FOOD SYSTEMS AND RESILIENCY

Food security for a household means access by all members at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. (USDA, 2021) Food security includes at a minimum:

- The ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods.
- Assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (that is, without resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing, or other coping strategies).

Ensuring food security is a practical public health intervention to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Hawai‘i.
FOOD INSECURITY AS A DETERMINANT OF HEALTH

The food system can create or destroy health.

The Hawaiian Islands are home to one of the most geographically isolated and food-import dependent populations in the world. It is estimated that Hawaii imports close to 90% of its food. At any given time, Hawai‘i has a 5-7 day food supply. The health consequences of an emergency disruption in the food chain would be severe.

It is estimated that one out of nine Hawaiians are food insecure. Economic and social disparities are significant drivers of food insecurity. Vulnerable groups are at greater risk for hunger, malnutrition, obesity and poor health. Poor diets are a key risk factor for premature death and diminished quality of life from obesity, diabetes, hypertension and cancer. Unhealthy diets are cheaper and more accessible. Typically these diets have high caloric content but low nutritive value - characterized by processed food that has excessive sugar, salt and trans-fatty acids.

Access to healthier food choices that are locally produced addresses food insecurity as well as nutrition needs of the people in ways that are culturally appropriate and sustainable.
The Hawai‘i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) has led improvements in health outcomes in Hawai‘i through policy, advocacy, community partnerships and action on a number of fronts, since 1996. It is a ‘hub for health’ - bringing together multiple stakeholders to work together toward improved health outcomes, particularly for the most vulnerable.

The COVID19 pandemic unmasked huge disparities in food access and called for immediate action to mitigate hunger and worsening of chronic disease, rendering visibility to the underlying reasons behind food insecurity in the state.

Through the Food Systems and Resiliency Program and the Healthy Eating + Active Living programs of HIPHI, we confront the challenge of food insecurity as a public health concern that requires urgent action. The Food Systems and Resiliency Program zeroes in on the issue of “food access” at the intersection of “what we grow” and “what we eat.”

As in many parts of the country, in Hawai‘i -what we grow is not what we eat, and what eat is not what we grow. Hence, a dependence on imported food that has distorted the nutritional balance of the diets of the people of Hawai‘i.

Our program focuses on universal food access as a public health goal, at the same time we work closely with sectors that are engaged in food availability and food safety.

Food insecurity is a public health concern that requires urgent action.
**VISION**

Food and nutrition security for everyone, at all times, in Hawai‘i

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>OUTCOME INDICATORS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. Increase food access, particularly for vulnerable groups of Hawai‘i</td>
<td>Decrease in food insecurity over baseline (2021) by zip code</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Support, enable and expand food production in the places where people live, learn, work and play.</td>
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<td>3. Promote local sources for healthier diets to reduce diabetes, heart disease, cancer and their risk factors.</td>
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Food Systems and Resiliency Program Framework

**Program Components**

1. Increase food access, particularly for vulnerable groups of Hawai‘i
2. Support and enable universal food production in the places where people live, learn, work and play.
3. Promote local sources for healthier diets to reduce diabetes, heart disease, cancer and their risk factors.

- **Decrease in food insecurity over baseline (2021 by zip code)**
- **Increase in food production in the places where people live, learn, work and play (2021, by zip code)**
- **Improved control of non-communicable diseases and dietary risk factors in vulnerable groups over baseline (2021 by zip code)**
Program Components

- Food Access Policy and Advocacy
- Community Partnerships
- Food Access Action
- Surveillance and Information Systems
- Training and capacity building
- Strategic communication

Food and nutrition security for all
Project clusters, 2021