrades. Approved by Mayor Blangiardi on October 25, this initiative aims to streamline solar adoption for businesses across Honolulu.

COFFEE AND MACADAMIA NUT LABELING: NEW STANDARDS

This fall, HFIA hosted a webinar to clarify recent changes in state laws on Hawai'i-grown coffee and macadamia nut labeling. HFIA's session featured Rick Cohen from the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, along with Peter Adler, PhD, and economist Harold Goodwin, PhD, from GUILD Consulting, who conducted an economic study assessing the impact of these labeling laws on Hawai'i's coffee industry.

HFIA also distributed a guide to help members comply with the new labeling standards, providing resources and information to support local businesses as these changes take effect.

PFAS BAN: ENSURING MEMBERS ARE PREPARED FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Act 152 (2022) prohibits the manufacture, sale, distribution for sale, or use of paper food packaging that contains perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (collectively known as PFAS). Michael Burke, Environmental Health Program Manager, Food and Drug Branch, Hawai'i State Department of Health joined us to discuss the move away from PFAS and answer questions to help businesses ensure they're in compliance. The department also provided an educational flyer which HFIA distributed to members and which can be found online at www.health.hawaii.gov/food-drug/pfas-in-food-packaging/

2025 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES: BUILDING A RESILIENT, SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM

As we look to 2025, HFIA's agenda centers on food security, sustainability, and workforce development to strengthen Hawai'i's food industry.

HFIA supports policies to make food affordable and accessible for all, including:

- Funding for Da BUX and SNAP to help families in need.
- Tax relief on groceries to lower the cost of essentials.
- Support for food supply chain companies via tax and regulatory breaks to address affordability of basic goods and ensure regulations, permits and other hurdles don't impede the growth of local food resiliency efforts.
 - Collaboration on resiliency with local partners to prepare for emergencies and secure efficient distribution.
 - Reducing retail crime and advocating for a higher SNAP allotment to boost food access.
 - Supporting grants and public-private partnerships to strengthen our food supply chain.

Through these goals, HFIA's Government Relations Committee is advancing a more resilient, sustainable, and inclusive food industry for Hawai'i.



IMAGE DUSTIN KODA





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EDUCATION DRIVING THE EXCITEMENT AT THE 2025 NGA SHOW

BY GREG FERRARA, PRESIDENT AND CEO, NATIONAL GROCERS ASSOCIATION

Independent grocers are a dedicated bunch. For many, time away from the business is time wasted, and vacations are certainly not a high priority.

NGA understands that your time is precious. That's why The NGA Show is designed to help you make the most of your time, with an education-centric program built around what you need to know to move your business forward.

As I've stated many times, sometimes you need to take time away from your business to work on your business, and The NGA Show – Feb. 23-25, 2025, at the Caesars Forum Convention Center in Las Vegas – has the tools you need to fine-tune your business all year long.

From the high-powered general sessions to the laser-focused breakouts to the expo floor education theaters, The NGA Show's multi-track education lineup is designed to set grocers up for success. Retailers and industry insiders lead most sessions, while the on-floor Thought Leadership Theater features vendor-led sessions that showcase new and innovative tools, techniques, technologies and strategies to grow sales and improve operational efficiency.

This year, we're privileged to welcome Adm. William H. McRaven, retired U.S. Navy four-star admiral, celebrated author and former chancellor of the University of Texas System, as our opening keynote speaker, sponsored by The Kraft Heinz Co. McRaven commanded U.S. Special Operations Forces at every level, including Operation Desert Storm, the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, the capture of Saddam Hussein and the mission to find Osama bin Laden.

We'll have the Best Bagger Competition, with the top grocery baggers from across the country competing for the \$10,000 grand prize. The Creative Choice Awards will recognize excellence in marketing and merchandising. And the industry's future leaders will offer innovative solutions for real-life challenges facing grocers in the Student Case Study Competition.

But at its core, the NGA Show is about education, and our program is designed to keep you on the cutting edge of the most important issues facing our industry, with tracks on technology, consumer trends, talent development and retention, operations, marketing and merchandising, the economy and public policy.

