



**THE
FOOD BASKET**
HAWAI'I ISLAND'S FOOD BANK



**2020
Annual
Report**

**Ending hunger on
Hawai'i Island**

Board of Directors

Ann Ebesuno (Chair)
Field Support Specialist,
Hawai'i Government
Employees Association

Dennis Lin (Treasurer)
Project Manager - Hale
Plus Modular Homes,
HPM Building Supply

Stephen Ueda
CEO and President,
Suisan

Mark Krzyzanowski
MK Planning LLC, Owner

Warren Lee (Vice Chair)
CEO, Hu Honua
Bioenergy LLC

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Cooperative Extension
Faculty University of
Hawai'i Manoa, Retired

Jasmine Kiernan
West Hawaii Community
Health Center, Retired

Samantha Collins
Senior Sales Executive
at the Waikoloa Beach
Marriott Resort & Spa

Our Staff

Administration

Kristin Frost Albrecht
Executive Director

Matt Crosson
Director of Finance

Elisa Derr
Accountant

Duryn Izumo
Donor Relations and
Accounting Specialist

Mercy Nakayama
Special Projects Manager

Leelen Park
Emergency Response and
Public Relations Manager

Tisha Lunsford
Administrative Assistant

Hilo Warehouse

Sarah Hamakawa
Operations Manager

Sara Kritikos
Warehouse Manager

Alanna Bumatay
Compliance and Outreach
Specialist

**Luis (Daniel) Torres-
Ramos**
Warehouse Lead

Danette Ayala
Administrative & Point-of-
Sale Specialist

Norberto (Papo) Ramos
Warehouse Associate &
Driver

Gavin Ojeda
Warehouse Associate &
Driver

Kona Warehouse

Marshall Akamu
Operations Manager

David Ha'alilio Jr.
Warehouse Manager

Todd Gifford
Warehouse
Associate & Driver

Alex Cosme
Driver & Point-of-Sale
Specialist

Healthy Food Access Initiatives

Chelsea Takahashi
Healthy Food Access
Initiatives Director

Melissa Nagatsuka
DA BUX Data and
Evaluation Analyst

Alex Haban
DA BOX Program Manager

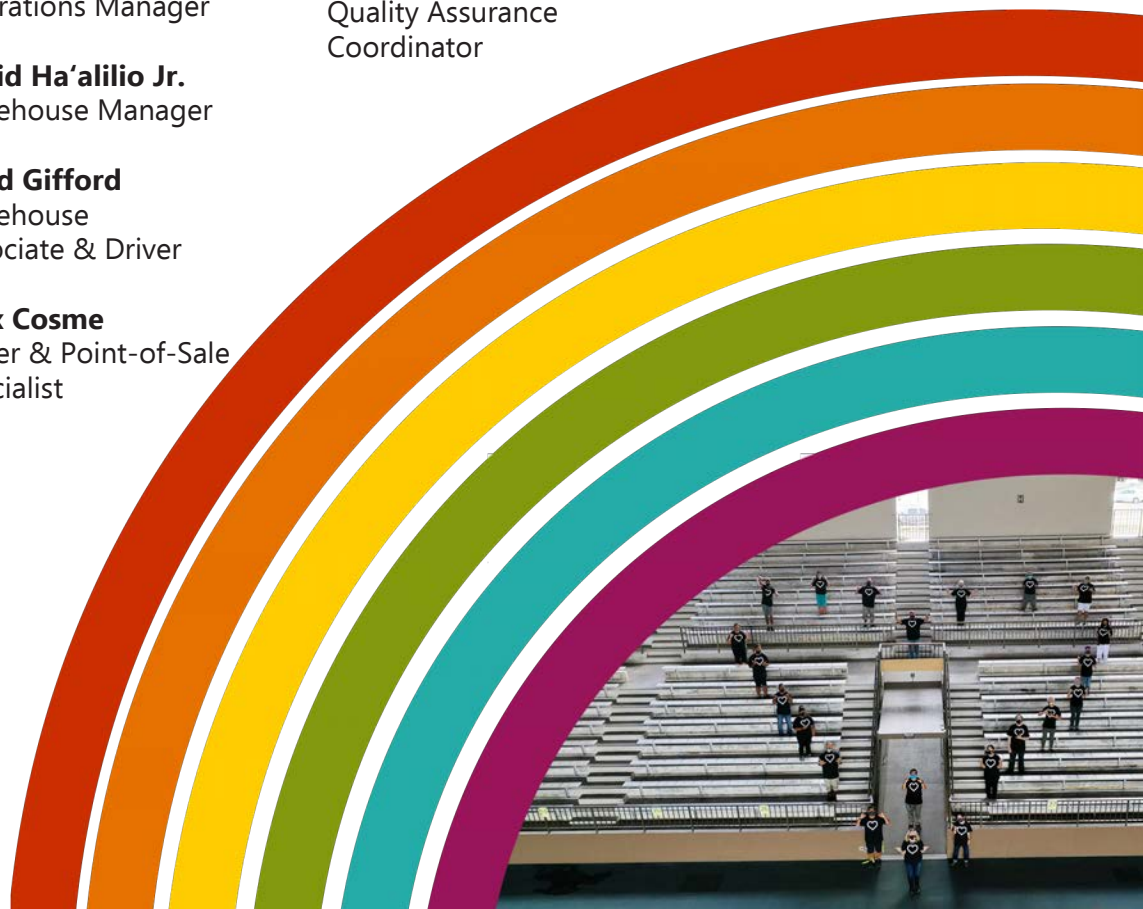
Zoe Banfield
Quality Assurance
Coordinator

Justin Kettleman
Produce Delivery Coordinator

SNAP Outreach

Kat Bumatay
East Hawai'i SNAP Outreach
Specialist

Duane Pajimola
West Hawai'i SNAP Outreach
Specialist





A Message from our Executive Director and Board Chair



A Year of Extraordinary Challenges and Generosity

