



## Village Harvest

### 2018 Annual Program Report



***Village Harvest is an award-winning collaborative partnership between Mālama Kaua'i and the Kaua'i Master Gardener Program that harvests and delivers fresh produce to schools, after-school programs, and food banks across Kaua'i.***

## Village Harvest

### *Gleaning to Redirect Food from Waste to Resource*

It was a challenging yet humbling year for the Village Harvest program. Kaua'i's record-breaking rainfall and flooding greatly affected food production and food security island-wide. Trees fruited in much smaller volumes due to the limited sunlight available for several months and blossoms washing away before pollination. Farms and residences flooded out, and volunteers were engaged in emergency response and recovery work that took precedence. These setbacks prevented us from reaching our annual goals for pounds of produce harvested and volunteer hours achieved for 2018.

The slower harvesting seasons in the summer and fall of this year allowed time to reassess our strategy and approach for addressing programmatic sustainability. We directed our attention to the critical nature of food security, access, and logistical delivery systems in times of crisis. Collaboration with the Hawai'i Food Bank's Kaua'i Branch on food donation flood relief strengthened an indispensable partnership. We project this teamwork will continue to improve the efficacy of fresh fruit distribution on Kaua'i.

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***Bridging The Gap Between  
Underutilized Produce &  
Those Who Need It***

**24,624 lbs**  
of Produce  
Distributed

**11**  
Recipient  
Sites

**29**  
Produce  
Donors

**448**  
Volunteer  
Hours

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## Our 2018 Goals & Achievements

***Divert 40,000 pounds of produce from waste to decrease agricultural food waste and increase fresh food access for Kaua'i's neediest populations, through expansion of donor and recipient site outreach.***

- Over the course of the year, 81 volunteer gleaning events produced a total collection of 24,624 lbs of unwanted or underutilized fruits and vegetables.
- The 12 donation recipient sites benefiting from Village Harvest include: 4 Hawaiian-focused Public Charter Schools (Kawaikini, Ke Kula Ni'ihau o Kekaha, KANAKA, & Kanuikapono), Anahola Food Pantry, Church of the Pacific Pantry, North Shore Food Pantry (Wainiha), Hanalei School, Boys and Girls Clubs (Kapa'a & Lihue), and Kamehameha Summer School Programs. A major recipient is Hawai'i Food Bank's Kaua'i Branch, which distributes donations to 31 food pantries across the island and is a key partner in identifying and delivering our harvested goods to areas of greatest need.
- 29 harvesting sites contributed to Village Harvest this year, and 20 new donors registered as harvesting sites, totaling 63 produce donation contacts: 12 farms and orchards and 51 individual households.

***Address food waste, hunger and fresh produce access issues on Kaua'i through 2,500 volunteer hours and creating 5 regional gleaning teams.***

- We established three regional gleaning team leaders who are actively leading group gleaning events and deliveries on the north, east, and central sides of the island.
- 72 volunteers engaged in Village Harvest activities this year, putting 448 hours of volunteer work into the program. Volunteer group partnerships include Kaua'i Master Gardeners, homeschool students, Girl Scout troops, and Mālama Kaua'i's Ag Interns.

***Establish greater community awareness of food waste, hunger and fresh produce access issues on Kauaʻi through 5 pieces of press coverage and 10 community presentations.***

- Received a positive response from the public and press, with 9 pieces of press coverage:
  - Two KONG radio appearances - 5 minute and 15 minute interviews July 2018
  - Monthly KKCR Radio Advertisements & PSAs July - December 2018
  - 'Ulu Repotting Workshop article in UH Magazine - May 2018
- Performed 3 public outreach sessions to groups across the island to educate on hunger, produce access, safe food handling, and agricultural waste issues on Kauaʻi. 140 attendees were engaged at these events with Kauaʻi Master Gardeners, Kauaʻi Community College, and Girl Scouts of Hawaiʻi.



## Highlights of Activities

- Although on-island volunteer gleaning teams have been challenging to establish, we have found great success in engaging visitor groups through our partnership with the Volunteer Kauaʻi program. Several visiting families have joined us for harvests to volunteer and enjoy the outdoors while learning about Kauaʻi's agriculture.
- Over a dozen abandoned 'ulu trees were rescued, repotted during workshops with volunteers, and planted at Kawaikini NCPCS and the Kalihiwai Community Farm, once rehabilitated.
- Created a Fruit Stand Establishment Procedure in partnership with Kalaheo Elementary, focusing on a safety and liability contract to present to new donors and communication between students, parents, school staff and the parent volunteer appointed to manage the stand.
- Held mini-workshops at the Kauaʻi Girl Scout STEM Fest and taught 65 Girl Scouts and leaders how to reduce their personal food waste and help prevent systematic waste.
- Awarded "Giving Tree" mini-grants to 4 schools in December, providing them with 35 fruit trees to be planted at Hanalei Elementary, Kauaʻi High School, Eleele Elementary, and Waimea High Schools. Use of student involvement to care for the trees and donation of produce to the school's community are stipulations of the Giving Tree agreement.



## Challenges & Solutions

Several challenges, aside from flood recovery, arose which we seek to address moving forward:

**Transportation:** A major loss this year to the program was the “death” of our work truck in November, which is used to transport harvesting tools and supplies, volunteers, and produce for deliveries. After having a used truck for a couple of years, we understand the financial drain an older vehicle in need of repair can cause and are seeking to fundraise for a new truck in 2019.