Back again to open the show on Sunday, the Tech Innovation Summit will focus on accessibility and practicality, with a special emphasis on improving and empowering the customer experience. Among the companies represented onstage will be Instacart, GroceryShopp, Flashfood, Birdzi, Sifter, Recall InfoLink, Shook Kelley and King Retail Solutions.

More tech content is on the lineup over the next two days, including sessions on harnessing AI for price optimization, shifting to digital marketing, best practices for e-commerce and multiple sessions on retail media networks.

FMS Solutions returns to lead our Financial Symposium, on the heels of the latest NGA/FMS Independent Grocers Financial Study, which highlights grocers' strategic responses to moderating inflation, shifting consumer behavior and rising operational costs.

Subsequent breakouts will focus on boosting operational excellence in waste reduction, driving differentiation with private brands, and maximizing assortment for competitive advantage.

There are also sessions on talent recruitment and retention, increasing sales in rural markets, prepared foods merchandising, digital ad spending, traceability and FSMA 204 compliance, leveraging AI for personalized marketing, and solutions for driving sustainability.

These are the details available as of this writing, but we're continuing to update the agenda. For the latest education lineup, visit <https://www.thengashow.com/education-program>.

I look forward to seeing you at The NGA Show! 🌟

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NEW TOBACCO LAW

Chapter 245, Hawai'i Revised Statutes

Wholesalers, dealers, and retailers of
electronic smoking devices (ESDs) and e-liquids

This law affects your business and business taxes

“Tobacco product” definition now includes:



Electronic Smoking Devices
(ESDs, e-cigs, vapes, etc.)



E-Liquids
(vape juice, pods, etc.)

The Hawai'i State Department of Taxation requires:

Wholesalers/Dealers to:

- Obtain a tobacco license
- File a monthly tax return
- Report monthly shipments
- Pay an excise tax of 70% of wholesale pricing
- Keep records of sales, prices, and taxes payable

Retailers to:

- Obtain a retail tobacco permit (for each retail location)
- Keep complete record of tobacco product inventory

For more
information,
scan to view:



Hawai'i State Department of Health
Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Division
Tobacco Prevention & Control Section





THE 30TH ANNUAL MADE IN HAWAI'I FESTIVAL MAKES WAVES IN THE LOCAL ECONOMY

A Celebration of Local Innovation, Community, and Resilience

ALL PHOTOS BY ANTHONY CONSILLIO

Presented by Hawaiian Airlines, the 30th Annual Made in Hawai'i Festival was a resounding success, hosting over 700 vendors and drawing approximately 70,000 attendees, making it the largest event of its kind to date. This year's Festival generated an impressive \$10 million in vendor sales for Hawai'i's economy, a testament to its role as a vital economic engine for local businesses. Beyond the immediate boost in revenue, the Festival creates a powerful economic multiplier effect—one that resonates long after the event. In preparation, vendors invest in local materials, hire additional staff, and collaborate with local businesses on booth design and setup. Post-Festival, these vendors reinvest in their operations, expanding their production, rebuilding inventory, and supporting the state's economic growth year-round.

A LEGACY OF STRENGTHENING LOCAL INDUSTRIES

The Made in Hawai'i Festival was launched three decades ago during a period of economic challenge, spearheaded by Representative David Morihiro of Maui and other leaders committed to uplifting local agriculture and manufacturing. The event was en-

visioned as a platform to highlight Hawai'i's unique products and the resilience of its people. Today, every product sold at the Festival must, by law, be at least 51% value-added in Hawai'i, ensuring that the Festival's economic impact extends statewide. Each purchase reinforces local businesses, supporting an ecosystem where the value of Hawai'i-made goods continues to circulate and sustain the local economy.