The first stay-at-home order issued on March 25, 2020, brought tourism to a standstill, forced non-essential businesses to shut down, caused unprecedented layoffs, and the worst food insecurity our island has ever experienced. The hardships caused in 2020 by the severe economic downturn brought incredible challenges, but our community's generosity to make sure no one went hungry, was truly extraordinary.

The coronavirus pandemic's effect on our economy was immediate. An astounding number of Hawai'i Island households suddenly lacked the means to put food on their tables, with a record number of residents finding themselves newly unemployed. Many families quickly drained their savings accounts with mortgage, car, and utility payments, then found themselves faced with the difficult decision of whether to pay for health coverage and essential prescriptions, or buy food to feed the family. For many, they could not have imagined they would ever be joining the long line of cars at a drive-through community food distribution because there was no other viable option.

At the initial onset of the pandemic, The Food Basket, Hawai'i Island's Food Bank quickly pivoted to innovate ways to meet the hugely expanded need in every district of the County. We distributed a record amount of food in partnership with our island network of over one hundred agencies and in cooperation with the County of Hawai'i, the National Guard and a multitude of nonprofit, government, and private entities. Our Hawai'i Island community rose to the daunting challenges brought on by the pandemic to work together to ensure that **no one goes hungry**. Over the past year, YOU and so many others, demonstrated your commitment to The Food Basket's mission to "end hunger" through an unprecedented outpouring of kindness, empathy, and love for your neighbors, friends, and families in need. Our long list of supporters is a testament to the strong compassionate spirit that rallied to feed thousands of vulnerable residents. Every donation, every gift, made a difference!

Our warmest mahalo goes out to each and every one of you, for the care and concern you have extended.

