



2 scoops

— winter 2023 —



MAUI FOOD BANK
Helping the Hungry

Food from the Maui Food Bank Makes Life on Molokai “Mo’ Betta”

Hawaii's fifth largest island, Molokai, is 38 miles long and 10 miles at its widest point. It is home to the highest sea cliffs in the world and the longest continuous fringing reef. Molokai also has the largest white-sand beach in Hawaii.

Hidden within Molokai's breathtaking natural beauty lies the complex problem of food insecurity for many Molokai residents. Molokai's unemployment rate jumped to 13.9 percent in June 2022, the highest in the state.

Maui Food Bank's mission is to help the hungry in Maui County by collecting and distributing food through community partnerships. And that includes serving over 2,000 people monthly on Molokai.

The Food Bank palatizes and ships 20,000 pounds of food to our neighboring island every month. With the help of 17 partner agencies and programs on Molokai, the food is quickly distributed to those in need of hunger relief. The Aloha Backpack Buddies program is active in five Molokai Schools.



Molokai is unique as access to food is limited. Everything has to be shipped in, which significantly raises food costs. Along with the Food Bank's shipments from Maui, we coordinate deliveries of fresh produce from Oahu and purchase fresh fruit and vegetables from local Molokai farmers.

Sustainable Molokai is one of the Food Bank's vital

support agencies. It is a mobile food hub that increases access to local produce through a mobile farmer's



market. They also supplement Maui Food Bank's shipments, providing local shrimp, beef, poi, and eggs, through a community egg co-op. *Sustainable Molokai* serves as the only food pantry in Maunaloa's rural community.

When the once-a-month food shipment arrives on Molokai, all partner agencies gather near the wharf to help unload pallets of food. Community partnerships such as Young Brothers, the County of Maui, Molokai Veterans Center, and Makoa Trucking are there to lend a helping hand.

There is a strong sense of community on Molokai. Everyone works together to ensure that the much-needed food supplies are distributed to those in need of hunger relief.

We can learn so much from the strength, care, and concern that emerges from the people of Molokai as we observe them helping each other.





MAUI FOOD BANK
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Our MISSION

Maui Food Bank's mission is to help the hungry in Maui County by collecting and distributing food through community partnerships.

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From the desk of
RICHARD YUST



Our Journey Began with Just a Few Volunteers and a Pick-Up Truck

Aloha Friends,

I was recently asked, "Is the Maui Food Bank the largest nonprofit food distribution organization in Maui County?" The answer to this question is yes. The Food Bank has been helping the hungry on Maui, Molokai, and Lanai since 1988. We began as a small food pantry distributing food out of the back of a pick-up truck.

As the need grew, the vision also increased, and in 1994 the Maui Food Bank became an official 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization. Our mission is to help the hungry in Maui County by collecting and distributing food through community partnerships.

Today the Food Bank operates out of a renovated 10,000-square-foot warehouse in Wailuku Industrial Park. Through our network of 170 agencies and programs, we provide food for over 13,000 people a month who are food insecure — making Maui Food Bank the largest food distribution resource in Maui County.

As the need for food assistance grows in our island community, we aim to look for new and innovative ways to provide hunger relief to those in need. One of our goals and achievements has been to increase the supply of fresh fruits and vegetables to people in need of hunger relief.

Since starting our *Fresh 4 All program*, we have regularly purchased fresh and nutritious food items from local Maui, Molokai, and Lanai farmers. This much-needed program is very successful in that annually, we have been able to distribute over 745,226 pounds of fresh produce to those who have limited healthy food choices.

Hunger shows no mercy. It impacts people from every walk of life. The Maui Food Bank endeavors to reach them all — working poor families, children and youth, seniors on fixed incomes, and the homeless. This year our goal is to distribute over three million pounds of safe and nutritious food to meet an ever-growing need in Maui County.

Mahalo for all you do to help us feed the hungry in Maui County.

Richard Yust, Executive Director



We Bid a Fond Aloha to Mark Harbison

We are deeply saddened to announce that Mark Harbison, our Maui Food Bank Board President, passed away December 9th. He will be deeply missed by all of us at the Maui Food Bank and our entire island ohana.

“Aloha Backpack Buddies” Program Addressing Child Hunger

There is no excuse for children to go hungry in this country. Yet it happens — every day, in every community.

Hawai'i holds the second highest rate of child food insecurity in the nation. When schools and businesses closed due to the pandemic, hunger affected many families for the first time.

While the 2020-21 school year brought some relief to families via the USDA waiver program, which allowed schools to serve both breakfast and lunch to all students at no cost, that program ended this past summer. This has left a gap this school year for many families whose expenses have gone up due to inflation, but do not qualify for other assistance.

It's important to note that hunger doesn't affect everyone equally — our keiki face hunger at much higher rates than the rest of our population.

With one in four keiki on Maui experiencing food scarcity, Maui Food Bank's *Aloha Backpack Buddies* program is meeting a crucial need. During the school year, 27 schools on

Maui, Molokai and Lanai receive backpacks filled with six meals to carry students through the weekend when school is not in session, and they don't have access to free and reduced cost meals.

Aloha Backpack Buddies is a crucial program that helps keiki and youth living in food-insecure homes receive the food they need to stay healthy and succeed in school.



Contact the Maui Food Bank at (808) 243-9500 to find out how you can get involved with the Aloha Backpack Buddies program!