BUILDING A FOUNDATION OF SUPPORT WITH OUR VALUED SPONSORS

The Made in Hawai'i Festival's positive impact is made possible through the support and commitment of our incredible sponsors. Their contributions are more than financial; these organizations are dedicated to advancing local agriculture, manufacturing, and business growth. As they empower local entrepreneurs, they play a crucial role in building a resilient economy.

HAWAIIAN AIRLINES - CONNECTING HAWAI'I AND THE WORLD

Hawaiian Airlines has been a steadfast supporter of kama'āina businesses for nearly 95 years. The airline not only brings visitors to experience authentic Hawai'i but also

features island-made products onboard, showcasing local entrepreneurs to a global audience. As the Festival's Official Airline sponsor since 2019, Hawaiian Airlines has provided vital cargo services, ensuring seamless transport between islands—a critical service for many exhibitors.

CENTRAL PACIFIC BANK - SUPPORTING LOCAL PROSPERITY

With a 70-year legacy, Central Pacific Bank (CPB) believes in the importance of a diverse economy for the well-being of Hawai'i's communities. As the Festival's Official Bank Sponsor, CPB enables local businesses to thrive by offering crucial financial resources to vendors. Many vendors could not participate without CPB's support, and the bank's innovative programs, such as WE by Rising Tide for women business owners, empower local entrepreneurs to expand their reach.

MAHI PONO - CULTIVATING SUSTAINABILITY AND FOOD SECURITY

As the Official Farm Sponsor, Mahi Pono embodies the Festival's commitment to local agriculture, sustainability, and food security. Mahi Pono's dedication to sustainable farming, responsible resource use, and high-quality agricultural jobs reinforces Hawai'i's path to a resilient, food-secure future. Their work makes it possible for local vendors to offer products created with fresh, locally-grown ingredients.

HAWAI'I TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION - ENABLING LOCAL INNOVATION

Through its INNOVATE Hawai'i program, HTDC supports Hawai'i-based manufacturers, offering training, consulting, industry-focused collaboration, and grants. Many Festival vendors leverage HTDC's resources to grow their businesses and thrive in competitive markets. Throughout the Festival and beyond, HTDC connects vendors with tools to ensure their continued success.

A GROWING LEGACY OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND LOCAL PRIDE

Each year, the Made in Hawai'i Festival's impact reaches new heights. Every ticket purchased, every product sold, and every interaction contributes to Hawai'i's economy and celebrates the value of the Made in Hawai'i brand. This year's record-breaking Festival would not have been possible without the dedication of our talented vendors, enthusiastic attendees, and generous sponsors. To all who have supported the Made in Hawai'i Festival in its 30-year journey—mahalo nui loa. You are the heart of this incredible celebration of Hawai'i's spirit and resilience. ❀





THE IMPORTANCE OF ONSITE ENERGY FOR HAWAII'S FOOD AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRY: DRIVING SAVINGS, RESILIENCE, AND SUSTAINABILITY

BY JONATHAN WHELAN
DIRECTOR, U.S. DOE WESTERN ONSITE ENERGY TAP

Onsite energy solutions are increasingly critical for Hawaii's food and beverage industry, providing unique advantages that enhance operational efficiency, reduce costs, and contribute to sustainability goals. For businesses in this sector—whether food processors, manufacturers, or distributors—onsite energy generation and storage, such as solar photovoltaics, wind, geothermal, and battery storage, offer a pathway to overcoming challenges related to high energy costs and grid reliability.

COST SAVINGS

In Hawaii, where average energy prices are the highest in the nation, onsite energy solutions can offer food and beverage businesses a significant opportunity to reduce their utility bills. This is especially important for energy-intensive and operationally prioritized activities such as refrigeration, processing, and storage. Additionally, businesses with excess electricity generation often sell surplus power back to the grid, unlocking new revenue streams and further lowering operational costs.

RESILIENCE

Hawaii's geographic isolation increases the

risk of supply chain disruptions and grid outages, making resilience a top priority for the food and beverage industry. Properly designed onsite energy systems can provide a reliable backup power source in the event of grid failures, ensuring continuous operations and avoiding spoilage of perishable goods. This capacity to maintain business continuity during emergencies can save companies from significant financial losses and help them better serve their customers.