With gratitude and appreciation,

Ann and Kristin



Our COVID-19 Response

a year like no other... by March of 2020, the world had drastically changed. The coronavirus (COVID-19) had completely ravaged our way of life, forcing many of us into isolation, unemployment, and instilling **panic and fear** of our fellowman. Through all this turmoil, The Food Basket's responsibility to the residents of Hawai'i Island did not waver. We continued to prioritize the good health and well-being of Hawaii's people, focusing on providing ample nutrition and food security island-wide in the safest and most efficient ways possible. With COVID-19 closing the doors to many of our pantries and soup kitchens, it forced us to create innovative ways to help make sure that people were able to provide food for their families. One of these was our direct service program, 'Ohana Food Drops (OFDs), designed to provide emergency food distribution to mass numbers of people, while adhering to the necessary pandemic safety guidelines. This included a contactless, drive-through format at designated County of Hawai'i Parks and Recreation sites, schools and churches.

By June 2020, we were holding **fifteen OFDs** at locations across the island, enabling families and individuals to easily access food in their communities in all nine districts. In an outpouring of generosity and goodwill, individual donors, businesses, government, and foundations supplied the necessary funding for the program's food, staffing, transport, storage, and ongoing safety needs. This included the establishment of a ten person OFD safety team, comprised of individuals who were currently out of work in the film and entertainment industry, to deliver logistic services and safe traffic operations to keep the OFDs running smoothly.

In 2020, the OFD's went from serving 12,000 people in March to consistently serving over **20,000 each month**. In addition to the OFD Safety Team, major logistical support was also provided by the County of Hawai'i, Sheriff's Department, The National Guard and Police Department.

Number of 'Ohana Food Drops Held

102

Individuals Served

176,714

Number of Families Served

42,455





DA BUX™ DOUBLE UP FOOD BUCKS

“DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks” is a statewide program providing food access to low-income households who receive federal food dollars from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp program). DA BUX is administered by The Food Basket in partnership with the Hawai’i Good Food Alliance.

How it works

Participating DA BUX retailers discount their Hawai’i grown produce by 50% for customers paying with SNAP food dollars. The Food Basket uses DA BUX program funds to reimburse the retailer for their issued discounts to cover the full retail cost of sold produce. These discounts result in increased purchasing of local produce by low-income households, as well as the retailers’ increased purchasing from local farms.

Over \$978,000 of incentive discounts

DA BUX launched in 2017 as pilot project on the Big Island with four farmers markets and two KTA Super Stores locations. As of mid-March 2021, DA BUX discounts are offered at 80 DA BUX retail locations statewide. In 2020, DA BUX retailers issued over \$978,000 of incentive discounts, including discounts issued for a limited time on locally sourced ground beef, eggs, and seafood using CARES Act funds.

167% increase in revenue from SNAP purchases of local produce

The program is providing a critical benefit for families and farmers suffering financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As of the

end of 2020, 77% of SNAP households in the state—41,939 households—lived within normal shopping distance from a DA BUX retail location, according to a study conducted by Dr. Vanessa Buchthal of UH Manoa’s Office of Public Health Studies. Widespread DA BUX accessibility is encouraging SNAP recipients to shop at participating retailers and to increase their purchase of local fruits and vegetables. In an analysis of thirty participating grocery stores, these stores on average experienced a 167% increase in revenue from SNAP purchases of local produce. Of the seven grocery stores that were able to track unique SNAP customers, on average, they experienced a 165% increase in unique SNAP customers purchasing local produce.

Benefits

Private sector, government, and non-profit alike are recognizing the benefits of the DA BUX program for families, farmers, and the local economy. SNAP households can buy more locally produced food, local farmers can earn more income, and more federal SNAP dollars can stimulate growth in our food and agriculture industry—a triple win for Hawai’i!



