From Crisis to Connection: Maui Emergency Feeding Task Force Lessons Learned and Future Resiliency Strategies

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EMERGENCY FEEDING TASKFORCE FOR MAUI

Acknowledgements and Mahalos

The Maui Emergency Feeding Task Force (MEFT) extends its deepest gratitude to the many individuals, organizations, and agencies whose dedication and support have made this initiative possible. This report is the result of the collective efforts of a broad coalition, and we are honored to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of each participant as well as the funding from Hawaiʻi Community Foundation that was crucial in this group's work.

First and foremost, we express our heartfelt mahalo to the people of Maui, whose resilience and community spirit have been the driving force behind our work. Your willingness to come together in times of crisis has inspired and guided our efforts to ensure that no one is left behind during moments of need.

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As we move forward, we remain committed to the principles of aloha, kuleana, and mālama — caring for one another and our island home. This report and the work it represents would not have been possible without the collective spirit of all those involved. We mahalo each of you for your contributions and look forward to continuing this vital work together.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

 Maui Emergency Feeding Task Force

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Executive Summary

In the wake of the devastating 2023 wildfires that swept across Maui, the Maui Emergency Feeding Task Force (MEFT) was established to address significant gaps in disaster-related food services and coordinate relief efforts. The unprecedented scale of the disaster, compounded by Maui's geographic isolation and socio-economic conditions, exposed deep vulnerabilities in the island's emergency response infrastructure, particularly in food distribution and essential services.

Formation and Goals of the MEFT

The MEFT was formed after it was learned that a critical decision at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) revealed that a feeding task force had not been included in the initial disaster response plan. Recognizing the urgent need for coordinated food distribution, a grassroots task force was created to address the crisis. Supported by the Hawaiʻi Community Foundation's Maui Strong funds, the MEFT worked to bring together stakeholders from across sectors, including nonprofits, community groups, local farmers, and government agencies. Our mission was to optimize the distribution of resources, ensure that the island's food needs were met, and build a more resilient food system for the future.

The key goals of the MEFT were to:
1. Coordinate stakeholders across government, nonprofit, and community sectors to improve resource management.
2. Foster collaboration to ensure efficient and equitable distribution of food during emergencies.
3. Collect data from response efforts.
4. Develop strategies to enhance Maui's long-term food security and emergency feeding systems.

Through biweekly group meetings, surveys, and multi-agency meetings, the MEFT engaged with a wide array of participants to address the immediate food needs and work toward building a more sustainable and responsive system for future disasters.

Survey Findings and Community Needs

To evaluate the needs of the community and the effectiveness of the emergency feeding response, the MEFT conducted several surveys targeting residents, meal providers, grocery distribution services, and local businesses. These surveys revealed the depth of the challenges faced by those receiving and providing food assistance.

1. Maui Citizen Survey:

Conducted between September 2023 and June 2024, this survey collected responses from impacted community members. Over half of respondents (53.7%) in Hawai'i reported losing their homes in the fires, with an additional 12.5% displaced due to unsafe living conditions or eviction. Many of these individuals were placed in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) or Red Cross shelters — 58.5% of whom were housed in hotels without kitchens, which extended their reliance on emergency meals well beyond typical recovery periods.

Less than half (45.6%) of respondents reported having reliable access to sufficient food, and many encountered challenges in obtaining government assistance, such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. A significant portion of respondents (21.3%) reported relying on personal savings or donations to purchase food. Food distribution, primarily through community hubs and food boxes, was essential, though the needs of those with dietary restrictions or requiring baby food were not always met. These findings underscore the long-lasting food insecurity created by the disaster and the need for a more responsive, inclusive food assistance system.

2. Hot Meal Provider Survey:

Sixteen organizations, including nonprofits and for-profits, responded to this survey. Collectively, these providers reported serving between 4,520 and 5,648 meals per day — a total of over 307,000 meals provided since the fires. Most meal providers relied on donated ingredients and personal funds to cover additional expenses, with 44% reporting that their staff were unpaid volunteers. The main barriers to sustaining operations included lack of funding, volunteer burnout, and logistical challenges related to food transportation and storage. The survey highlighted the crucial role of local organizations but also revealed the fragility of their efforts without long-term financial support.

3. Grocery Distribution & Food Box Survey:

This survey, completed by local organizations, showed that all had expanded their food box distribution services in response to the fires. Neighborhood-based distribution proved effective, though funding remained the top barrier to long-term sustainability. The limited response size underscored the need for more widespread support to scale such efforts in future emergencies.

4. Impact on Local Agriculture and Businesses:

The agricultural sector, integral to Maui's economy and food security, was severely impacted by the wildfires. A survey by Hawai'i Farmers Union United (HFUU) revealed that nearly 60% of farmers lost between 75-100% of their market access due to the fires. These farmers expressed an urgent need for financial relief and grants to

recover. Local businesses, particularly restaurants, played a significant role in the emergency response but also faced economic hardships. Collectively, businesses spent over $800,000 on food relief efforts, many using their own resources. With already existing debts from the COVID-19 pandemic, these businesses cited the need for financial assistance and debt relief. The diminished capacity of both local farmers and businesses to recover quickly has long-term implications for the island's economy and food security.

Challenges in the Emergency Feeding Response

The 2023 wildfires exposed critical gaps in Maui's emergency feeding system; and revealed the need for substantial improvements in coordination, infrastructure, and funding. Key challenges identified include:

1. Coordination and Activation Delays:

Pre-existing disaster response plans were not effectively activated when the fires broke out. The absence of an official feeding task force at the beginning of the disaster response led to delays in food distribution. Community organizations initiated local relief efforts, but there was a lack of integration once official government response efforts hit the ground. This led to conflict, inefficiencies, gaps, and waste. Additionally, the official response involved rotating volunteers and staff every few weeks, which created further confusion and inconsistency in operations.

2. Infrastructure and Resource Shortfalls:

Maui's geographic isolation compounded by inadequate infrastructure presented major obstacles to the emergency response. Shelters lacked the ability to prepare hot meals and store necessary food supplies. Delays in supply chains slowed the delivery of essential goods. The scalability of food distribution efforts were limited by high shipping costs; water contamination issues in Kula and Lāhainā; slaughterhouse bottle necks; and a lack of large commercial kitchens, commercial sized chill units for cold storage, and refrigerated trucks. These challenges and others highlighted the need for investment in emergency infrastructure, local resources, and supply chain to ensure quicker, more efficient responses in the future.

3. Funding and Sustainability Issues:

Access to financial support was, and continues to be, a significant barrier to the sustainability of emergency feeding efforts. Many local nonprofits and community groups relied on personal donations and their own funds to keep services running. FEMA's reimbursement model excludes smaller organizations and local businesses filling gaps in response from accessing critical financial aid. This placed additional strain on these groups. The FEMA model also excludes agricultural operation businesses

which took a huge hit, with some suffering damages and many others facing drastic market losses. Without sustainable funding mechanisms, these organizations struggled to continue providing necessary services during the prolonged recovery period and some were even forced to close their businesses.

4. Cultural and Trust Challenges:

Cultural sensitivities and a lack of trust between local communities and external agencies affected the effectiveness of the response. Many residents expressed frustration with the lack of culturally familiar foods provided in shelters and noted that communication barriers exacerbated issues for non-English-speaking residents. Long standing mistrust of the government due to colonization and many instances of corruption made some residents hesitant or completely object to going through official response channels for assistance. This mistrust was compounded by propaganda campaigns on the internet and concerns that emerged about how official response efforts were allocating and spending funds. The frequent rotation of outside volunteers and staff added to the confusion, as new personnel were often unfamiliar with the community and ongoing relief efforts, leading to inefficiencies and frustration among both volunteers and residents.

Recommendations for Strengthening Maui's Emergency Feeding System

Based on the lessons learned from the 2023 Maui wildfires, this report outlines several key recommendations aimed at improving Maui's emergency feeding system and enhancing long-term disaster preparedness:

Recommendation	Pages
Emergency Feeding Network and Coordination - Continue Maui Emergency Feeding Task Force (MEFT) as a permanent entity. Create a comprehensive Emergency Feeding Plan that allows for a strategic, flexible approach, and a hierarchy for multi-agency disaster response, with clear roles at federal, state, county, and community levels. Integrate local partners to build trust, accountability, effective disaster mitigation, and recovery strategies that align with community needs and environmental sustainability. Coordinate and streamline mapping efforts for emergency feeding services. Establish a network of translators to assist with emergency communications for non-English speakers. Ensure all communication materials are culturally appropriate and accessible to diverse communities.	27 - 31; 33
Emergency Feeding Contracts - Proactively create contract templates for various levels and sectors of emergency feeding, identify multiple service providers in advance, allocate emergency funds with clear trigger mechanisms, and prioritize local suppliers and workforce. Implement strict policies on data sharing, administrative overhead, and travel costs.	34

Emergency Feeding Infrastructure - Establish permanent Resource Hubs equipped with mobile kitchens, refrigeration, and storage to act as food distribution centers. Integrate wrap-around supportive services into Resource Hubs. Develop Agricultural Hubs to serve as centralized repositories for storing essential supplies and equipment. Create dedicated positions to address emergency feeding and proactively development of feeding systems at both the State and County levels.	32 - 33; 36 - 41
Enhance Emergency Preparedness in Agriculture & Food Sector - Establish an Agricultural Emergency Fund to support local farmers during disasters. Promote local product purchasing in emergency contracts, strengthen collaboration with the Department of Health (DOH) on feeding protocols, and develop a network of tools and translators for emergency communication and preparedness. Develop training sessions for fire prevention and land maintenance, and create clear protocols for land clearing after disasters to mitigate risks and promote recovery efforts.	41 - 43
Policies to Build Long-Term Resilience - Develop county-level policies to implement a comprehensive Emergency Feeding Plan, promote local purchasing programs, and establish clear standards for contracts and data-sharing agreements for streamlined emergency response. At the state level, reduce barriers to emergency feeding, support food assistance programs, and address the financial needs of agricultural producers impacted by disasters. At the federal level, integrate local feeding efforts into FEMA, increase SNAP and Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) benefits to account for Hawai'i's higher cost of living, and increase flexibility in nutrition programs during disasters.	45 - 47
Address Homelessness and Other Service Gaps Post-Disaster - Identify service gaps for homeless populations after disasters and develop recommendations to support displaced individuals. Advocate for holistic, culturally sensitive approaches to disaster relief for vulnerable populations.	140-145

In conclusion, the 2023 Maui wildfires exposed both the strength of community-driven relief efforts and the vulnerabilities in the island's disaster response infrastructure. The MEFT's comprehensive assessment highlights the need for sustained collaboration, investment in local food systems, and the establishment of permanent emergency feeding infrastructure to ensure Maui County is better prepared for future crises.

Maui Emergency Feeding Task Force Overview

In September 2023, it was discovered through Red Cross representatives that a critical decision had been made at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) regarding the 2023 Maui wildfires: a feeding task force was deemed unnecessary for the response and relief efforts. This surprising revelation came as a shock to many local organizations, as feeding task forces are typically a key component in disaster relief. Recognizing the gaps in service and the growing need for coordinated efforts, the local nonprofit Common Ground Collective (CGC) took swift action. They approached leadership at both Maui United Way and Hawaiʻi Community Foundation to discuss the need for a dedicated feeding task force.

After several discussions, it was agreed that given the magnitude of the disaster and its wide-reaching impacts, entacting a multi-agency feeding task force was an essential best practice measure (Howitt and Leonard 219; *Multi-Agency Feeding Support Plan Template* ii*)*. The three organizations partnered to establish the Maui Emergency Feeding Task Force (MEFT) under the Common Ground Collective's non-profit umbrella. To ensure the task force would be effectively managed and facilitated, local consultants were brought on board to assist with logistics, coordination, and long-term strategy.