SUSTAINABILITY

Hawaii's food and beverage industry, faces growing pressure to adopt sustainable practices. Onsite energy generation supports Hawaii's food and beverage industry's efforts to reduce its environmental footprint by increasing efficiency and lowering carbon emissions. Aligning with sustainability initiatives not only protects Hawaii's natural environment but also helps companies enhance their brand images and meet regulatory requirements for energy use and emissions.

COMMUNITY AND INNOVATION

Onsite energy projects in Hawaii's food and beverage sector also open avenues for community engagement through coopera-



tive ownership models and educational initiatives, reinforcing local ties and promoting economic resilience. Investing in onsite energy not only benefits individual companies but also drives innovation in renewable energy and storage, positioning Hawaii's food and beverage industry as a leader in the clean energy transition and supporting long-term resilient infrastructure growth.

Onsite energy is a game changer for Hawaii's food and beverage industry. It brings financial savings, enhances operational resilience, fosters sustainability, and supports the broader community, making onsite energy a vital investment for the islands.

If you are interested in learning about no-cost technical assistance, contact the U.S. Department of Energy's Western Onsite Energy Technical Assistance Partnership (TAP). We can offer a multi-technology screening for clean onsite generation and storage technologies at your site. ❄️

For more information, please contact us at jonathan.whelan@optonyusa.com or call 415-450-7032

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operations worldwide. JPMorgan Chase had \$4.1 trillion in assets and \$341 billion in stockholders' equity as of June 30, 2024. The Firm is a leader in investment banking, financial services for consumers and small businesses, commercial banking, financial transaction processing and asset management. Under the J.P. Morgan and Chase brands, the Firm serves millions of customers in the U.S., and many of the world's most prominent corporate, institutional and government clients globally. Information about JPMorgan Chase & Co. is available at www.jpmorganchase.com



OLOMANA LOOMIS

Olomana Loomis ISC has been helping small businesses and large corporations grow since 1996. As an award-winning agency, we specialize in sales-driven marketing, data-centric marketing solutions and eye-catching creative that drive tangible results. We are uniquely positioned to help local business expand globally through our exclusive network of provid-

ers in APAC, Europe and North America. By focusing on storytelling and innovative strategies, we help elevate your brand, increase market share, and build lasting customer loyalty in an ever-evolving digital landscape. Olomana Loomis is accredited by the Better Business Bureau and a member in good standing of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii.

WAI MELI® ARTISANAL RAW HONEY

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Big Island Moonbow Farms is a small-scale beekeeping venture located on Hawai'i Island. Inspired by the plight of the honeybee in Hawai'i and worldwide, we have been caring for honeybees in an organic fashion since 2011.

While our primary focus is the health and well being of our bees, our diverse apary locations allow us to capture several of the unique nectar sources our island has to offer. With immense passion, and the combined efforts of our family and our bees, we are pleased to provide Wai Meli, an array of small harvest, artisanal, raw honeys.

MEMBER NEWS



Photo Credit: Ryan Gobuty

CPB Opens Innovative New Branch in Kahului

"We are proud to unveil our beautiful new Kahului Branch, which stands as a testament to our commitment to the Maui community," said Central Pacific Bank Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer Arnold Martines. "This state-of-the-art, multimillion-dollar facility represents a significant investment in the island. Our vision was to create a building that offered a sense of place, was environmentally sensitive, while providing functionality and convenience for our customers. I am confident our new branch will be a valuable asset for the community for many years to come."

This nearly 10,000-square-foot, two-sto-

ry branch offers a full range of financial services, from personal and business banking to residential, wealth, and investment support. The branch also introduces Tidepools, a modern lobby with a wi-fi connected conference room, available to the public for community and business meetings. For added convenience, the branch offers a 24-hour drive-thru ATM and a variety of essential services, including currency exchange, notary, and more.

