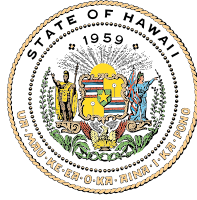


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



KEITH T. HAYASHI
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

October 4, 2024

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi, President
and Members of the Senate
415 South Beretania Street
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, HI 96813

The Honorable Scott K. Saiki, Speaker
and Members of the House of Representatives
415 South Beretania Street
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: Hawaii State Department of Education Annual Report on Local Meals

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Saiki, and Members of the Legislature:

For your information and consideration, the annual report, Local Meals, is being transmitted Pursuant to Section 27-8, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS). In accordance with Section 93-16, HRS, I am also informing you that the report may be viewed electronically at:
<https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/VisionForSuccess/SchoolDataAndReports/StateReports/Pages/Legislative-reports.aspx>.

Should you have any questions, please contact Ken Kakesako, Director of the Policy, Innovation, Planning and Evaluation Branch, via email at ken.kakesako@k12.hi.us or by phone at (808) 282-3430.

Sincerely,


Keith T. Hayashi,
Superintendent

KTH:wy

c: Legislative Reference Bureau
Hawaii State Public Library System
University of Hawaii
Office of Facilities and Operations

AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER



State of Hawaii
Department of Education

Annual Report on Local Meals

October 2024

Section 27-8, Hawaii Revised Statutes, requires the Hawaii State Department of Education to annually report on its progress towards the percentage of food purchased that is local.

**Hawaii State Department of Education
Local Meals**

Introduction

The Hawaii State Department of Education (Department) reports that the total cost of food purchased from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023, was \$64,111,718.15.

The percentage of fresh local agricultural products and local value-added, processed, agricultural, or food products purchased in 2022 - 2023 was 6.14%. The Department is working towards meeting the January 1, 2025, benchmark of having a minimum of 10% of the total food purchased, as measured by the percentage of total food cost.

To address the total cost of local food data requirements, the Department has provided data below.

Table 1: Locally Sourced Fresh Produce Purchased and Percentage by County, as Measured by the Total Expense of Food

County	Local Food Cost
Honolulu	\$604,746.36
Hawaii	\$382,117.92
Maui	\$283,718.80
Kauai	\$75,282.29
Grand Total	\$1,345,865.37
Percent of the Total Expense Cost	2.10%

Tables 2 and 3 reflect the percent of the total cost of food purchased for local value-added, processed, agricultural, or food products was a combined 4.04%.

Table 2: Locally Sourced Ground Beef Purchased and Percentage by County, as Measured by the Total Expense of Food

County	Local Food Cost
Honolulu	\$1,638,027.20
Hawaii	\$479,711.20
Maui	\$302,666.66
Kauai	\$145,184.80
Grand Total	\$2,565,589.86
Percent of the Total Expense Cost	4.00%

Table 3: Locally Sourced Poi (Monthly Special for May 2023) Purchased and Percentage by County, as Measured by the Total Expense of Food

County	Local Food Cost
Honolulu	\$24,960.00
Hawaii	\$0.00
Maui	\$0.00
Kauai	\$0.00
Grand Total	\$24,960.00
Percent of the Total Food Expense	
	0.04%

A Farm-to-School Program Coordinator was hired in August 2023. This has been positive in helping the Department reach the 10% local food goal by 2025. The Farm-to-School Program Coordinator assists the Department’s menu planners and school food service staff in accessing more local ingredients.

The impact of climate change on our farmers has reduced yields. For example, in April 2022, the Department began procuring local lettuce from an Oahu farm with a target of 1,000 pounds per week. However, during the summer of 2022, this farmer’s crops were hampered by record-high temperatures, which slowed lettuce growth and resulted in Pythium fungus in the hydroponic system. Distribution was forced to stop soon afterward. As of October 2023, this farmer offered a corrective action plan to mitigate climate-related losses. As of 2024, the Department has resumed serving local lettuce for Oahu districts.

Conclusion

The Department acknowledges the prior success of the Farm-to-School program that operated from 2015 to 2019. The Department is developing a procurement-compliant program built for competitive bid transparency and sustainability. This will enable an increase in direct purchases from farms and processors. While the Department will continue to rely on its distributors, there is an opportunity to integrate more food hubs and cooperatives. The Department prioritizes geographically preferred local food suppliers to support the state’s food security goals.