Supported by the Hawaiʻi Community Foundation's Maui Strong funds, and aligned with national best practice models around emergency feeding task forces, the MEFT was tasked with building a coalition of stakeholders to collaboratively optimize resource utilization and ensure the island's food needs were met during this critical time. Individuals and organizations invested in Maui's emergency feeding, including nonprofits, community groups, and local farmers, were invited to join the coalition and work together to address the urgent need. Through these collaborative efforts, the MEFT sought to address the immediate gaps in feeding services, ensure efficient resource allocation, and foster the creation and management of a more resilient food system for the island moving forward.

Participants of the Maui Emergency Feeding Task Force

(Please see [Appendix A](#) for this list with accompanying specialties and contact information)

American Red Cross
All Hands and Hearts
Chef Hui
Citizen's Church Maui
Common Ground Collective

County of Maui Department of Agriculture
Feed My Sheep
Hawaiʻi Community Foundation
Hawaiʻi Data Collaborative
Hawaiʻi Farmers Union United

Hawaiʻi Public Health Institute
Hawaiʻi Farm Project
Hua Momona Farms
Hungry Heroes Hawaiʻi
Hulihia
Kaiser Permanente
Living Pono Project
Old Lowes Hub
Old Safeway Hub
Mala Tavern
Maui Food Bank
Maui Hub

Maui Nui Venison
Maui Rapid Response
Maui United Way
Napili Noho Hub
Nohoana Farms
Pohaku Park/S-Turns Hub
Rimfire Imports
The Keola Project
University of Hawaiʻi Maui College
Upcountry Strong
United States Department of
Agriculture (USDA)

Goals and Methodology

The overarching goals identified in the creation of the Maui Emergency Feeding Task Force (MEFT) were to organize stakeholders, foster collaboration, and optimize resource utilization among the emergency feeding sector. The MEFT created a plan to achieve this through a two-fold process. The MEFT first sought to identify unmet needs, lessons learned, and recurring themes within the emergency feeding sectors by surveying key stakeholders within the emergency feeding sector on Maui. With the information obtained, the MEFT then worked to develop clear recommendations and a synthesized plan to support resiliency building within the emergency feeding needs in Maui County.

Biweekly meetings were instituted to coordinate efforts, share resources, and enhance efficiency. The Agendas and Minutes to these meetings can be found in *Appendix B*. To comprehensively assess the impact and efficacy of these efforts, a structured survey methodology was employed among key stakeholders within the emergency feeding sector. This approach explored distribution frequencies, logistical challenges, demographic insights, and the perceived effectiveness of strategies employed.

Utilizing both quantitative data and qualitative feedback, the MEFT aimed to utilize findings to inform robust disaster response strategies and bolster community resilience against future natural and man-made disasters. By capturing firsthand accounts and data-driven feedback from stakeholders, the MEFT also aimed to identify common themes that can inform future disaster response strategies and enhance the resilience of Maui's communities in the face of future natural and man-made disasters. Survey responses have been anonymously incorporated into this report and have greatly informed the recommendations put forth.

The coordinated approach of the MEFT allowed for the evaluation of the post-wildfire feeding landscape, while also supported the creation of community-formulated recommendations for bolstering emergency feeding capabilities across Maui County. By identifying existing gaps, building resilience, and fostering collaboration among governmental, nonprofit, and private sectors, the MEFT seeks to ensure more effective and efficient emergency feeding responses in future crises (Howitt and Leonard 219; *Multi-Agency Feeding Support Plan Template* ii-3).

The work of the MEFT is ongoing and it is through this report that the MEFT aspires to further open the door for the creation of a collaborative, sustainable, community-led emergency feeding plan and future response.

> Too often, local actors are excluded from decision-making processes in favor of large, well-funded international humanitarian organizations. When external actors are involved, they must understand and respect this principle and work to support and build on what already exists locally...The involvement of affected persons [in decision-making] is as important as the services and support provided. (*Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Coordination* 4)

The recommendations and plan put forth here intentionally encourages collaboration between governmental, private, nonprofit, and philanthropic sectors; streamlines the process to support resiliency building within the emergency feeding needs of Maui County; and can be a replicated best-practice model statewide.

Community Data Collection

The following section highlights major findings derived from the surveys administered by the MEFT and Task Force partners between August 2023 and September 2024. All efforts have been made to protect the identities of those who responded, while uplifting the invaluable information that was shared.

Maui Citizen Survey *(Appendix C)*

The Maui Emergency Feeding Needs Survey was administered by the MEFT to help better understand and address the pressing food-related challenges – such as access to food resources, food preferences, and any specific challenges – faced by the community during directly following the 2023 Maui wildfires. Community members responded between September 2023 and June 2024. Input was used to aid the MEFT in developing targeted strategies and resources during this prolonged time of crisis.

One-hundred and thirty-six members of the Maui community responded to this survey to report out on the needs, challenges, and preferences of their households. Of those who responded, 53.7% of respondents reported that their place of residence was lost in the fires; an additional 12.5% of respondents reported not being able to reside in their place of residence (due to eviction or inhabitable state); and 25% reported no loss of residence, but loss of business, job, or income as a result of the fires. The majority (58.9%) of those directly affected reported being sheltered by FEMA or Red Cross - predominantly (58.5%) in hotels.

Less than half (45.6%) of respondents reported having consistent, reliable access to sufficient foods. The majority of those who had applied for SNAP were denied; and roughly one-fifth (21.3%) of respondents reported having to use their own savings, money, or monetary donations to purchase food. Half (50.7%) of respondents reported accessing food through more than one source, most commonly by: picking up ingredients from a community hub or distribution center (41.9%) and/or food boxes (38.2%). "Food boxes" (43.1%) were also the most common request for food assistance by respondents. Close to one-third (30.1%) of respondents reported that a member of their household had a dietary restriction - such as vegetarianism, an allergy, or a diabetic diet - and close to 12% of respondents reported needing access to baby or child formula/food.

Hot Meal Provider Survey *(Appendix D)*

Common Ground Collective (CGC) and the MEFT partnered to survey organizations supplying hot meals to the Maui community following the 2023 wildfires. Sixteen organizations responded to the *Hot Meal Provider Survey* between October 9 and November 20, 2023. These organizations included for-profit and nonprofit businesses, community groups, and fiscally sponsored residents. Of the responding organizations, only one reported they had provided an emergency or food insecure meal program prior to the 2023 Maui wildfires.

Individually, each surveyed organization reported serving anywhere from fifty to 1,200 meals daily. Collectively, these organizations reported serving between 4,520 to 5,648 meals daily, or a total of over 307,000 meals to date. The majority of responding organizations (60%) provided meals seven days a week, in an array of areas – from Honokōwai Beach Hub to Upcountry Maui.

The majority of responding organizations reported offering meals to anyone using ingredients from whatever was donated (75%). The majority (75%) also reported paying for some or all of the necessary supplies with their own money. Less than half (44%) of responding organizations reported that their staff was paid – most were

volunteers. Lack of funding was the top identified barrier to the continued sustainability of feeding efforts. Responding organizations collectively acknowledged that they would not feel confident discontinuing their feeding efforts until it was ensured that their communities' needs were being met (i.e., "displaced people are being taken care of", "farmers are supported", "jobs are secured", "Maui is being fed", "housing is solved", "the economy is stabilized", and "people have access to their own kitchen").

Grocery Distribution & Food Box Survey *([Appendix E](#))*

Common Ground Collective (CGC) and the MEFT partnered to survey organizations distributing food boxes to the community following the 2023 Maui wildfires. Only three organizations responded to the *Grocery Distribution & Food Box Survey*. Data analysis was limited due to small response size.

The three responding organizations reported to have been providing food boxes prior to the wildfires and expanded their capacity to respond to the need. Food boxes were primarily distributed in neighborhoods, and one organization offered pick-up at the organization's location. Donations were used to fund supply purchases by all responding organizations, and two organizations also reported utilizing nonprofit funding. All three organizations identified funding as a top area for improvement and the biggest barrier to serving the community, and that this was an unmet need prior to the wildfires that should continue long-term.

Distribution Hub Survey *([Appendix F](#))*

In September 2023, members of the MEFT individually met with the leaders of five distribution hubs that had been stood up in response to the 2023 Maui wildfires: Honokowai Beach Park, Kelawea Mauka Park, Napili Noho, S-Turns and Sheraton. The goal of these meetings was to gather information for the MEFT to support the hubs and community in a more organized way moving forward.

All interviewed hubs reported being open five to seven days/week from either 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. or 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., with varying days and extended hours of operation between them. Collectively, these hubs told a shared story of wanting to serve the people that really needed it through the provision of consistent and reliable services, supplies, and comfort – using island family values that support health, wellness, and community building. Their spaces' and crews' ability to offer comprehensive community building, fresh hot meals at all times, mental health and healing support were also among their most frequently identified strengths. It was collectively reported that collaborating with an extensive network of local and national

nonprofits and organizations to obtain supplies and maintain operations was a shared strength.

The most frequently identified areas of need were manpower/staffing, funding, and a secure location so staff did not have to sleep at the hubs. Only 20% of interviewed hubs reported having paid positions, 80% expressed interest in receiving staffing support, and 60% reported longer term hub sustainability would be reliant on positions that pay more unemployment (i.e., more than $16/hr; $4 -5k/monthly). Additional identified areas of improvement and need included: equipment; infrastructure, organization and communication support; security; translation services; and inventory tracking and supply ordering.

Despite these barriers, interviewed hubs consistently reported they would only feel confident decommissioning hub support when the need was no longer there. This would be known when: operational, logistical, and infrastructure systems are incorporated into reconstruction; community members are back in their long-term homes; people are able to be back at work and families are no longer financially burdened; and opportunities for healing are readily available through community building events, music, and low cost entertainment.

Agriculture Industry Survey *([Appendix G](#))*

The MEFT's partner, Hawai'i Farmers Union United (HFUU), conducted a *2023 Fire Impacted Producer Survey* that found that almost 60% of their 67 responding farmers and ranchers lost 75-100% of their market access following the 2023 fires. The majority of survey respondents reported their most immediate need to be for financial relief and grants.

Restaurant & Small Business Survey *([Appendix H](#))*

The Restaurant and Small Business Maui Fire Relief and Economic Impact Survey was created by the MEFT to collect vital data detailing the roles of small businesses and restaurants that served the community in the weeks following the 2023 Maui wildfires, and the resulting economic impact that each faced. Fifty-seven Maui-based restaurants and small businesses responded to the survey.

Seventy-seven percent (77%) of responding restaurants and businesses reported being involved in the post-wildfire emergency feeding efforts. These businesses identified themselves as being largely family owned-operated restaurants and

non-restaurant small businesses, a third of whom were located in Lāhainā and the remaining from Upcountry, South, and Central Maui.

Almost all of responding businesses (91%) reported donating products, services, time, skills, space, or money toward the food relief effort. Of the 37% of responding businesses that reported providing hot meals, averages ranged from providing twenty to 1,500 meals/daily and three-hundred to 10,500 meals/weekly. The approximate collective sum of money spent by responding businesses on food relief efforts totaled over $800,000. Average spending per business was reported to be approximately $18,400; however some businesses reported spending as much as $200,000. Financial aid was cited as the top immediate need of these businesses, specifically grants and financial aid that did not require payback. This was specifically highlighted as a need by 31% of responding businesses that reported to already be carrying debt from financial loans or aid (e.g., Economic Injury and Disaster Loan or PPP) received during COVID, which significantly limited their ability to obtain another loan.

Emergency Feeding Support To Date *(Appendix I)*

One year post-wildfire, the MEFT administered *The Emergency Feeding Support To Date Survey* to the organizations and groups who had supported the emergency feeding efforts the most to date. Thirteen organizations responded. In the corresponding data, "to date" is reflective of the timeframe August 2023 to September 2024.