The new branch also boasts sustainability features including a photovoltaic system, storm water retention capabilities and ecofriendly and recycled interior finishes. The parking lot will funnel additional storm water to landscaped areas. In the event of a power outage the building can be powered by a backup generator, and it is equipped with a backup satellite system to help maintain continuity of critical operations during extended outages.



KTA Buys K. Takata Store

Puna Plantation Hawaii Ltd., the parent company of KTA Super Stores recently fi-

nanced the purchase of K. Takata Store. The North Kohala business will retain the name and brand K. Takata Store for continuity. For those familiar with the two family owned business the sale is a logical and positive next step now that the current owners Rayton and Jerry Takata are ready to retire. Both K. Takata and KTA Super Stores are independent grocers that have been serving their communities on the Big Island for over a century, both are HFIA Members, and since 2010 KTA has been sharing shipping container space with K. Takata Store. Toby Taniguchi, President and CEO, KTA Super Stores said of the sale, "It's an honor for us to carry forward the Takatas' legacy of service and commitment to their community."



Coca-Cola Besties

Introducing the new Coca-Cola® Zero Sugar OREO™ Limited Edition Creations®, a delicious duo that to help you find a new friend with all the flavor. Taste it while it last!

THE SPIRIT OF THE HOLIDAYS

Toast the season with unique flavors and celebratory spirits from HFIA Beverage Members Southern Glaziers Wine and Spirits, Island Distributing, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, a Subsidiary of the Odom Corp.



Coca-Cola is inviting fans around the world to create and share "Real Magic" this holiday season by combining iconic brand assets like its cherished depictions of Santa Claus, created by Haddon Sundblom in 1931, and the beloved Coca-Cola Caravan trucks and polar bears with the power of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology.

Consumers can visit [CreateRealMagic.com](https://createrrealmagic.com) to generate digital greeting cards by reimagining iconic Coca-Cola images and characters through the creative prism of AI tools. Personalized cards can be downloaded, emailed to family and friends, or posted to social media. Fans also can save online galleries and browse fellow creators' artwork.



Indulge in a royal blend of salty & sweet with Crown Royal Salted Caramel. Enjoy this limited edition flavor while you can, neat or in a decadent cocktail.



Traditions that transcend time deserve taste that celebrates it. Smirnoff, Crown Royal and Baileys to celebrate all your holiday needs.



The new holiday tradition. Enjoy our classic lemon-lime taste mixed with warm spices and tart cranberry. All-natural and caffeine-free.



In 1810, Munich threw a party so great that "Oktoberfest" became an annual 16-day autumn celebration of beer. Samuel Adams' rich, roasty Märzen is a pröst to fall. Its deep amber color, mild pleasant sweetness, and light hop character is a hearty (but not heavy) signal to make the most of the crisper days ahead. Like fall, it's here for a limited-time.

Food Pairings:

It's a brats, roasted chicken, sauerkraut, strudel, big ol pretzels kind of beer.



Freshly picked hops, rushed from farm to brewery, fill Celebration IPA with powerful citrus and pine flavors. When you're on the slopes with friends or building a backyard campfire for the fam, you need a beer as fresh as fallen snow. Pure hops, balanced with rich caramel malt, make this a celebration in every sip.



Featuring pumpkin, peppermint, ginger, and spice RNDC's favorite holiday recipes have something for everyone.

HOT BUTTERED PUMPKIN

1 TBSP unsalted butter
0.75 oz. Reàl Pumpkin Syrup
1 oz. Koloa Kaua'i Spice Rum
1 oz. Jack Daniel's Bonded Whiskey
Boiling Water

Method: Build in Irish Coffee Mug, fill with very hot water and whisk ingredients together.

Glass: Hot Coffee Mug

Garnish: Star anise & orange peel studded with cloves, freshly grated nutmeg

PEPPERMINT ESPRESSO MARTINI

0.5 oz. Bols Peppermint Schnapps
1 oz. Strongly-brewed Cold Brew or Espresso
1 oz. Koloa Coffee Rum
1 oz. Tito's Vodka

Method: Shake & strain.

