

**'Aina Pono Farmer & Supplier Webinar:**  
**How to Supply Fresh and Local Produce to HIDOE (January 30, 2020)**

**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

*Answers by Dexter Kishida, Farm to School Coordinator, Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) School Food Services Branch (SFSB), unless otherwise noted.  
Names and email addresses of requesters have been deleted for privacy.*

Q: Excellent and critical topic MAHALO! Just checking if we can get all slides after the webinar please?

A: Yes we can make these available via [www.farmtoschoolhui.org](http://www.farmtoschoolhui.org), Resources, 'Aina Pono tab.

Q: Pigeon peas?

A: We currently do not use pigeon peas, but would be willing to come up with a few recipes if the product is available! Gandule rice sounds good right now!

Q: What if you are a non-profit food hub / aggregator? We do not need to pay taxes, etc. Are the requirements the same as a for-profit?

A: The requirement is the same for any vendor, but as a non profit it makes it even easier to get HCE compliant status!

Q: Mahalo! Just wanted to know if/what are the requirements or documents that a farmer should have on hand to demonstrate that they are following GAP?

A: Proper Restroom facilities, logging of amendment/pesticide use. Upon request, a Standard Operating Procedure should be available for review, along with a walk through!

Q: Is it different for eggs?

A: Some clarification may be needed to the question, but requirements are slightly different for protein items, as USDA has some specific requirements when purchasing, meat, dairy and eggs.

Q: Are fresh produce suppliers required to have 3rd party food safety or FSMA inspections?

A: This was a requirement in the recent past, but we are adjusting the 3rd party review to allow for Department of Health Review to count. If you have a green placard, that will suffice in future solicitations.

Q: Thanks! I am a little confused about how the contracting works, is the DOE selecting multiple distributors or solely single providers? Are bids statewide, or per specific regions—mahalo!

A: I totally understand the confusion, as DOE is under constant evolution when it comes to how we procure goods. We select a single distributor, but the grouping could vary depending on our need. When we procure, in some cases, like Dana's products [Hawaii 'Ulu Cooperative] we have 1 grouping and a vendor must supply the whole state. In other times, like our beef and produce, we have broken the state to smaller groups.

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Q: Thanks! What are the needs in the schools for eggs? We have many many chickens and are obtaining organic certification. On Maui.

A: We currently don't use much when it comes to shell eggs, but have learned that to have a cracking facility in Hawai'i would be very challenging to make financially feasible. With all that said, we are looking at ways we can get local eggs incorporated to our school, while not making our staff crack hundreds of eggs a day. We have done boiled egg to mediocre reviews by our students. Would love to get your contact info to discuss further.

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Q: Seems like current DOE requirements do not always align with local seasonality of products. Is there a process tracking each desired product so over time each product can have a local solution developed and help farmers/producers develop products that can work (as Dana discussed)?

A: This is one of the aspects of our work as a local aggregator. We have been building a hyper-local seasonality calendar and sharing with the DOE menu committee in order to inform their decision making. [Answered by Dana Shapiro, Hawai'i 'Ulu Cooperative]

Q: Are there any bids/solicitations currently available?

A: We have a beef solicitation live for Kauai and Hawaii Island, and a Poi, Kalo, Ulu Pancake solicitation that is ready to close in the next few weeks.

Q: Please consider supporting the Food Hub Pilot Program Bill that is currently in session by submitting testimony! The first public hearing for the Food hub bill in the Senate is scheduled for Wednesday 1.15pm in Conference Room 224:

[https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2020/hearingnotices/HEARING\\_AEN\\_02-05-20\\_.HTM](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2020/hearingnotices/HEARING_AEN_02-05-20_.HTM)

The bill would launch a 5 year program and appropriate \$1 million (year 1) for existing food hubs to expand and enhance operations to meet demand for locally grown food, and new food hubs to start where none exist in places such as Kauai. DOA would manage/distribute funds, likely through a grant program.

A: Thanks for the info!

Q: What vegetables are in demand? A: The most used produce are green leaf lettuce, romaine, cucumbers, carrots, tomato, and cabbage.

Q: Is there any way that current food hubs can see the prices offered per pound for different crops by DOE to compare with other customers? A: Email me and we can share the price lists.

Q: Is there a common core ordering (software) system used by all DOE facilities (which could also be linked to suppliers - like FarmLink)?

A: We are in the midst of implementing this back office solution. This would require a level of technical sophistication from vendors though.