Between the 13 responding organizations, an estimated total of 1,557,160 meals; 217,398 food boxes; and over 6,095 tons of food have been provided to the Maui community. These responding organizations alone reported spending $25.9 million on emergency feeding efforts over the past year, an average of $2.4 million per organization. The majority (median percentage of 85%) of these funds went directly towards local purchasing for emergency feeding. These efforts have also been facilitated through the creation of over 79 emergency feeding staff related positions and an approximate sum of 224,554 volunteer hours.

Emergency Feeding Planning Survey *(Appendix J)*

The Emergency Feeding Planning Survey was administered by the MEFT one year post-wildfire to organizations that played a role in emergency feeding to date. In the corresponding data, "to date" is reflective of the timeframe August 2023 to September 2024. Twelve organizations responded.

One-hundred percent (100%) of responding organizations reported interest in supporting future emergency feeding efforts in Maui County. The twelve responding organizations reported abilities to provide future support mostly through the provision of food boxes and coordination, followed by transportation/delivery and local product aggregation/distribution. None of the responding organizations reported an ability to offer fiscal sponsorship or shipping support.

Responding organizations with the ability to provide meals and food, reported capacity ranges from: zero to 100,000 daily meals; 240 to 400 weekly fresh produce boxes; and up to 2,500 lbs of ground meat. These efforts could be sustained by responding organizations for the following timeframes: nine to eighteen months with appropriate resources and partnership (40%); indefinitely with the appropriate level of support (40%); and less than 1 week without additional resources (20%).

Many of the respondents specified that the above amounts are dependent on appropriate funding, planning, and manpower. While responding organizations were able to provide past support by stretching grant funds, utilizing their own finances, and through donations; these did not prove sufficient to cover all expenses. Having an emergency budget to support these efforts, outside of what nonprofits can supply, was highlighted as an essential component to planning ahead.

Overview of Local Feeding Efforts in Response to the 2023 Maui Wildfires

The 2023 Maui wildfires presented a uniquely challenging landscape for disaster response, with multiple fires breaking out across different locations on the island. Of the various fires, two caused significant residential damage in separate areas, resulting in widespread and varied impacts. These fires not only devastated the physical landscape but also exposed critical vulnerabilities in the island's emergency response capabilities. Although pre-existing disaster response plans were in place, no clear plan was implemented to support the island's feeding needs. It appears that the maintenance and updating of these plans and systems had not been adequately kept up, ultimately leading to their failure when they were most needed. Moreover, it is believed that the sheer scale of the disaster, combined with the extensive areas affected, overwhelmed typical response efforts (Maui Police Department 10; Western Fire Chiefs Association).

Maui's geographic location and housing landscape further complicated the response efforts. The island's unique challenges of having the highest rent costs in the nation, with 52.9% of Maui County's population being rent burdened, coupled with an

already severe housing crisis, meant that the fires exacerbated an already precarious situation (Tyndall et al. 24). Many of those impacted by the fires were housed in hotels, where they lacked access to kitchens or areas to prepare their own meals. This situation forced individuals and families to rely on emergency feeding systems for much longer than in typical disasters, where such needs usually persist for only 4 to 6 weeks. While the need for continued food assistance can vary based on the scale of the disaster and community recovery pace ("How We Respond to Disasters | Feeding America"), this duration is based on historical disaster recovery timelines, where emergency food distribution remains active until the affected communities can stabilize and transition to regular supply chains. After major disasters like floods or hurricanes, food relief organizations partner with local agencies to ensure access to essential food supplies.

In comparison, as of July 2024, hot meals were still being provided to those impacted on Maui – almost a year after the wildfires. The lack of available housing and decision to use hotels for the Non-Congregate Shelter (NCS) program, not only affected displaced residents but also made it difficult to accommodate disaster response workers, further straining the response efforts.

Adding to the complexity was the delayed response from government agencies and Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD). This delay necessitated an immediate community-led response to address the urgent needs on the ground. However, when official response channels eventually arrived, there was no clear plan for integrating these efforts with those already established by the community. This disconnect led to friction between official response providers and local community efforts, creating additional challenges in coordinating a unified response.

Pre-existing food insecurity on Maui, which had already been a significant issue before the fires, was further exacerbated by the disaster, putting even more pressure on the island's limited resources. In 2022, Aloha United Way found that 52% of Maui County residents struggled to "afford housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, a smartphone plan, and taxes — the basics needed to live and work in the modern economy" (*ALICE in Hawai'i* 4). According to the Hawai'i Food Bank, 31.4% of residents in Maui County already experienced food insecurity before the fires and "among the households affected by the wildfires, 49% experienced food insecurity — highlighting the importance of developing proactive disaster preparedness and response plans within the community" (21; 31).

Cultural and trust issues also surfaced during the response, compounding frustrations among both responders and the impacted communities. Maui's strong cultural identity and close-knit community dynamics meant that any missteps or perceived insensitivity by outside agencies could quickly erode trust. This cultural

dimension, coupled with the already strained resources, made effective communication and collaboration even more critical — and, unfortunately, more difficult to achieve. The 2023 Maui wildfires thus underscored the need for disaster response plans that are not only up-to-date and well-maintained but also deeply attuned to the unique geographical, cultural, and social landscapes of the communities they are designed to protect.

FEMA/ VOAD Models for Response

FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) and VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) play critical roles in emergency response efforts during disasters, providing essential resources, coordination, and support to affected communities. FEMA, as the primary federal agency responsible for disaster response, typically leads their effort by coordinating with state and local governments to deliver immediate relief. This includes deploying resources such as search and rescue teams, medical assistance, and temporary housing solutions, as well as providing financial aid to help individuals and communities recover. FEMA's role is to manage the logistical complexities of large-scale disaster response, ensuring that federal resources are allocated efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of those impacted (FEMA).

VOAD is a coalition of nonprofit organizations that specialize in various aspects of disaster response, including food distribution, sheltering, emotional and spiritual care, and long-term recovery assistance. VOAD's strength lies in its ability to mobilize a diverse network of organizations, each with its own expertise, to provide a comprehensive response to disasters. By fostering collaboration among its member organizations, the aim of VOAD is to help avoid duplication of efforts and ensure that aid is delivered where it is most needed. This collaborative approach allows for a more agile and community-focused response, addressing both immediate needs and longer-term recovery efforts (National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD)).

However, it has been noted that the effectiveness of FEMA and VOAD's response efforts can be challenged by the scale and complexity of disasters. The FEMA/VOAD model has faced challenges and lost effectiveness in several large-scale or complex disasters due to factors like coordination difficulties, overwhelmed systems, and unique local conditions. Below, are a few examples:

1. Hurricane Katrina (2005): One of the most significant examples where the FEMA/VOAD model struggled was during Hurricane Katrina. The scale of the disaster, combined with the widespread devastation across New Orleans and the Gulf Coast, overwhelmed FEMA's response capacity. The disaster exposed critical flaws in disaster preparedness, communication, and coordination between

federal, state, and local agencies. Delays in the federal response and miscommunication between agencies led to prolonged suffering for many affected residents. VOAD organizations were also stretched thin, facing challenges in coordinating their efforts amid the chaos ("Emergency Management"; Haney).

2. Puerto Rico and Hurricane Maria (2017): The response to Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico highlighted significant issues with the FEMA/VOAD model in geographically isolated and culturally unique regions. The island's infrastructure was severely damaged, making it difficult for FEMA and VOAD organizations to deliver aid efficiently. The logistics of delivering aid to an island, compounded by pre-existing economic challenges and communication breakdowns, resulted in slow and often inadequate assistance. The disaster response was criticized for being delayed and insufficient, with many residents left without power, clean water, or food for extended periods ("Emergency Management"; Haney).

3. COVID-19 Pandemic (2020-2021): Although not a traditional natural disaster, the COVID-19 pandemic revealed the limitations of the FEMA/VOAD model in dealing with a prolonged, nationwide crisis. The pandemic required a response that was vastly different from the typical disaster scenarios FEMA and VOAD are accustomed to. The scale of the crisis, affecting every state simultaneously, strained resources and exposed weaknesses in the coordination between federal and state governments. Additionally, the nature of the pandemic necessitated a response that was not just immediate but sustained over many months, challenging the traditional disaster response model that is usually focused on short-term relief. ("Emergency Management"; Howitt and Leonard 215-221)

These examples illustrate how the FEMA/VOAD model, while effective in many situations, can struggle in the face of large-scale or particularly complex disasters. Factors such as the overwhelming scale of the disaster, geographical isolation, pre-existing vulnerabilities, and the need for prolonged response efforts can strain the model's effectiveness.

In large-scale events, such as hurricanes, wildfires, or earthquakes, the sheer number of people affected and the widespread damage can overwhelm even the most well-prepared systems. In such cases, the coordination between FEMA, VOAD, and local agencies becomes crucial. Delays in response or miscommunication between agencies can lead to gaps in service delivery, leaving vulnerable populations without the necessary support. Furthermore, in culturally unique or geographically isolated areas, such as island communities or rural regions, the standard response protocols may not be sufficient, requiring tailored approaches that consider local conditions and needs.

Local Feeding Efforts Summarized

In response to the 2023 Maui wildfires, local nonprofits and grassroots community efforts played a crucial role in the emergency feeding response. As the fires devastated large areas of Maui, official response efforts, including those from FEMA and VOAD, were delayed or limited due to the scale of the disaster and geographic challenges. This left a gap that local organizations had to fill quickly.

Local nonprofits, community groups, and chefs, along with local farmers, restaurants, and grassroots volunteers, mobilized to provide hot meals, food boxes, and essential supplies to displaced residents. Community-led hubs became key in the distribution of food and resources, often operating with minimal or no support from official channels. Despite the lack of formal infrastructure, these grassroots organizations leveraged their local knowledge and networks to deliver food where it was needed most.

Local nonprofits tried their best to work collaboratively to ensure culturally relevant meals were provided whenever possible. Many tapped into local agriculture, ensuring that fresh produce and proteins were included in the relief efforts. However, the lack of coordination and conflict with official agencies, coupled with limited funding, resources and infrastructure, strained these community efforts as they struggled to keep up with demand. Some efforts were not able to continue serving due to these challenges while others are still providing support more than a year later.

Gaps, Barriers, and Challenges in the 2023 Maui Wildfires: Lessons for Future Resilience

The 2023 Maui Wildfires brought to light several significant gaps, barriers, and challenges in the emergency feeding and disaster response systems. While the efforts made by official agencies, nonprofits, and grassroots organizations were commendable, several systemic issues hindered the effectiveness of these responses. These challenges are not highlighted to criticize any one group's response but rather to serve as valuable lessons for the future. Addressing these problems is crucial to ensuring that Maui's emergency feeding systems, as well as its broader food security infrastructure, are better prepared for future crises.

Coordination issues, infrastructure limitations, communication breakdowns, and cultural insensitivities all contributed to the difficulties faced during the wildfire

response. From delayed official activations to gaps in integrating local community efforts into the larger system, it became clear that roles, responsibilities, and expectations were not clearly defined. Additionally, strained resources and logistical hurdles, such as shipping costs and infrastructure constraints, led to inefficiencies and frustrations on the ground.

By identifying and learning from these challenges, future disaster responses can be better coordinated, ensuring that local feeding systems can continue to serve the community effectively in the face of adversity.