Glassware: Coupe

Garnish: Smoked salt, coffee beans, or mini candy cane

NICE SPICE MULE

0.5 oz. Fresh Lime Juice
1 oz. Milagro Reposado Tequila
1 oz. Geijer CA Glogg
2-3 oz. Q Mixers Hibiscus Ginger Beer

Method: Build in mule mug or Collins

Glassware: Mule mug or Collins

Garnish: Slightly scorched Rosemary sprig



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Local Voices Shape a Sustainable Future

BY SHARON HURD, CHAIR, HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

In a bold move to revitalize agriculture in Hawai'i, the state Department of Agriculture is planting the seeds of change — but change rooted in priorities identified by the islands' agriculture community. With the 2025 legislative session only a month away, the department is aiming to cultivate economic growth, safeguard agricultural investments, and harvest a sustainable future for Hawai'i's diverse agricultural landscape.

This isn't your typical top-down approach. Throughout 2024, the Department of Agriculture partnered with the County of Hawai'i and other stakeholders to gather insights from the agriculture industry. The group held meetings across all four counties and provided an online questionnaire, which resulted in nearly 550 surveys completed.

The survey asked producers to identify the top issues that impacted their economic viability. Equipped with the resulting data, the Department of Agriculture worked to identify the top issues facing the agriculture industry. Out of the 29 total areas identified, here are the concerns that were most mentioned:

- Invasive Species and Pest Management
- Labor
- Equipment Costs
- Plant Diseases
- Workforce Housing Availability
- Access to Capital
- Access to Land
- Skilled Labor Availability
- Water Infrastructure
- Access to Value-Added Processing Infrastructure
- Soil Quality
- Access to Quality/Affordable Farm Inputs

- Agricultural Theft
- Transportation Costs

With the data in hand, the Department of Agriculture is now looking at how policy can provide solutions, which issues should be addressed in the short-term, and which ones are more extensive that require other agencies and partners' support.

Also emerging from this collaborative effort was an ambitious call-to-action — "Go B.I.G. on Agriculture" — urging consumers, manufacturers, retailers and policy makers



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

SOWING THE FUTURE



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

to Buy, Invest, and Grow Hawai'i's agricultural future:

- **Buy Local Products:** Increase the demand for local agricultural products to reduce the state's reliance on imports, enhance market presence, and stimulate economic activity. The idea is to encourage consumers and state entities to prioritize locally sourced products, creating a self-sustaining market that not only benefits local farmers but also strengthens Hawai'i's overall food security and economy.
- **Invest in Agriculture's Development:** This emphasizes investment in infrastructure, financial mechanisms, and capacity-building to address barriers like rising land and water costs, labor shortages, workforce housing and biosecurity challenges. The Department seeks to secure resources for developing sustainable systems, boosting economic returns for both the state and agricultural producers.
- **Grow Agriculture's Scale and Economic Impact:** Enhance the capacity, efficiency, and scale of agricultural operations to meet consumer demand and generate a solid return on investments. By focusing on strategic growth, this aims to enable profitability and long-term sustainability within the sector.

A TWO-PRONGED APPROACH FOR TRANSFORMATION

The "Go B.I.G. on Agriculture" initiative is part of a broader strategy to create a resilient agricultural system that honors Hawai'i's cultural heritage. The state Department of Agriculture has adopted a two-pronged approach: short-term actions for immediate challenges and a long-term vision to address complex issues in 2025 and beyond. This approach aims to propel the industry forward, with a particular focus on building economic resilience, enhancing local food production, and supporting the sustainability of Hawai'i's agricultural sector.