Feeding people in more ways than one

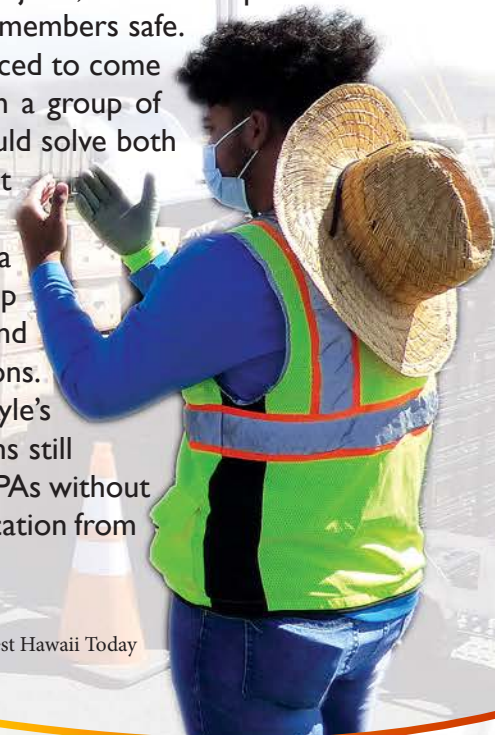
'Ohana Food Drop Safety Team

From May through early June, The Food Basket was fortunate to have the support and expertise of the Hawai'i Sheriff's Department to assist with traffic at our 'Ohana Food Drops (OFDs) in communities across the 4028 square miles of our island. Before that, our staff struggled to manage the high volume of vehicles at our distribution sites. With these events causing massive slowdowns and traffic jams, the sheriff's professional assistance kept the OFD participants, staff, volunteers, and other community members safe.

When in July, the sheriffs were called back to their regular posts, we were forced to come up with an alternative plan for traffic safety. One of the ideas was to form a group of unemployed gig workers to serve as traffic and safety coordinators. This would solve both our ongoing traffic issues and logistical concerns as well as provide employment to out-of-work individuals.

By August, The Food Basket had secured funding to support this idea with a serendipitous grant, and the OFD Safety Team was established. Since the group was started, they have been a key element in the success of our OFDs and critical to traffic safety and the ongoing logistics needed at our distributions. The OFD Safety team, managed by Kyle Keli'i Douglas, was started through Kyle's network of production assistants (PAs). With many of the COVID restrictions still in place, television and moving productions were halted, leaving many of these PAs without employment. The Food Basket is eternally grateful for the hard work and dedication from this team, we couldn't have done it without them!

Photo provided by Chelsea Jensen, West Hawaii Today



Partnership with Local Restaurants

In June, The Food Basket received funding through the County of Hawaii's Community Development Block Grant which allowed us to be able to contract ready-to-eat meals from local restaurants to be distributed at our OFDs. This is a note from Casey Halpern, Executive Chef of Café Pesto:

This is Bryson Moses, he is a married father of three, Hilo High Graduate, and a fifteen year employee of Café Pesto, Hilo. His youngest child is just two and was born right before COVID hit. Initially this young man was laid off, but through our partnership with The Food Basket we were able to keep him along with several other employees since this pandemic started. His talent, attention to detail, and efficient approach have helped make this project the success that it is.

Dave Palmer's (Owner) \$1,000,000 investment in Café Pesto's infrastructure in 2016, besides supporting local construction jobs, perfectly prepared our facilities to provide bulk food production in a safe and healthy environment. In the past he has questioned the rationale of spending that kind of money, but the positive impact this project has had on the community, and the financial support it has provided us and our vendors is undeniable.

As a company we will be forever grateful for the opportunity afforded to us by this partnership. Punahoa Springs was unearthed from the fire of service and self sacrifice, attributes that will continue as Café Pesto navigates the future.