Breakdowns, Gaps and Barriers

Activation and Coordination Issues:

- Although there were reports of prearranged plans and networks, they were not activated.
- An official Feeding Task Force was not implemented in this disaster. Due to this, the MEFT was stood up towards the end of September 2023.
- Official response efforts were delayed due to various factors (e.g., geographic location, size of disaster, multiple impacted areas).
- Local efforts stood up initial programs and systems but were not properly integrated with official response efforts.
- The lack of integration of community groups and local organizations caused frustrations, confusion, gaps, and waste in the feeding system.
- Actors, roles, and responsibilities were never clearly defined at the beginning, leading to inconsistent objectives and miscommunication by County and VOAD officials.
- State and County partnerships with hubs, including those in direct collaboration, lacked coordination and cooperation with the broader relief efforts. This resulted in conflicts, withholding of resources, and bottlenecks in supply distribution.
- When hot meals were being phased out by the official response channels, some NCS host sites resisted direct food delivery to hotel-housed residents in need and opposed bringing in outside food.
- Community groups and organizations who helped during response and recovery were generally not prepared to take on response efforts of this size. This led to a lack of protocols, procedures and proper inventory management in some cases.
- Community groups and organizations though working together, did not have unified policies, procedures, or inventory management systems which created issues between groups and organizations that were difficult to reconcile or hold accountability without jeopardizing overall ties

- Emergency feeding partners and the community wanted coordinated efforts, but no single entity took ownership of this in the aftermath of the wildfires, and it was difficult to almost impossible to do as a peer to peer coordination effort.
- There was a lack of forward-facing maps and consistent, reliable information disseminated out to the public, contributing to frustration, confusion, and distrust.
- The lack of a predetermined plan or framework for response left the community equally lost after communications, cell towers, and power went down.

Infrastructure and Resource Challenges:

- There was a lack of infrastructure, equipment, and public spaces that made response efforts challenging (e.g., pre-established resource hubs, commercial kitchens, large refrigeration units, satellite phones).
- Government response shelters lacked infrastructure to cook hot meals from the beginning and this continued through the NCS program.
- Many emergency feeding partners are staffed by volunteers or are nonprofit with budget limitations for staffing, which limited capacity and led to burnout.
- Supply chain delays and our remote island location required significant logistical efforts and prohibited timely delivery of needed food and supplies.
- Shipping costs were high and not covered by many donors, leaving local agencies to cover shipping and trucking costs.
- Water contamination issues that stemmed from the fires in Kula and Lāhainā lasted for months after the fires. This, paired with a lack of filtered drinking water at hotels, led to massive amounts of plastic waste and huge costs for service providers.
- There were complaints of a lack of culturally familiar foods served in both non-congregate shelters and community meal programs.
- Funding gray areas and gaps for service providers existed for those assisting the directly impacted homeless and others who just needed assistance. This caused unnecessary stress and financial hardships for providers and agencies.

Data and Communication Barriers:

- Technology for communications failed, and there were no systems in place that the community knew about to obtain information about response and relief services.
- There was a lack of data and data coordination for headcounts, NCS updates, funding spent, inventory, and wrap-around services.
- Multiple requests for data were denied or ignored by VOAD, State, and County representatives, data that could have helped prevent gaps in feeding and better resource management.

- Early data lacked transparency around the number and location of people in hotels and short-term vacation rentals, creating barriers to ensuring everyone had food, water, and basic needs met.
- Data points such as addresses did not work for those that lived on compounds with multiple units, had unconventional living situations, concerns with immigrant statuses or who were previously homeless.

Economic and Financial Impacts:

- FEMA's model of reimbursement does not include a channel for many local nonprofits and grassroots community groups or local agricultural businesses to receive support.
- Hawaiʻi Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA) does not normally have contracts prepared with local organizations and retroactive contracting is still not complete after over a year since the wildfires. This is making it difficult for local nonprofits who do not have the capacity to float feeding costs for long periods of time.
- Local farmers and food producers lost significant market connections and faced financial uncertainty after being told they did not qualify for insurance or FEMA reimbursements and that loans were their only option.
- There are no clear requirements for local purchasing or contracting, leading to a downward economic spiral.
- Sorting of donated goods, shipping, and trucking costs were consistently listed gaps in funding.
- Capacity building assistance for local agencies was another gap. This impacted agencies' ability to plan, fundraise, and implement disaster response services.
- Local feeding partners were not prioritized or supported by official response efforts. This contributed to the tremendous suffering of the local economy, as many small and large businesses took on the economic burden of feeding the community.
- The FEMA housing program exacerbated the local housing crisis and caused an increase of food insecure residents. These residents did not qualify for fire relief support putting the additional burden on local agencies.

Cultural and Social Issues:

- Community efforts were celebrated in public but were also chastised and deprived of resources through the official response efforts.
- There were significant trust and cultural issues that arose, exacerbating frustrations in response.
- Fire-impacted residents who chose to stay with family instead of Red Cross shelters fell through the cracks with feeding and other services.

- Part of the culture in Hawai'i is to care for your community – which is why response efforts were so immediate; but that culturally tied responsibility was not understood or respected by some official response efforts.
- Many fire-impacted residents felt uncomfortable with or completely against official response processes due to a range of factors, including: official response failures that took place during the fires, historical trauma, colonization, cultural sensitivities, stigmas, and foreign propaganda campaigns.
- Lack of translators or technology to help with communication barriers led to frustrations and gaps within various subsects of the community including those with disabilities, Non-English speakers or those with English as a second language (ESL) (Ravida, et al., 2024).
- The Department of Health (DOH) policies and regulations, including inspections, commercial kitchen requirements, food temperature regulations, and animal slaughter and harvesting impeded the distribution of local proteins and presented challenges for those offering emergency feeding services.
- Complaints arose regarding a lack of culturally familiar foods and options for those with dietary restrictions such as vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free, and allergies.

In conclusion, the gaps, barriers, and challenges faced during the 2023 Maui wildfires highlight the complexities of disaster response in such a unique and vulnerable region. While there were significant issues with coordination, infrastructure, communication, and integration between local efforts and official response systems, these challenges provide critical learning opportunities. By understanding the breakdowns that occurred, Maui can take proactive steps to strengthen its emergency feeding systems and overall disaster preparedness. Rather than viewing these challenges as failures, they should serve as catalysts for improvement, ensuring that future disaster responses are more cohesive, efficient, and culturally sensitive. Through collaboration and innovation, Maui's food systems can be fortified to prevent diminished capacity and better serve the community in times of crisis.

The integration of FEMA and VOAD efforts with community-led initiatives is vital for successful disaster response. While FEMA and VOAD bring significant resources and expertise to the table, local communities often have the best understanding of their own needs and the most effective ways to address them. When FEMA and VOAD work closely with community organizations, they can create a more seamless and effective response that leverages both national resources and local knowledge. This collaboration not only enhances the immediate relief efforts but also helps to build stronger, more resilient communities that are better prepared for future disasters.

Emergency Feeding Network and Coordination Recommendations

The recovery efforts at all levels have been commendable, showcasing a phenomenal feat of coordination and resilience despite the many challenges the community faced at the onset of the wildfires. From government agencies to local nonprofits, the collaborative response made significant impacts, providing much-needed relief and support to affected communities. However, even with these successes, it is crucial to learn from the challenges encountered to prevent diminished capacity at all levels of response and within the local economy and community. By addressing these pitfalls and implementing strategic improvements, we can strengthen our preparedness and resiliency building to ensure a more robust and effective response in future emergencies – one that can also be tied into the larger statewide framework as it is developed.

The current iteration of the Maui Emergency Feeding Task Force (MEFT) exists because of a significant breakdown in coordination, roles, and responsibilities during the recent disaster and was established in the midst of this chaos. Establishing a robust task force in advance with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, comprehensive training programs, and streamlined communication protocols, will ensure a more efficient and effective response to future disasters. The lessons learned from this disaster emphasize the importance of preparedness, planning, and collaboration. These guideposts drove the formation and expansion of this Task Force, as it continues to seek to build a more resilient and well-prepared community in Maui County.

It is recommended that a Maui Emergency Feeding Task Force be continued and a comprehensive emergency feeding plan be prioritized. This is crucial given Maui's unique geographic location and the potential for diminished capacity in times of crisis. Due to Maui's remote island setting, ensuring that food needs are met during disasters requires a robust, scalable system that can adapt to the varying scales of emergencies. By incorporating a diverse range of local partners, we can build stronger systems that enhance our community's resilience. These partnerships foster trust and accountability, ensuring that data consistency is maintained and that the distribution of food and resources is efficient and effective.

Involving local partners promotes economic resilience through supporting local farmers and food producers, thereby preventing the collapse of our tourism-dependent local agricultural economy. This strengthens our food supply chain and ensures that emergency responses are swift and tailored to the community's needs, providing culturally appropriate food to support community health and wellbeing. A well-coordinated task force can maintain data consistency, which is vital for accurate

tracking and reporting of resources and needs. This accountability ensures that resources are used effectively and that aid reaches those who need it most. Importantly, having a task force increases the reach of information delivery, helping to prevent communication breakdowns. By providing comprehensive resource lists that the community can access both in advance and during emergencies, we can avoid many of the gaps and breakdowns witnessed after the 2023 Maui Wildfires. Ultimately, the integration of local partners into the emergency feeding plan creates a resilient, and self-sufficient community, more prepared to overcome future disasters and mitigate impacts of climate change or even help prevent them.

Proposed Hierarchy for Multi-Agency Disaster Response & The Continuation of the Maui Emergency Feeding Task Force for Future Coordination

The MEFT aims to develop a well-organized and efficient chain of response. In order to do so, transferring coordination to the Hawaiʻi Community Foundation while building out positions within Maui Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), Hawaiʻi Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA), Department of Health (DOH, Department of Human Services (DHS), and the Maui Department of Agriculture (MDoA), with continued support from VOAD is recommended. This structure will ensure secure yet fluid data flow, meeting the community's needs more efficiently.

The proposed hierarchy is designed to ensure accountability, a critical aspect that becomes much harder to maintain without built-in measures. For example, as Common Ground Collective (CGC) helped spearhead this effort, there were times when it felt inappropriate for their leadership to weigh in on the tasks or programs of other agencies because they were peers in the response efforts. CGC has noted that it would likely be hard for any organization to remain unbiased in this position as a peer of other direct service providers. Additionally, while VOAD is a valuable resource that brings in a diverse network of organizations and businesses, it lacks the framework to ensure accountability or investigate concerns. This can lead to distrust in the entire response system. For this reason it is recommended that the Task Force should be led by a local agency that is *not* providing direct services but can work directly with local agencies that are, while also integrating into a multi-agency response network at the Federal, State and County levels. This approach will help ensure consistency and continuity of the Task Force, preparedness plans, and the network of providers during non-emergency times, as well as bridge gaps during changes in government, organizational leadership, and administrations. This framework of hierarchy and response is demonstrated in the below model.
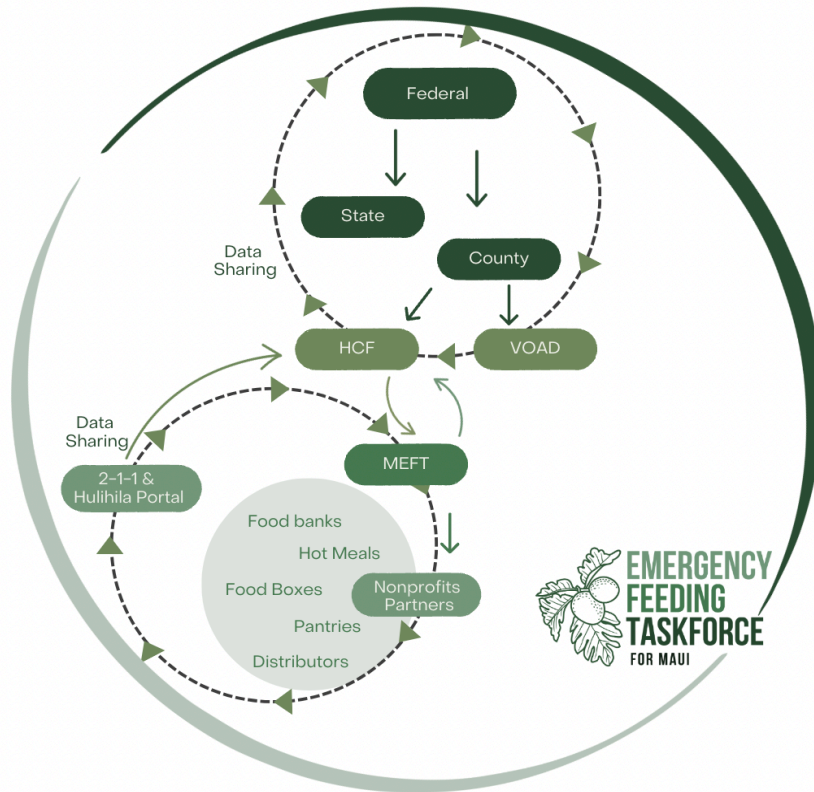
System Framework Role Recommendations

This is not meant to outline the full roles of VOAD, governmental, nonprofit, and community agencies during a disaster or emergency. It instead gives brief recommendations of how it would work to integrate the MEFT into an updated multi-agency model of response.