BE PART OF THE CONVERSATION

A way for the agriculture industry to also "Go B.I.G." is to engage with the process and provide feedback. With the 2025 Hawai'i State Legislative session around the corner, the hearings will be a great time for the stakeholders to share their concerns with lawmakers. The Department of Agriculture is working on several bills that would address a few of the areas identified from the surveys. The department will send out updates before and throughout the session, so stay tuned. Let's all "Go B.I.G. on Agriculture" to help realize the vision of a self-sustaining and prosperous future for agriculture in Hawai'i. ❀



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A PASSION FOR LILIKOI

BY ALEXIS CHAPMAN



There is something about lilikoi, the tang, the sweetness, and that unmistakable flavor that always leaves you wanting a little more. Like pineapple, lilikoi is a non-native species that has become deeply rooted in Hawai'i cuisine. Unlike pineapple, lilikoi is not grown in large quantities in Hawai'i these days. This can pose a challenge for lovers of lilikoi. Luckily, several local food companies that are passionate about this unique fruit continue to find ways to make sure there is plenty of lilikoi flavor to go around.

LILIKOI COMES TO HAWAII

Lilikoi is known as passion fruit in English, and maracuya in Spanish and Portuguese. Like pineapple it's native to Brazil and other parts of South America but it took a roundabout route to Hawaii. The seeds of the plant were first brought to the islands in the 1880's from Australia and it was first planted in Lilikoi Gulch on Maui which became the plant's name in Hawaiian. With its beautiful and exotic flowers and flavorful fruits, lilikoi plants soon became popular additions to local home gardens. People often think of lilikoi as being either purple or golden, but there are almost 20 different types currently grown in Hawai'i. The viny plant can thrive in home gardens where it receives lots of attention and water, and even become an invasive pest in certain parts of the islands where conditions are just right.

Commercial lilikoi cultivation did take place in Hawaii and reached a peak in the 1960's with several hundred acres in com-

mercial cultivation around the state. However, large scale growing did not last. Lilikoi tends to be water intensive, wind intolerant, and some varieties don't cope well with direct tropical sun. Creating ideal growing conditions in Hawai'i's current agricultural areas takes work and resources, and at the moment few farmers choose to prioritize lilikoi over other more predictable and profitable crops. For those that want to manufacture locally with this unique fruit, that often means importing, using a mix of local and imported, or manufacturing only when there is enough fruit available.



Children playing the game of Pogs

THE ORIGINAL: POG

One of the first commercially manufactured products with lilikoi in Hawai'i was of course, POG. Haleakala Dairy on Maui began making a mix of Passion Fruit, Orange, and Guava juic-

es in the 1970's and gave it a catchy name for the initials of the fruits. The drink was immediately a hit, especially with local kids. Soon the game they played with their POG bottle caps caught on nationally with some caps becoming valuable collectibles. POG the drink has caught on too and is now a nationally and internationally known taste of Hawai'i.

Haleakala Dairy was eventually bought by Meadow Gold and they still make POG locally at their Hilo Plant. Kimia Sadeghi, Business Development Manager for Meadow Gold, talked about the desire to have access to more locally grown lilikoi and other produce. "It is in fact very difficult to source local lilikoi. Especially because we need to use a consistent supply in bulk for our products, it makes it tougher. We also have that challenge with other local fruit juices and purees as well. If we had consistent access to local lilikoi I'd love to use it in our products!"

100 FLAVORS OF LILIKOI FROM MAUI FRUIT JEWELS

Lin Ter-Horst co-owner of Maui Fruit Jewels is a trained pastry chef who has lived all over the world from Shanghai to New York to London. She knows that the appeal of lilikoi is universal and believes the Chinese name describes it best, "They call this fruit "BAI XIANG GUO" which is translates to "Hundred-Flavor Fruit", meaning this fruit contains flavors and notes from all other fruits." Maui Fruit Jewels captures these 100 flavors in a range of distinctive products including 100% lilikoi puree, lilikoi and POG fruit pastes, lil-

PHOTO COURTESY WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



PHOTO COURTESY MAUI FRUIT JEWELS



PHOTO COURTESY LIKIKOI LEHUA

Left: Lilikois are rinsed in the bath of a production line at Maui Fruit Jewels; Right: Lilikoi Butter (Passion Fruit Butter) from Liko Lehua

ikoil fruit jellies, and lilikoi short breads.