- Casey Halpern - Executive Chef, Café Pesto



2020 in numbers

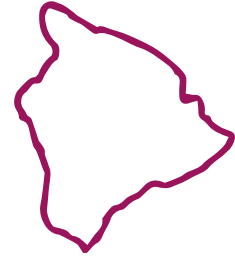
Hunger on Hawai'i Island



Over **121,592** Unemployment Insurance Claims were filed over the course of the year



83% of keiki on Hawai'i Island receive free or reduce lunch

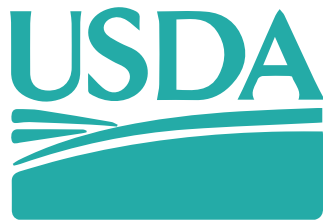


The Food Basket's service area: Hawai'i County spans **4,028** square miles

We work to feed our community



4,649,599 pounds of food distributed
(compared to 2,154,910 lbs in 2019)



2,420,537 pounds of food received from USDA
(compared to 644,119 lbs in 2019)



Over 575,925 people served through partner agencies and emergency distributions
(compared to 383,038 in 2019)

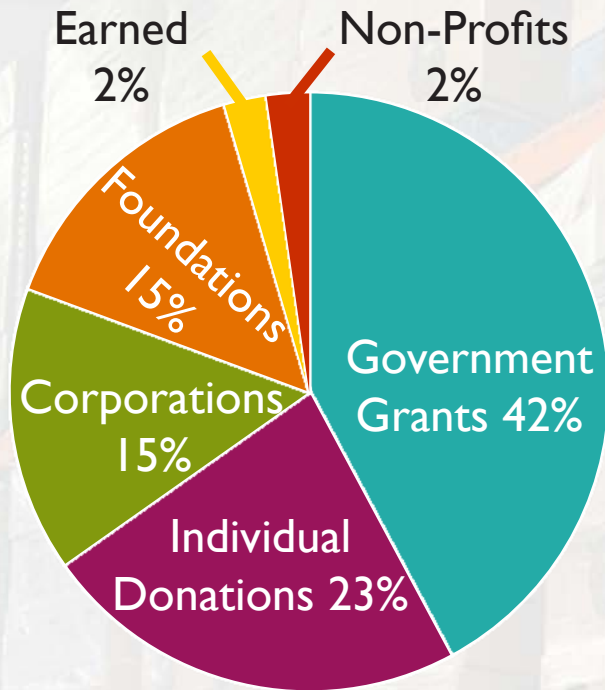


Over 104,726 families received food assistance

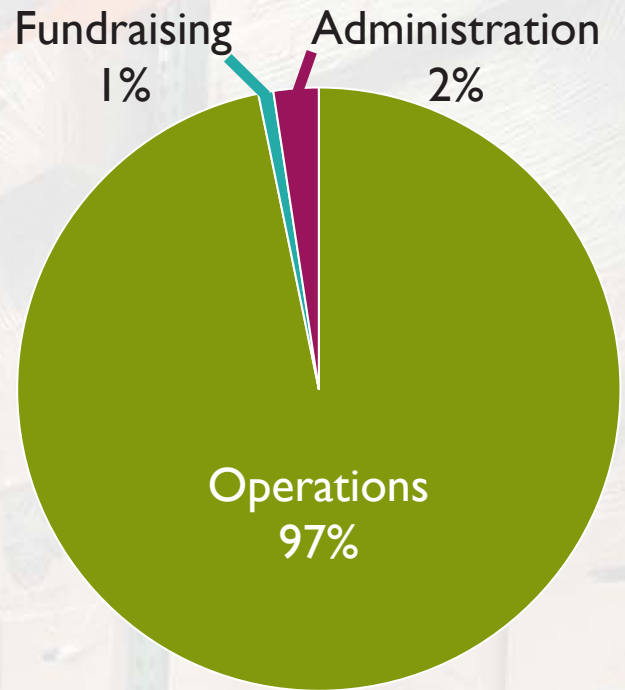


Financials

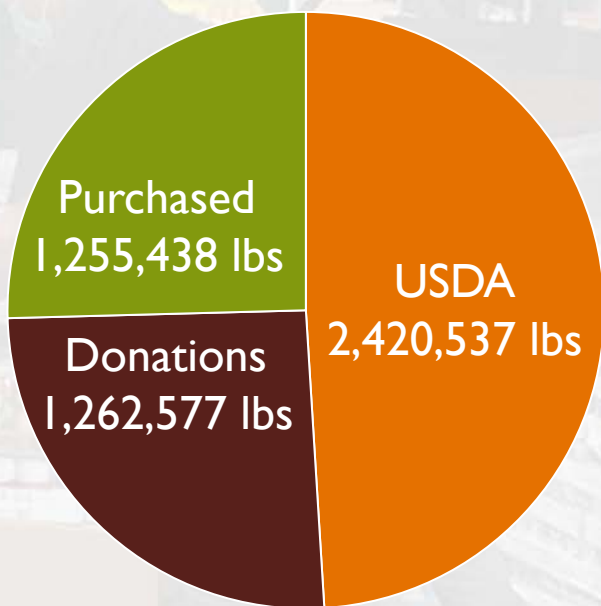
Where Our Funding Comes From



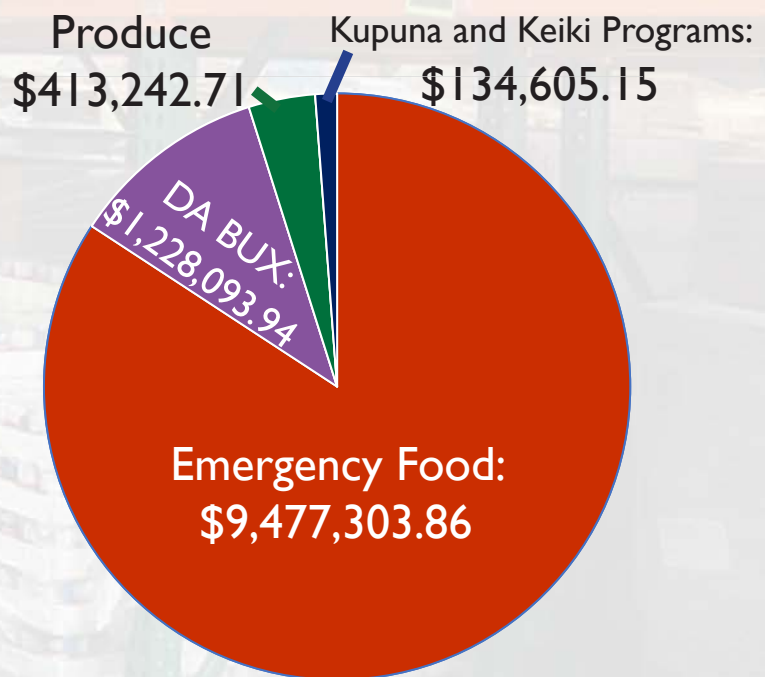
How We Use Our Resources



Where Our Food Comes From



Actual Operation Costs



In 2020 we...

HOME DELIVERIES

Delivered to an average of **123 homes each month.**



DA BOX CSA

Increased produce bags distributed by 85% to an average of **1,512 produce bags each month.**

DA BUX

Provided over \$900,000 in discounts for local fruits, vegetables, proteins and dairy; providing much needed access to fresh, local, healthy foods to struggling families.



KUPUNA PANTRY

Distributed food by way of the USDA Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) serving **1,081 qualified seniors each month.**



EMERGENCY BOXES

Distributed to an average of **1,038 people each month.**



BASKET
'S FOOD BANK



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From All of Us at The Food Basket...

There are no words to describe our gratitude for the remarkable generosity we have received over the course of the year. We are humbled and honored to have had the opportunity to serve our island residents in this elevated capacity with all of you lock in step with us. For those of you who donated your time, money, equipment, food, and expertise, thank you, Thank You, THANK YOU! Your support and partnership have been crucial to our mission to end hunger on Hawai'i Island.





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