Federal and State Representatives

Roles: Provide support in the forms of solidarity, National and State network coordination, equipment, funding, and resources.

Responsibilities: Ensure access to areas in need, create data sharing agreements, involve community organizations in development of planning framework, maintain open communication lines and consistency in messaging with community partners, provide community updates and education, advocate for assistance and support, ensure contract compliance, and facilitate coordination between various levels of government response and the community.

County Representatives

Roles: Similar to Federal and State Representatives with a localized focus.

Responsibilities: Address specific county needs, liaise with state and federal levels, bridge government siloes, ensure County employees share consistent messaging and directions with the community, facilitate the implementation of tailored solutions for the community, oversee local resource allocation, support local nonprofits and community groups, and ensure efficient local emergency responses.

Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF)
Roles: Accountability and coordination.

Responsibilities: Maintain the coordination of the Emergency Feeding Task Force both in times of emergency and nonemergency. Work to maintain and expand the existing framework; onboard agencies and create a process for the flow of communications between the government, VOAD, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and local organizations, businesses and contractors; streamline local funding opportunities; and implement the framework of the Task Force and response with a focus on building a circular economic model; work closely with VOAD to ensure seamless integration of data both ways, volunteer efforts and resource allocation.

VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster):
Roles: Provide wraparound services and national resource coordination.

Responsibilities: Allocate additional staff and volunteer capacity that can be phased out to minimize per diem and travel costs, share data with local entities, support national resource coordination, and ensure comprehensive service delivery during emergencies.

Local Nonprofits, Distributors, Food Banks, Pantries, Restaurants, and Community Groups:
Roles: Operate as the backbone of the food distribution network.

Responsibilities: Operate Resource Hubs as pantries and rentable kitchens during non-emergency times, activate during emergencies to provide hot meals, manage food distribution, maintain hub operations, ensure a steady supply of food and resources, prepare and distribute meals, and support community outreach efforts.

Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF) stands out as the best fit for overseeing the Maui Emergency Feeding Task Force due to its size, capacity, and established presence within the community. HCF has a long history of successfully managing large-scale initiatives and has the infrastructure needed to handle complex coordination efforts. Their existing work within the community, which includes supporting local nonprofits and addressing various social needs, positions them uniquely to integrate the

Task Force's objectives seamlessly. Additionally, HCF's ability to attract and manage funds has been clearly demonstrated through their 107 years in operation. This is no more clearly evidenced than through their raising of over $199 million in donated funds for the Maui Strong Fund. This organizational asset ensures that the Task Force will have access to necessary resources, further enhancing its operational capacity.

HCF's extensive network of vetted providers will be crucial during emergency situations, as these partnerships can be activated swiftly and efficiently. This network also allows HCF to promote the funding of organizations doing the actual work with clear goals, responsibilities, and parameters – ensuring that resources are maximized and waste is minimized. HCF's long standing relationship with State and County entities, as well as their experience collaborating with VOAD and larger NGOs on multiple occasions, makes them adept at bridging gaps in efforts related to feeding and wraparound services. Their comprehensive approach will ensure that the MEFT network, along with County, State, and VOAD partners, works cohesively to provide a well-rounded response during times of disaster.

By transferring the coordination of the MEFT to HCF and integrating positions to address emergency feeding needs within MEMA, HI-EMA, DOH, DHS, and MDoA, this Task Force framework will create a cohesive and effective response hierarchy for emergency feeding. Federal and State representatives will help to provide national and statewide support and resources while addressing barriers to efficient response. County representatives will focus on local needs and assist with the implementation of tailored solutions. HCF will oversee accountability and coordination, and help with streamlined funding and effective resource distribution. VOAD will provide wraparound services, national resource coordination, and additional manpower, ensuring comprehensive service delivery. Local nonprofits, distributors, food banks, pantries, restaurants, and community groups will form the backbone of the food distribution network, ensuring the community's needs are met efficiently, and providing consistency and community building in the wake of disaster.

The MEFT firmly believes that this model will help build trust, provide more consistent and culturally minded response efforts, and allow for community feedback to bring issues up the chain for attention and assistance. This proposed hierarchy will work to enable a secure and efficient flow of data, fostering a resilient and prepared community in Maui County.

Position Development at the County and State Levels

The need for dedicated positions to address emergency feeding at both the State and County levels has become increasingly evident as we face more frequent and severe

disasters. Feeding needs are a critical concern during times of crisis, and having a designated point person for this task — someone who is deeply familiar with the system and not burdened with managing various other sectors of disaster response — will significantly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of response efforts. By focusing solely on emergency feeding, these positions will help to ensure that food distribution is coordinated more smoothly and swiftly, reducing the risk of delays, miscommunication, frustrations, and burnout that can occur when responsibilities are spread too thin across different roles.

Furthermore, these positions are essential not only for immediate disaster response but also for the proactive development of robust feeding systems before the next disaster strikes. Full-time position dedicated to building out systems in advance and coordination at both the State and County levels — housed within MEMA and HI-EMA, respectively — would facilitate more cohesive collaboration across the multi-agency response framework. These roles would serve as crucial links between various organizations, ensuring consistent messaging and support and work to ensure that feeding strategies are integrated, well-coordinated, and responsive to the evolving needs of the community.

While it is recommended that these positions receive funding and support through State and County channels, we recognize that the governmental processes required to establish these roles can take time. As such, it is advisable to form community partnerships to initially fund and house these positions within local nonprofits, which can act as interim partners until the roles can be formally integrated into government structures.

A job description for the MEMA position is included in *Appendix K*, and MEMA has expressed openness to partnering with a nonprofit to establish this role in the short-term, until it can be fully integrated through the Department of Personnel. This approach allows capacity building more immediately, and allows work to start so that the system can be better prepared for future emergencies.

In addition to the recommend two full-time positions, we also recommend additional point people within County departments such as Department of Housing Concerns, Department of Human Concerns, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Department of Agriculture (DOA) who can help break down departmental silos, act as liaisons to ensure continuity of emergency feeding support throughout the County and State, and be activated in times of emergency. These recommended roles can be further defined through the emergency contingency plans being developed by TetraTech and the MEMA team.

Emergency Resource and Network Mapping

To further coordinate the various services and organizations that are available during disaster response, it is recommended that Maui United Way host a public-facing map, which will allow residents to find available resources county-wide. This recommendation is based on the fact that Maui United Way already has access to sufficient software and a management team that can coordinate, update, and maintain the resource map that can be made available both on and offline.

The United Way 2-1-1 site (https://auw211.org/) can host a streamlined map of critical statewide resources, including resource type, hours of operation, and eligibility information for services. To ensure accuracy and reliability, service agreements, grants, and contracts should require the quarterly review and updating of this information. Regular updates will be necessary to maintain the map's relevance and usefulness. This information should be available in offline PDF formats that can be printed and distributed through local channels (i.e., government agencies, local nonprofits, community bulletin boards, text chains) ensuring easy access for the community even during system outages. This approach will enhance transparency and provide residents with reliable, up-to-date information during emergencies.

The MEFT also recommends support be offered for an effort that has been launched already by UHMC's Hulihia program. Their stakeholder map (https://www.kumu.io/Hulihia/maui-wildfire-recovery-stakeholder-map) illustrates the interconnections between natural, human, and built systems. These data-driven models will facilitate a deep analysis of various redevelopment scenarios and possible outcomes, aiming to identify solutions that align with community needs and enhance the well-being of Lāhainā residents as the rebuilding process continues. Hulihia's mapping efforts will equip decision-makers with a comprehensive view of community resources. This analytical support will be crucial for developing strategies that are both effective and community-centered for this current recovery effort, as well as disasters in the future.

To further increase the reach and effectiveness of the resource map, we suggest implementing shared intake forms for both mapping efforts and an embeddable website feature. This will allow various organizations and stakeholders to contribute to and disseminate the information more broadly. This system will help to bridge gaps in communication and resource availability, ultimately fostering a more resilient and well-informed community.

The MEFT has already been working to create connections between the two platforms, facilitating a streamlined process for organizations. By enabling a single login and updating process we can minimize the time required for organizations' resources to

be mapped and updated. This integration maximizes response effort data for decision-makers and funders, ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently and effectively. Additionally, utilizing these entities helps to minimize costs and provides stability and partnerships for the longevity of the response effort. This coordinated approach not only enhances immediate response capabilities but also ensures sustained support and preparedness for future emergencies.

Contract Recommendations for Emergency Feeding

The MEFT recommends that contracts be negotiated in advance of a future disaster and include an allocation of emergency funding for coordination requirements during non-emergency times. Below are several additional recommendations for the contracting process. A more robust, sustainable, and resilient local economy can be built by incorporating these specifications into emergency response contracts, diversifying, and decentralizing response efforts through the contracting process. This approach will work to strengthen response systems and minimize the burden and burnout for County, State, and organizations both locally and nationally, ensuring preparedness and efficiency in future emergencies.

Network Contract Templates and Advance Preparation for Emergency Response

- **Network Contracts:** Develop contract templates for all levels and sectors of emergency feeding, ensuring clarity in roles and responsibilities. Some examples include emergency kitchens, food pantries, food banks, food rescue organizations, emergency food organizations, chefs, hot meals programs, distribution, purchasing and procurement, food boxes, trucking, shipping, etc. While these are all sectors to think about, various organizations may be able to fulfill several of these needs through their operations.
- **Include Multiple Service Providers:** Identify a minimum of three service provider options in advance, whenever possible, to streamline processes and have backup options in case main or secondary providers are impacted or unable to meet the demand.
- **Advance Funding Allocation:** Allocate a portion of emergency funds in advance, with clearly defined activation processes, to enable immediate response by the contracted network. Funds should be held in high-yield savings accounts that do not have access restrictions to ensure quick access to funding and to generate additional income in times of non-emergencies.

Emergency Funds Trigger Mechanisms and Requirements
- **Clear Trigger Mechanisms:** Define specific conditions under which emergency funds can be accessed, such as declarations of emergency by the State or County. This should include a pre-agreed process for quick execution and fund disbursement.
- **Execution Protocols:** Lay out detailed procedures for the execution of emergency funds, including approval workflows, documentation requirements, and accountability measures to ensure timely and appropriate use of funds.

Local Purchasing and Contracting
- **Prioritize Local Suppliers:** Contracts should mandate the prioritization of local purchasing and contracting to support local economies and ensure faster response times. This includes sourcing food and supplies from local farmers, locally owned and operated distributors, and businesses.
- **Local Workforce Utilization:** Encourage the prioritization of Hawaiʻi-based volunteers and employees for emergency response efforts. For specialized roles that require flying in personnel, establish longer-term contracts to minimize costs, turnover, confusion and ensure continuity.