Donors Can Assure Ongoing Help for Maui's Hungry Through Planned Giving

Over the years, the Maui Food Bank has been the grateful recipient of estate gifts from donors who wish to support the continuation of our efforts to serve food-challenged individuals and families throughout Maui County.

Estate gifts are unique in that they provide a vital, dependable base of support that empowers us to continue our operations and pursue our mission.

Estate gifts of all sizes are welcome, and every gift helps! Here are a few examples of some ways you could donate an estate gift to the Maui Food Bank:



- ⇒ Cash
- ⇒ Publicly Traded Securities
- ⇒ Retirement Plan Assets
- ⇒ Life Insurance Policies
- ⇒ Closely Held Stock
- ⇒ Family Limited Partnership Interests

The Maui Food Bank's Executive Director, Richard Yust, would be happy to provide additional information on estate gifts; feel free to contact Richard at (808) 243-9500. As with all charitable contributions, please consult your financial advisor for advice concerning your specific situation.

Nine-Year-Old Keoni Steps Up to Help the Hungry

Sometimes kids can be some of the Maui Food Bank's most effective fundraisers. A case in point: Recently, when nine-year-old Keoni was in town visiting his grandmother, he observed many homeless people. Keoni looked up at his grandma Cindy and asked, "What can we do to help these people get food?"



Together they devised a plan to have a bake sale in their neighborhood. Keoni made Spam Musubi and Chex Mix, and his auntie helped him bake mango bread and cookies.

Next, Keoni visited all his neighbors and invited them to come to the bake sale. Nearly everyone showed up, and all the items they had made were sold in just three hours.

Keoni raised enough money through his bake sale to provide 800 meals for those in need, demonstrating that everyone — even kids — can make a positive impact on hunger if they put their minds to it.

A big shout out to Keoni for his successful fundraising efforts!

Accomplished Concert Violinist Turns to Farming to Benefit Maui Food Bank

Sally Barr, now a resident of Maui, has earned international acclaim for her performances as a concert violinist and multi-instrumentalist across several musical genres. As an accomplished violinist, she's held seats in the Santa Barbara Symphony, Santa Barbara Chamber Orchestra, Opera Santa Barbara, and the Santa Ynez Valley Master Chorale, where she served as Concertmaster. She's performed as both a violinist and a singer. Sally has also given performances on the viola, five-string violin, piano, and mandolin.



So why would such an accomplished performer choose to relinquish the spotlight and relocate to Maui?

From her childhood, Sally visited Maui on a regular basis, and quickly came to love our island paradise. So, when the time came to throttle back on her successful career, Sally landed in Maui, found 2.5 acres of agricultural land in Haiku, and launched Hale Sunshine Farm with a goal of giving back to others.



It turns out that Sally has some background in gardening and farm development, and she also enlisted the help of Kevin Kovach of EcoScapes Maui, who managed the farm installation. Ethan Hughes runs the maintenance crew, which is another vital factor in the success of the operation.

“This just felt like the right thing to do,” noted Sally. “My kuliana is to be pono and malama my island home. We’re growing over 200 trees and more than 1,000 plants here, and almost all our production is donated to the Maui Food Bank.”

Hale Sunshine Rae farm delivers fresh fruits and vegetables to the Maui Food Bank once a week. Frequent offerings include eggplant, papaya, squash, spinach, watermelon, and fresh herbs. In addition, Sally donates some produce not common to Maui, such as sapote, sapodilla (that have adapted to Maui soil), Panama berries, and Surinam cherries.

“My little two-and-a-half-acre farm proves you don’t need 50 acres to make a difference,” Sally explained. “Hale Sunshine Rae has donated over 2,500 pounds of fresh produce in the past six months! And you don’t need to farm full-time, either. Even if you just have a few fruit trees on your property, you could be donating any extra fruit to the Maui Food Bank. It would make a meaningful difference to people on Maui who don’t know where their next meal is coming from.”

“I’m so grateful to Kevin Kovach and his whole crew,” Sally continued. “They have extensive local knowledge, and their diligent work has made this place not only possible, but a dream come true to help the community we all love.”

Sally Barr feels that she’s in the middle of Kina Ole, a Hawaiian phrase meaning, “right place, right time, right people.” We at the Maui Food Bank agree, and on behalf of Maui County’s hungry, we extend a big Mahalo to Sally for her incredible generosity!



When Maui’s Businesses Compete, Hungry People Win

During October of 2022, sixteen businesses competed to see who could collect the most food and cash donations. The two winners, representing large and small businesses, both received a generous marketing campaign provided by Pacific Radio Group.

Congratulations to this year's winners:



(large business)

TECHNOLOGY
Aloha

(small business.)

And a special thank you to all the businesses who participated and collected over 10,000 pounds of healthy food, plus cash donations which combined have provided 24,891 meals for people in need!

Battle of the Businesses Participants:

- AAAAA Rent A Space
- Aston Maui Hill
- Ceramic Tile Plus
- Equity One Real Estate
- Island Grocery Depot
- Kaanapali Golf Courses
- Level Up Maui Gym
- Marmac Ace Hardware
- Maui Candy Co.
- Maui Onstage Education & Youth Program
- Maui Sport Cards
- Queen Kaahumanu Center
- Raising Canes Chicken Fingers
- SKYLINE Hawaii Eco Adventures
- Technology Aloha
- TJ's Warehouse