When Maui Fruit Jewels began making their lilikoi products the biggest obstacle initially was the need to process lilikoi by hand. Now, with mechanized processing capabilities, sourcing enough lilikoi to meet their demand has become the bigger challenge. They aggregate lilikoi from a number of small producers until they have at least 1500lbs and up to 3000lbs to process and turn into their value-added products. In previous years they used exclusively Maui grown lilikoi, but lately they are bringing in Big Island grown fruit as well. Adequate water supply is critical for growing big juicy lilikoi and the drought in Maui has hit lilikoi production hard.

Still, Lin is optimistic, scarcity of lilikoi led to a lack of production capacity in the past, but the cycle can be reversed. As production increases there is a greater demand which incentivizes more cultivation. She hopes that in the future they can secure a consistent supply which will allow them to scale up their local manufacturing operation and make even more lilikoi products.

LILIKOI FARM TO TABLE AND JAR WITH LIKO LEHUA

Liko Lehua is the parent company of Liko Lehua Cafe, Liko Lehua Butter, and Liko Lehua at the Farm, a ten-acre farm in 'Ōla'a on Hawai'i Island where they grow produce to create their value-added products. Lilikoi butter is a customer favorite, and they feature lilikoi in a wide range of menu items at the cafe, from burgers to milkshakes, hand-shaken lemonade, and soft serve ice cream.

Even growing their own supply of lilikoi on the farm, Liko Lehua faces challenges as a value-added producer working with locally grown products. Growing high in elevation near Volcano has many advantages, but it means a late and short growing season for lilikoi. This year the lilikoi vines didn't fruit

until September at the farm. When there is not enough lilikoi to meet production demand they have to ship in lilikoi from the mainland, like many Hawai'i producers.



Despite the challenges of sourcing and producing with lilikoi the fruit still holds a special place in the heart of those that love it enough to manufacture with it. Dawn Kanealii-Kleinfielder, Liko Lehua's owner described the deep connection it has for many Hawai'i residents, "Lilikoi is a fruit that's entwined

within our DNA in Hawai'i. I think every keiki growing up has a memory of lilikoi. Whether it's fresh off the vine, shave ice, or maybe you had pancakes covered in Lilikoi Butter over Sunday morning breakfast at Tutu's house. There is something about the way a tart lilikoi fruit catches and stimulates all those taste buds on your palette. We love it in the cafe because it's refreshing, light and helps evoke those feel-good memories from growing up as a keiki in Hawai'i." ❀

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PHOTO COURTESY LIKO LEHUA

REFLECTIONS AND INSIGHTS FROM HFIA'S SECOND ANNUAL BOARD RETREAT

BY LAUREN ZIRBEL

This October, HFIA hosted its Second Annual Board Retreat, a pivotal time for us to pause, reflect, and envision what's next. With Jeff Berlin leading our sessions, we gathered actionable insights and mapped a future built on growth and resilience.

FOOD AFFORDABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

2024 was a landmark legislative year for HFIA, with victories for programs like DA BUX and SUN Bucks, tackling food insecurity and injecting Federal funds into Hawai'i's food systems. We're doubling down, working to expand these initiatives and secure new funding to keep food affordable and accessible for all.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Finding and retaining talent remains a core challenge. HFIA is teaming up with local schools and partners to promote careers in food, and we're excited to explore new collaborations to bolster our industry's workforce.

BUILDING INDUSTRY CONNECTIONS

For decades, HFIA has been the linchpin of Hawai'i's food community. Our network is a true 'ohana, with family businesses and industry leaders coming together to create lasting connections. We're proud to be the central hub for these vital relationships.



SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

Sustainability isn't just a goal; it's our commitment. From boosting local agriculture to supporting local manufacturing, we're dedicated to building a food industry that's both resilient and sustainable.

HFIA's vision for a strong, sustainable, and resilient food industry wouldn't be possible without our members. To our Board, Committee Members, and each HFIA member—your dedication drives us forward. Together, our progress is your success.

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