Administrative Overhead and Travel Costs:
- **Strict Policies on Overheads:** Implement strict policies to cap administrative overhead and travel costs. Ensure that the majority of funds are directed towards direct services and aid rather than administrative expenses.
- **Transparent Cost Reporting:** Require transparent reporting of all administrative and travel expenses, with regular audits to build and maintain accountability and trust (SAMHSA 10-11).

Pay Ratios and Sensitivity Training:
- **Equitable Pay Ratios:** Establish guidelines to maintain fair pay ratios between executives and the lowest-paid workers involved in emergency response efforts. This promotes equity and ensures that frontline workers are adequately compensated. It also ensures that funding is not eaten up by highly compensated executives' pay when the majority of the program work depends on the lower paid workers.
- **Sensitivity Training Programs:** Mandate comprehensive trauma-informed sensitivity training programs for all personnel involved in emergency response to foster awareness, understanding, respect, and effective communication within diverse communities (Wolkin).
- **Compassion Fatigue and Burnout Training:** Training should also extend to boards and management teams to help them understand the impact of trauma on staff and the populations they serve. In addition, equipping leadership with tools

to support staff well-being helps prevent compassion fatigue and burnout. Such training ensures a healthier work environment, where personnel feel supported, and enhances the effectiveness and sustainability of emergency response efforts.

Data Sharing Mandates:
- **Consistent and Secure Data Sharing:** Enforce data sharing mandates to ensure that all entities involved in emergency feeding efforts have access to up-to-date and accurate information. This includes creating standardized data sharing protocols and platforms to facilitate seamless information flow.
- **Regular Updates and Integration:** Require regular updates to data and ensure integration with existing systems and additional service sectors to provide a comprehensive and current view of resource availability, needs, and response efforts.

Establishment of consistent, transparent, and helpful data sharing with the community:
- **Regular Public Updates:** Use a network model to share regular updates on recovery progress, challenges, and available resources.
- **Ensure Transparency and Trust:** Foster open communication and provide clear information throughout disaster recovery to build community trust.
- **Accessible and Inclusive Communication:** Share information in formats accessible to individuals with disabilities and language barriers, and ensure updates are available offline during system outages.
- **Empower Community Resilience:** Clear, open, and inclusive data sharing equips the community to effectively navigate recovery and prepare for future crises.

Implementing these contract recommendations can enhance the efficiency, equity, and effectiveness of emergency feeding efforts, ensuring a robust and coordinated response to future crises.

Emergency Feeding Infrastructure Recommendations

The primary infrastructural recommendations of the MEFT relate to funding and the establishment of permanent Resource Hubs and Agricultural Hubs in each district of Maui County. These hubs will strengthen emergency response capabilities by providing essential food and supply distribution, provide access to tools and equipment, and will serve as centralized response centers for those in need. They will also provide access to support services which will enhance food security during both emergency and non-emergency times. By stacking functions, these hubs will serve multiple community

needs, including mobile kitchens built for batch cooking, distribution centers, cold and dry food storage, supply storage, and areas to provide wrap-around service and data collection. To ensure these hubs are quickly operational, we recommend forming public and private partnerships between the government, local nonprofits, and funders. This collaborative approach will facilitate the development and management of low-cost yet highly functional hubs, ready to serve the community efficiently both in everyday operations and when the next emergency strikes.

Establishing Permanent Community Resource Hub Locations

Identifying and establishing permanent Resource Hub locations and agreeing on a plan for execution and funding will help to address many gaps in response efforts. At the height of response, Community and County Community Hubs, VOAD, NGOs, local organizations, and community groups were servicing approximately 35,000+ individuals weekly. This massive undertaking highlighted the need to have a concrete plan of action to address disaster efforts and to ensure that resources are maximized while gaps and overall costs of response are minimized. This is especially important as it is now widely accepted that we will see an increase in the frequency and severity of natural disasters due to climate change.
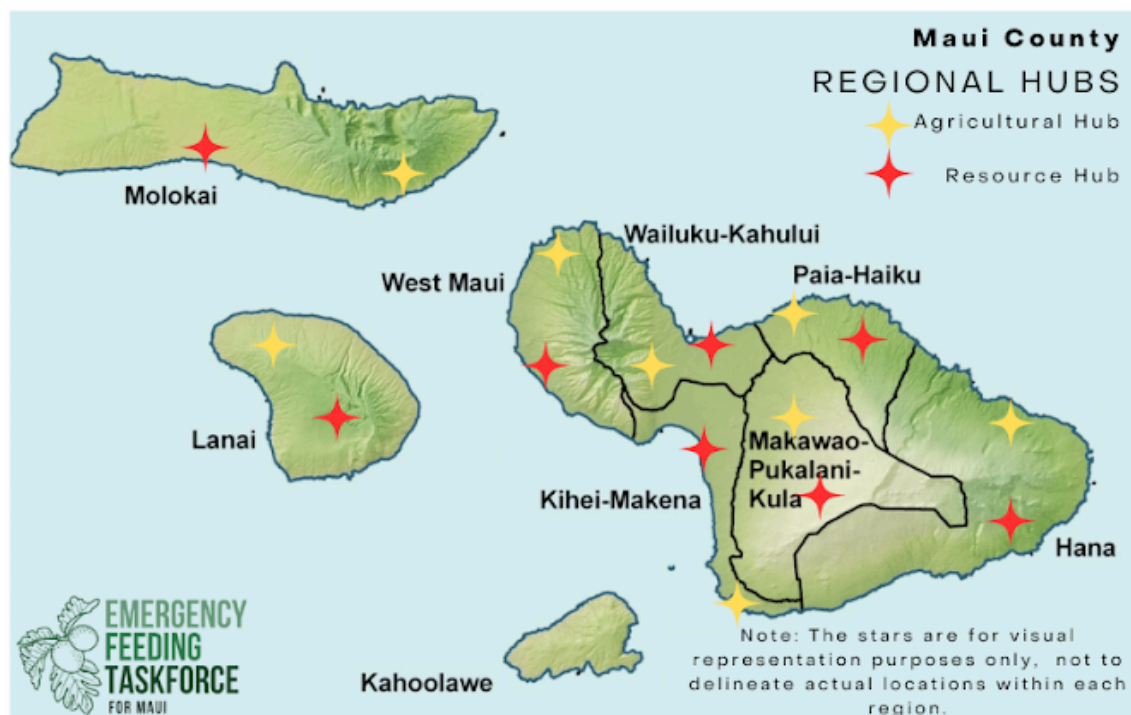
These permanent Resource Hubs can serve the community in both emergency and non-emergency times. Key components of the Resource Hubs and sample budgets can be found in *Appendix L*. The Resource Hubs can serve as better equipped food pantries and batch cooking mobile kitchens to help decrease the local food insecurity that has existed and been exacerbated by the Maui wildfires. In times of disasters these hubs can be activated to increase service capacity and serve as emergency food storage, food pantries and emergency kitchens throughout Maui. This will allow for more efficient and strategic food and supply distribution and wrap-around services. For maximum community building and efficacy collaboration with Maui Food Bank, current community-run hubs and food pantries should be prioritized. If existing sites can be modified and retro-fitted to fit hub needs, those partnerships should be prioritized to stand up low cost hubs when needed.

There are community groups on Maui and Lānaʻi actively working to develop the build out of more elaborate Resilience Hubs that will offer essential services and healing spaces for the community. The Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) defines Resilience Hubs as "community-serving facilities augmented to: 1) support residents and 2) coordinate resource distribution and services before, during, or after a natural hazard event" (Baja, 2). These initial hubs are intended to serve as Phase One in the broader effort to quickly and efficiently stand up a comprehensive network of resiliency infrastructure that will enhance "community cohesion [and]...community capacity to plan for, respond to, and recover from stressors and shocks" (Baja, 6). By implementing these hubs now, we can empower our local communities to gain valuable insights to "address root causes of vulnerabilities and help the community thrive", and identify aspects that should be prioritized when larger, more established resiliency hubs are constructed ("Resilience Hubs").

It is recommended that these early hubs build lower cost warehouse kits with necessary infrastructure to address the needs and remain flexible to later function as spokes within a larger network of support. This would allow for these hubs to work in tandem with the resiliency hubs to create a robust, interconnected system. The hubs being proposed are basic yet crucial infrastructure that can serve the community in times of non-emergency, and can be quickly mobilized to address the ongoing threat of storms and emergencies. As the community remains on high alert, it is vital that Maui County establish infrastructure that can be deployed swiftly, efficiently, and within reasonable budgets to ensure all are prepared to meet the demands of the next emergency.

Mobile Emergency Kitchens

The MEFT recommends the purchasing of mobile emergency kitchens equipped for batch cooking at each Resource Hub. (See *Appendix L*) This is a critical element to enhancing disaster response capabilities. These kitchens can draw supplies from Resource Hubs to prepare hot meals and provide assistance where it is most needed. Their mobility allows them to serve bulk pan food at shelters or other locations lacking cooking facilities. Coordination with the Department of Health (DOH) will be necessary to establish systems for water and wastewater management when traditional utilities are unavailable. This will ensure that water filling and waste water pumping systems can suffice to avoid the lengthy process of the development of typical commercial kitchen in Maui County which have been noted to take longer than a decade to establish in some instances. Beyond emergency situations, these mobile kitchens can address food insecurity by supporting community groups and organizations that serve those in need such as homeless meal programs. Additionally, they can be rented out for batch cooking for local community fundraisers, helping to offset the costs and maintenance of the units while still benefiting the community.

Wrap Around Service Integration

In the aftermath of the wildfires, the integration of wrap-around supportive services into emergency Resource Hubs emerged as a critical strategy recommendation to address the multifaceted needs of disaster-affected communities. Ensuring the coordination, integration, and prioritization of psychosocial support services across emergency response sectors has been highlighted as a necessary element to reducing suffering and improving positive health and well-being outcomes by the United Nations (UN), World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF (*Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Coordination*). The 2023 Maui wildfires underscored the pivotal role of food and water security in bringing together and sustaining communities during the initial stages of disaster response. Resource Hubs are an inherent gathering point that can be leveraged to create comprehensive support and referral centers where individuals and families can access not only essential food supplies but also a spectrum of vital services.

By co-locating psychosocial assessments, mental health support, housing assistance, addiction counseling, and medical services alongside emergency feeding resources, these Resource Hubs will serve as centralized, one-stop shops for community members seeking assistance post-disaster. This integrated approach ensures that individuals receive holistic support tailored to their specific needs, fostering a sense of safety, stability, and continuity amidst crisis. Moreover, consolidating these services in one location facilitates easier navigation for community members, eliminating the need

to seek out disparate support networks during a time of heightened stress and uncertainty.

If co-location is not feasible, at the minimum, check-in data at the hubs should include short questions to be able to track and refer impacted residents who are in need of wrap-around services. This could be done through a kiosk or similar system. Kaiser Permanente's check-in system is one example of a model that could be used to develop a system for emergency feeding and wrap-around services. (See *Appendix M*)

Resource Hubs will play a crucial role beyond immediate relief by serving as real-time data collection points. By gathering comprehensive data on community needs and service utilization, funders and support personnel can gain real-time insights into evolving community requirements throughout all stages of disaster recovery. This data-driven approach enables more responsive and targeted resource allocation, ensuring that interventions are not only timely but also effectively meet the evolving needs of disaster survivors over time.

In essence, integrating wrap-around supportive services into emergency feeding Resource Hubs not only enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of disaster response efforts but also promotes community resilience and long-term recovery. By addressing the holistic needs of individuals and families in crisis, these Resource Hubs will serve as vital pillars of support, fostering a stronger, more resilient community capable of weathering future challenges with greater cohesion and preparedness.