**Staffing:** The AmeriCorps staffing is limited on support for ongoing needs to set the program up for success. We believe a long-term staff position for the Project Manager role would be a better solution to difficulties involving participant retention and program continuity. Relationships must be rebuilt often with the annual turnover of AmeriCorps VISTAs, causing a slow ramp-up for the program each time. We see the need for a full time Program Manager position to take over for the AmeriCorps VISTA role, but have not yet determined a path for sustainable funding of staff.

**Geographics:** The availability of fruit varies geographically with generally higher production rates on the North Shore. The need for produce, however, is higher in the central and western parts of the island. Seeking out what is available and abundant in the central and western areas, as well as transporting produce from the north to the other parts of the island, are our main focuses to address this issue. This year we began planting trees directly at sites of high food insecurity on Kauaʻi’s West Side to increase community access, and we look to continue this in 2019.

**Volunteer Engagement:** Inconsistencies in Village Harvest’s volunteer base has made identifying people to fill leadership positions in the self-sustaining gleaning teams difficult. With growing income inequalities, it is becoming more difficult to retain consistent local volunteers with time to give. To address these issues of program sustainability, we are looking to build community-based orchards, and teams around them, directly at schools and nonprofit sites within the communities to have a longer-lasting impact. We are utilizing Volunteer Kauaʻi to engage visitor volunteers to participate in Village Harvest, and see great results thus far.

**Financial Sustainability:** Funding is a foreseeable challenge, especially as we seek to supplement the AmeriCorps Project Manager role with a staff position. Through experience, we find that funders are less interested in supporting continuation of established programs and prefer to help launch new programs. We are developing and implementing new ideas for earned income opportunities to combat financial instability through generating revenue.

For example, it is difficult to find agencies that can accept the thousands of pounds of grapefruit we harvest. Children (due to taste preferences) and seniors (medication interaction issues) both generally have adversities to the fruit. We worked around this challenge thus far by selling grapefruit to retailers as a fundraising opportunity to pay for additional harvesting tools and gas.



## Making a Difference

*"While we waited for the Farm-to-School mobile kitchen to arrive, Village Harvest helped ensure the keiki still had access to fresh snacks."*

*"In the three and a half months of no lunch service, they continued to support the nutrition and learning of the kids by donating locally grown fruits and vegetables."*

- Chef Barbara Kaauiwai, Kawaikini NCPCS



*"By receiving these local and healthy fruit, some members were reintroduced to how tasty fruit is over sugary processed snacks. Our middle school members also had the opportunity to help harvest 200 pounds of starfruit during an excursion. Those members were excited for the next time they could harvest fruit again. Village Harvest helps the Club members reconnect with local foods."*

- JR Guerrero, Kapa'a Boys & Girls Clubhouse Director

*"Last fiscal year we distributed over one million pounds of food, including 100,000 pounds of fresh produce to people needing emergency food assistance."*

*"We hope that Village Harvest can continue to supply us with fresh, local produce, as it is one of our most requested foods. We look forward to receiving and helping to distribute more fresh produce to our community, and are excited to see the potential impact of this program to include island-wide gleaning efforts for the needy."*

- Wes Perreira, Hawai'i Foodbank - Kaua'i Branch



*"There is so much fruit going to waste and such a great need. I know, it's paradise, how can kids go hungry here? \$4000 rent, \$7 for a gallon of milk, low paying jobs."*

*"With just a little time and property owners who care, we can make a real difference to the keiki who receive these gifts."*

- Gray Hayton, Gleaning Team Leader

## 2019 Program Goals

In 2019, our hope is to get the program back on track as the island dries out.

- Deliver 10 Community Presentations.
- Obtain 5 Pieces of Press Coverage.
- Establish 5 New Community Based Mini-Orchards.
- Build Fruit Tree Production in Greenhouse to Distribute 100+ Trees.
- Harvest 40,000 lbs of Produce and Divert to Areas of Need.

Upon continued evaluation of the program, our strategy has shifted. We determined that focusing solely on redirecting food waste in our neighborhoods will not bring about the genuine programmatic sustainability we seek to achieve. Increasing abundance and food access on the island, by establishing more community-based orchards in partnership with other agencies, is a potential way to move forward. Our partners, such as schools and food pantries, have already built-in volunteer bases and space to host orchards, with direct links to the people in need of food-access support.

To facilitate these efforts at a lower cost than purchasing fruit trees at retail from nurseries, we will expand our greenhouse at the Kalihiwai Community Farm to incorporate fruit tree production into our volunteer activities. This will allow us to stretch our limited funding further and out-plant fruit trees in the communities we serve to develop small self-run orchards accessible to the public. Quarterly volunteer events and workshops are in the planning stages to jumpstart growth and production of fruit trees at a low cost, with the added benefit of providing educational opportunities to participants.

Advancement of the “Giving Tree” Orchard Project described above, will directly enhance the capacity of the Village Harvest Gleaning Program to provide nutritional support to low-income, food-insecure communities of Kauaʻi.

## Mahalos

### *Funders & Donors:*



Atherton Family Foundation

### *Partners & Community Support:*

Anaina Hou Community Park  
AmeriCorps VISTA  
Boys and Girls Clubs of Kauaʻi  
Department of Education  
The Farm at Hokuala  
The Garden Island Newspaper

Girl Scouts of America  
Gray Hayton  
Hawaiʻi Foodbank, Kauaʻi Branch  
Kauaʻi Master Gardeners  
Kauaʻi Juice Company  
KKCR Kauaʻi Community Radio

Papaya's Natural Foods and Cafe  
Ron Wiley at KONG Radio  
Seascapes Nursery  
University of Hawaiʻi's CTAHR  
Volunteer Kauaʻi

***Donate today to help support Village Harvest!***