2024 Hawai‘i Food System Summit

OVERVIEW

The December 2024 Hawai‘i Food System Summit was the third annual educational and advocacy organizing gathering of the Transforming Hawai‘i’s Food System Together coalition. The Summit advanced legislative action, collaboration, and cross-sector solutions for affecting change throughout Hawai‘i’s food system, with a focus on the household food insecurity crisis.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

FOOD IS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT.

We have a moral obligation to ensure every Hawai‘i resident has access to adequate and nutritious food.

INFLATION AND THE HIGH COST OF LIVING ARE DRIVING FOOD INSECURITY.

Since the pandemic, Hawai‘i has seen a 29% increase in the cost of food. As many households are utilizing food bank services in 2024 as they did during the height during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021.

WHEN OUR PEOPLE ARE FOOD INSECURE, WE SUFFER IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS.

Food insecurity negatively impacts our communities’ health outcomes, educational attainment, and economic opportunities.

SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD ASSISTANCE IS NOT SUPPLEMENTAL FOR MANY.

Programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) are vital resources that families depend on to afford food, yet many families who qualify do not receive assistance because of barriers to access.

COMMUNITY-LED RESILIENCE INITIATIVES ARE UNDERWAY TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS.

Resiliency in food production and distribution is essential for ensuring our food systems function well during normal times and during disasters.

“FOOD IS MEDICINE” PROGRAMS PROMOTE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.

Produce prescription and food subscription programs support local farmers, producers, and retailers, and help Hawai‘i’s families access culturally-relevant, nutritious foods.

THE INTERAGENCY FOOD SYSTEMS PLAN UNDER DEVELOPMENT IS ESSENTIAL FOR REACHING OUR FOOD SYSTEMS GOALS.

This plan will help support our pathway to achieving a more sustainable, food-secure future for our state.