Establishing Agricultural Hubs for Emergency Preparedness

In response to the increasing frequency and severity of natural disasters, it is imperative to develop proactive strategies for emergency preparedness and response. The establishment of Agricultural Hubs represents a proactive approach to emergency preparedness and response, offering communities a sustainable and cost-effective solution to address the challenges posed by natural disasters. This approach also provides resources to help prevent future disaster through climate change mitigation, which is a serious concern that the State of Hawai'i needs to work to address. ("Navahine F. V. Hawai'i Department of Transportation - Climate Change Litigation")

Agricultural Hubs will serve as centralized repositories for storing essential supplies and equipment (e.g., tools, generators, water buffalos, and water tanks) to facilitate efficient and effective emergency response efforts. During non-emergency periods, these hubs can function as resource centers for education and workshops, and as tool libraries offering equipment and tools for loan to community members for a nominal fee, thereby generating revenue to sustain the Hubs' operations.

By leveraging existing resources and infrastructure, while also promoting community engagement and collaboration to have local nonprofits manage them, these Agricultural Hubs have the potential to significantly enhance community resilience and mitigate the impacts of future emergencies. It is recommended that Agricultural Hubs also be low cost but highly functional spaces that government agencies, local nonprofits, and funders can work together to stand up and manage in order to bolster emergency preparedness efforts and safeguard the well-being of their communities. Key recommendations and benefits to consider when establishing these networks can be found in *Appendix L*. (Note: More detailed information on each of the following recommendations can be found in the appendix.)

Recommendations to Enhance Emergency Preparedness in the Agricultural and General Response Sector

In light of the growing frequency and severity of natural and man-made disasters, it is essential to prioritize emergency preparedness efforts within the agriculture and food sector. Through the collaborative work of the MEFT, it has become evident that agriculture and food security are often overlooked in traditional long-term recovery efforts at the Federal, State, and County levels. In order to continue meeting the needs of our community, it is imperative to implement protocols and safeguards to support the agricultural sector and ensure the food security of our residents during times of emergency. This will furthermore mitigate climate change, help prevent future disasters, and enhance resource protection for generations to come. The following recommendations are aimed at increasing community and economic resilience by strengthening emergency preparedness in the agriculture and food sector.

Key Recommendations:

Establish an Agricultural Emergency Fund: Work closely with County grant writers to apply for grants aimed at covering damage costs for agricultural operations following natural and man-made disasters both now and in the future to create a fund that can be tapped in future emergencies. Promote education to funders at various levels of why these kinds of funds are crucial. This proactive approach will provide much-needed financial assistance to farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural producers helping them recover and rebuild their livelihoods. (See *Appendix N*)

Advocate for Local Product Purchasing and Local Business and Nonprofit Contractors in Emergency Contracts: Advocate for the inclusion of local product purchasing and requirements for contracting local businesses and

nonprofits in all emergency response contracts. Supporting local producers, businesses and nonprofits during emergencies strengthens the local food system and economy, conserves precious emergency funds and resources, and promotes overall economic resilience. (See *Appendix O*)

Collaborate with the Department of Health (DOH) on Feeding Protocols: Work with the DOH to develop realistic protocols for feeding during emergencies and to accommodate the fast and efficient implementation of the resource hubs and mobile kitchens. Ensuring safe and nutritious food distribution is essential for meeting the nutritional needs of communities during times of crisis. This will also help to prevent the frustrations that arose during the 2023 Maui wildfires that were caused by the regulations enforced by DOH, when what was needed was support. (See *Appendix P*)

Develop a Network of Translators and Communication Tools for Emergency Preparedness: Establish a network of translators to support individuals with communication disabilities, non-English and ESL speakers in accessing emergency preparedness, response information, and resources. Existing technology is available to serve as a communication tool. One example is a Xerox Application that provides translation for printed materials. Technologies like this one could help minimize the need for live interpreters but will not eliminate the need completely. Clear communication is essential for ensuring all residents can effectively receive assistance, prepare for, and respond to emergencies (Ravida, et al., 2024). (See *Appendix Q*)

Establish an Agriculture Emergency Response and Resource Network: Connect impacted producers to available Federal, State, County, and nonprofit assistance and mental health resources. Create a phone-tree, list-serv, and network for resource sharing in times of crisis to assist with coordination, resource sharing, and outreach. (See *Appendix R*)

Increase Capacity of Local Protein Production: Enhance the capacity of local slaughter facilities and develop mobile units to increase local protein production. By bolstering local production capabilities, communities can reduce reliance on external sources and develop a steady supply of essential proteins during emergencies while also bolstering the local economy. (See *Appendix S*)

Increase the Supply of Local Produce and Products: Increasing local food production and supply in Maui County is crucial for enhancing emergency preparedness, given the County's remote geographic location. Global crises such as wars, economic instability, and supply chain disruptions can severely impact Hawai'i's ability to import sufficient food, making local production vital. By mindfully increasing

local agriculture, Maui can regenerate natural resources, avoid depletion of food stocks, mitigate climate change, and reduce the risk of future disasters. Strengthening local food systems not only ensures food security during emergencies but also promotes environmental sustainability and resilience against global uncertainties. (See *Appendix T*)

Review RPT Valuation Methods for Large Tracts of Land: Ensure that taxation rates are being evaluated correctly. Encourage landowners to take more initiative inorder to minimize fuel loads for fire and to promote increased local food production.

Advocate for Longer Leases for Agricultural Land: Advocating for longer leases for agricultural land is essential to supporting sustainable farming and ranching in Maui. Short-term leases discourage farmers and ranchers from making significant investments in their operations, as they do not provide sufficient time for a proper return on investment. By promoting education and offering incentives for longer agricultural leases, we can encourage more robust land management practices. This stability allows agricultural producers to plan for the long-term, invest in infrastructure and soil health, and contribute to the overall resilience and productivity of Maui's agricultural sector.

Training Sessions on Fire Prevention and Land Maintenance: Conduct training sessions on implementing fire breaks and maintaining agricultural lands to prevent fires. Equipping farmers and landowners with the knowledge and skills to mitigate fire risks will help safeguard agricultural assets and protect communities from wildfire threats. (See *Appendix U)*

Develop Clear Protocols for Land Clearing After Disasters: Establish protocols for safe and effective land clearing after disasters to prevent health risks to volunteers and community members involved in cleanup efforts. By implementing standardized procedures that are available ahead of time, the well-being of those involved in post-disaster recovery activities can be ensured. (See *Appendix V*)

Collaboration with Local Organizations and Researchers: Collaborate with local organizations and researchers to develop a list of suggested disaster mitigation, recovery, and bio-remediation strategies for agricultural lands. These strategies can help safeguard and restore soil health and productivity, promoting the long-term resilience of agricultural operations. (See *Appendix W*)

Promote Education on the Issues Service Providers Faced with the Homeless Sector and Other Triteray Impacts of the Disaster: Educating decision makers and funders on the challenges of assisting homeless populations during disasters is crucial. The lack of fixed addresses complicated food aid eligibility, while rising rental costs and housing displacement worsened food insecurity. These issues, among many others, strained already limited resources. By promoting collaboration among agencies and organizations, and developing clear protocols for supporting homeless and displaced individuals, disaster response efforts can be improved. Implementing targeted education and funding initiatives will help service providers better navigate these challenges and ensure vulnerable populations receive the necessary support. (See *Appendix X*)

Implementing these recommendations will play a critical role in enhancing emergency preparedness within the agriculture and emergency feeding sector, ultimately increasing community and economic resilience in Maui. By prioritizing the development of protocols, funding mechanisms, and capacity-building initiatives, we can ensure the continued viability of our agricultural sector and safeguard the food security of our residents in times of crisis. It is essential to take proactive steps now to mitigate the impacts of future disasters and build a more resilient and sustainable food system for Maui.

Policy Recommendations

The following policy recommendations outline key strategies to strengthen emergency feeding efforts, enhance food security, and build long-term resilience across Maui County. The continuation and expansion of existing programs, alongside new initiatives, are emphasized as vital steps to improving disaster response and community well-being. Recommendations include developing a comprehensive Emergency Feeding Plan, promoting local purchasing programs to support the economy during disasters, and establishing clear standards for contracts, reimbursement rates, and data-sharing protocols. Infrastructure improvements such as Resource Hubs and Agricultural Hubs, as well as specific job roles to support emergency feeding, are also suggested to enhance preparedness and response capacity.

State-level recommendations focus on policy adjustments to reduce barriers to emergency feeding, support food assistance programs, and address the financial needs of agricultural producers impacted by disasters. Federal policy changes are proposed to better integrate local feeding efforts into FEMA frameworks, increase SNAP and Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) benefits to account for

Hawai'i's higher cost of living, and provide waivers to allow for flexibility in nutrition programs during emergencies. Together, these policy recommendations aim to strengthen the support network for food security and emergency response across local, State, and Federal levels.

County Policies Recommendations:

- Develop an Emergency Feeding Plan
- Implement local product purchasing programs and gift card programs to support the local economy in times of disaster. Include Maui Food Bank, food hubs, and aggregators in purchasing local food (e.g., Hawai'i Department of Health; Maui County Farm Bureau; State of Hawai'i Office of Planning, Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism). Require standards and minimums for local food purchasing (HI Rev Stat § 302A-405.6).
- Review emergency feeding contracts and set maximum allowable expenses for travel and personnel costs in order to focus more funding on supplies and operations. Set minimum reimbursement requirements for meals, to ensure feeding partners receive necessary federal reimbursements.
- Develop data sharing agreements for use in times of emergency to ensure the necessary flow of information to providers at various levels of response and across sectors, to minimize gaps in service, and maximize community support.
- Develop CIP projects to address infrastructure needs in Emergency Response that can stack functions to address everyday needs in the County as well (e.g., Resource Hubs, Agricultural Hubs, Resilience Hubs, Mobile Slaughter Houses, Expansion of County water and wastewater lines and facilities, etc.).
- Develop positions and job duties for emergency feeding response in MEMA, DHC, MDOA to support emergency feeding.
- Review Real Property Tax Valuations for large tract landowners to address pasture rates that may be in effect for unmanaged land that contributes to the fuel load for fire hazard.
- Establish an Agricultural Emergency Fund to allow for support of agriculture business losses in times of disaster. Agricultural businesses are not covered in the FEMA reimbursement process and instead directed to loans that can further exacerbate any financial burdens agricultural producers face.

State Policies Recommendations:

- **Department of Health (DOH):** Adjust restrictions to prevent barriers around emergency feeding and the supply of local proteins, produce and products, and infrastructure in times of emergency.

- **Department of Human Services (DHS):** Launch Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) and support replacement of lost benefits (*Hawaiʻi Disaster SNAP Program Launches Monday, September 18, 2023*). Collaborate with local partners, such as Maui Economic Opportunity (MEO), to administer Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs for impacted individuals.
- **Hawaiʻi Food Bank:** Secure additional The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) funding for food banks to support increased community need for food assistance.
- **State Senators and Congress** (The MEFT to Assign Agency Responsibility): Address federal benefits cliff with state supported programs to expand benefits to decrease gradually as household income approaches 300% of the FPL — approximately $103,000 annually for a family of four (*Hunger Cliff 2023: Hawaiʻi*).

Federal Policies

- Incorporate feeding into the FEMA response and recovery framework to open up reimbursement opportunities for local feeding organizations and meet the unique needs of our community.
- Food Assistance Programs (USDA Food and Nutrition Service)
  - Increase SNAP and D-SNAP allocation for Hawaiʻi, due to higher food costs.
  - Increase gross income limits for more inclusion of those in need of SNAP and D-SNAP due to Hawaiʻi's high cost of living.
  - Develop a waiver to allow all SNAP households to purchase hot foods with SNAP benefits during times of emergency.
  - Develop a waiver to allow replacement SNAP benefits.
  - Develop a Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) waiver to allow for flexible replacements for WIC qualifying groceries.
  - Enhance Child Nutrition Program flexibilities including: flexibilities that allow for meals and snacks served through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) to be reimbursed even if meal pattern requirements are not fully met. Allow sites that are operating Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) meal service without milk during the emergency period, and encourage the state to prioritize technical assistance when meal pattern requirements cannot be met.

Phases of Recommendation Implementation

The recommendations put forth in this report are extensive and will take time, effort, and perseverance to implement. They will also need to be adjusted after each incident in order to ensure that the system uses lessons learned to maintain the sustainability and effectiveness of the system.

In conclusion, this section highlights the critical steps needed to strengthen Maui's emergency feeding preparedness. From pre-crisis planning and risk assessment to recovery and resilience-building, a strategic, flexible approach is essential.

Preparing Maui County for emergency feeding needs for the future will also require a willingness and flexibility to adapt and evolve means of response throughout the various stages of the crisis. To do so will involve comprehensive planning, coordination, and strategic community engagement. By fostering partnerships, stockpiling resources, and ensuring ongoing training, Maui can better position itself to respond to future emergencies. Continuous adaptation based on lessons learned will ensure that the system remains effective and sustainable, capable of meeting the diverse needs of the community throughout each phase of a crisis.

The following steps are supported by the Multi-Agency Feeding Support Plan Template developed in 2015 (p. 21-25) but tailored to meet local needs. They provide a structured and actionable approach for addressing food security and disaster response and ways we can enhance preparedness at each phase:
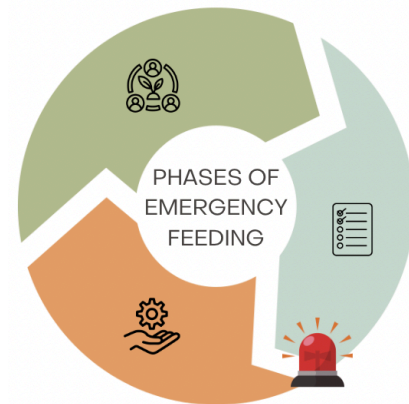
Preparation & Mitigation (Pre-Planning before our next Crisis)
Risk Assessment and Planning:
- Conduct thorough risk assessments to identify potential hazards that could lead to food insecurity during emergencies (e.g., hurricanes, wildfires, earthquakes).
- Develop and update emergency feeding plans based on identified risks, considering diverse community needs and vulnerabilities with the Maui Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) taking lead and working with the various County and State departments who have roles in relief efforts, as well as the MEFT, to develop and implement a County-wide plan.

Establishment of Partnerships:
- Forge partnerships with local food banks, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and community groups well in advance.
- Define roles and responsibilities for each partner in emergency feeding operations and establish communication protocols.

Resource Stockpiling:
- Stockpile non-perishable food items, water, and essential supplies such as chairs, tables, cots, blankets, sandwich boards, mobile kitchens, etc. in strategic locations across the island. Prepare technology to support this process and have it tested and ready to implement.
- Ensure that stockpiles are regularly maintained, rotated, and updated according to expiration dates.

Training and Exercises:
- Conduct training sessions and drills for staff, volunteers, and partners involved in emergency feeding operations. Meet at minimum every six months to keep contacts up to date and build pilina.
- Simulate emergency scenarios to test response capabilities and identify areas for improvement.

Response (During Crisis)

Activation of the MEFT & VOAD:
- As soon as the threat of a disaster or emergency occurs there should be a soft activation by the County or State of the MEFT network, so that on the ground partners can be prepared to respond immediately.
- The MEFT will work alongside the County, governmental officials and VOAD to activate pre-established emergency feeding plans promptly upon recognition of a crisis.

Activation of the MEFT & VOAD Partners:
- Agencies who face potential threats from the emergency should be on standby but backups should also be ready to go in case these agencies are not able to respond to due impacts occurred during the emergency. This will cover the time from the immediate threat including evacuation shelters and impact until the larger multi-agency response can take place.

Establish and Support Emergency Resource Hubs Sites:
- Set up and maintain fixed feeding sites in accessible locations throughout Maui, ensuring they are well-stocked and equipped to serve the displaced and affected populations.
- Utilize local food producers and distributors to obtain food supplies, as well as non-perishables and shelf-stable meals via donations, Food Banks, NGOs and USDA foods, to address the immediate food needs of the affected population.

Deploy Mobile Feeding Units:
- Use mobile kitchens and food service delivery units to reach remote and hard-hit areas where access to fixed feeding sites may be limited. Ingredients for meals can be pulled from the Resource Hubs daily to prepare hot meals. Filling and pumping of potable and waste water tanks can be done as needed.

Immediate Assessment and Coordination:
- Simultaneously, with the activation of the MEFT, the State and County should begin to conduct a Comprehensive Assessment.
- Begin with a thorough assessment of the current food security situation on Maui, focusing on the most affected areas.
- This should include understanding the scope of infrastructure damage, the current availability of food supplies, and the specific needs of the population, including vulnerable groups.
- During the assessment, the coordination between State, Local, and Federal agencies, NGOs, should begin and include the MEFT, who will coordinate the community-based organizations to manage and streamline feeding operations.
- Ensure that all participating organizations are included in the planning and execution phases, including feedback from the MEFT partners that will include pertinent information from boots on the ground efforts.

Coordination and Communication:
- Maintain regular communication with the MEFT and partner organizations, government agencies, VOAD and the public to provide updates on feeding operations and available resources.
- Utilize technology platforms for tracking of food distribution, customer needs, and resource utilization (e.g., SquareUp).

Adaptability and Flexibility:
- Remain adaptable to changing circumstances and needs during the crisis, but also prepared for different levels of lack of communication capacities and responses queued up to react accordingly.

- Adjust feeding strategies based on evolving conditions (e.g., shifting population movements, changing accessibility to affected areas, available products, etc.).

Community Engagement:
- Engage with affected communities to gather feedback, assess emerging needs, and ensure inclusivity in service delivery.
- Provide culturally appropriate food options and language support as needed to address diverse community needs.
- Promote data transparency with the community to build trust, keep residents informed, and promote community building efforts and volunteer engagement.

Long-Term Feeding, Resilience and Recovery Planning: (Post Response)

Transition to Long-Term Feeding Strategies:
- Assess food security and nutrition needs for ongoing support to vulnerable populations.
- As the situation stabilizes, transition from immediate feeding operations to long-term solutions. This transition may include food boxes, gift card programs, scaling back down to food bank and pantry service or the continuation of some hot meals dependent on the disaster and infrastructure that survivors have access to.
- Ensure that nutritionally balanced meals that meet cultural and dietary needs are provided.
- Work with State and Federal agencies to implement D-SNAP and Other Assistance Programs.

Rebuild and Strengthen Food Supply Chains:
- Focus on funding, restoring, and enhancing the food supply chain infrastructure, including farms, grocery stores, markets, and distribution networks.
- Support local agriculture to reduce dependency on external food sources.

Evaluation and Learning:
- Conduct post-crisis evaluations to review the effectiveness of emergency feeding efforts.

Preparedness & Mitigation
- Risk Assessment & Planning
- Establishment of Partnerships
- Resource Stockpiling
- Training & Exercises

Response
- Activation of Emergency Feeding Plans
- Maintain Coordination & Communication
- Remain Adaptable & Flexible
- Engage with Affected Communities

Recovery & Resiliency Building
- Transition to Long-Term Recovery
- Evaluation & Learning
- Capacity Building
- Resilience Planning

EMERGENCY FEEDING TASKFORCE FOR MAUI

- Identify lessons learned and areas for improvement in preparedness, response, and recovery phases.

Capacity Building:
- Strengthen local capacity for future emergencies through training, resource allocation, and continuous improvement of emergency plans.
- Foster partnerships and collaborations that enhance resilience and sustainability in food security initiatives.

Resilience Planning:
- Integrate lessons learned into updated emergency response plans and resilience-building strategies.
- Advocate for policies and investments that support long-term food security and disaster preparedness on Maui.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this report offers essential recommendations and highlights critical lessons learned that are key to better preparing our community for future disasters and emergencies. The findings emphasize the importance of strengthening our emergency food systems and overall agricultural systems support, ensuring that we are less dependent on imported food, especially in times of crisis. For these recommendations to take root and truly benefit the community, buy-in is necessary from all levels — the government, local organizations, businesses, key stakeholders, and the community itself. Without their collective support, implementation will not occur, leaving us vulnerable in future emergencies.

While we saw the community rise to the challenges faced as a result of the 2023 Maui wildfires, improvising solutions in the absence of formal systems and plans, it is important to recognize that such capacity cannot be relied upon indefinitely. With each successive disaster response, the ability to mobilize in this manner will be diminished, increasing the risks of unrest, suicides, criminal activity, and the outmigration of residents who can no longer sustain themselves. These dire consequences, though somewhat mitigated in this instance due to community solidarity, may not be preventable in future disasters unless structured systems are put into place. It is crucial that we act now to implement these recommendations and build a more resilient and self-sufficient future.

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Appendix A. Organization List

Organization Name	Organizational Specialty	Active
American Red Cross	Emergency Response + Recovery	x
All Hands and Hearts	Volunteer Powered Organization for immediate and long-term disaster response	x
Chef Hui	Hui of local chefs and producers	x
Citizen's Church Maui	Faith Based Organization/ Feeding Location	x
Common Ground Collective	Mobile Farming, Hot Meals, Food Boxes, Emergency Feeding Strategy	x
County of Maui Department of Agriculture	Local Governmental Coordination	x
Farmer's Market Maui	Local Produce	x
Feed My Sheep	Hot Meal Preparation	x
Global Empowerment Mission	Disaster Response Org.	
Hana Farmer's Market	Local Produce	
Havens Maui	Restaurant	x
Hawai'i Community Foundation	Community Foundation/Funder	x
Hawai'i Data Collaborative	Data Organization	x
Hawai'i Farmers Union United	Family Farmer Advocates	x
Hawai'i Public Health Institute	Policy Advocates	
Hawai'i Farm Project	Partner Farm Coordination	x
Honokowai Beach Park Hub	Community Hub	x
Hua Momona Farms	Hot Meal Preparation	x
Hungry Heroes Hawai'i	Hot Meal/Food Box Delivery	x
Hūlihia	Data Organization	x

Joey's Kitchen	Restaurant	x
Kamehameha Schools Maui	School	x
Kaiser Permanente	Healthcare Provider	x
Living Pono Project	Local Produce/Product Source	x
Old Lowes Hub	Resource Hub	x
Old Safeway Hub	Resource Hub	x
Māla Tavern	Restaurant	x
Maui Food Bank	Community Food Security Support	x
Maui Fresh Streatery	Food Truck	x
Maui Hub	Local Produce/Product Source	x
Maui Nui Venison	Venison/Protein Source	x
Maui Rapid Response	Disaster Response Org.	x
Maui Tacos	Restaurant	
Maui United Way	Community Convenor/Funder	x
Nāpili Noho	Community Hub	x
Nohoʻana Farms	Local Produce/Hot Meal Preparation	x
Pōhaku Park/S-Turns Hub	Community Hub	x
Rimfire Imports	Food Storage/Distribution Products	x
Salvation Army	Emergency Response Organization	
Sheraton Hub	Community Hub	x
The Keola Project	Hot Meal Preparation	x
UHERO	Data Organization	x
University of Hawaiʻi Maui College	Cafeteria/Commercial Kitchen	x
Upcountry Strong	Food pantry	x

Appendix B. MEFT Agenda/Minutes

Appendix C. Maui Emergency Feeding Needs Survey

The Maui Emergency Feeding Needs Survey was administered by the MEFT to help better understand and address the pressing food-related challenges (i.e., access to food resources, food preferences, specific challenges) faced by the Maui community during directly following the 2023 Maui wildfires. Input was used to aid the MEFT in developing targeted strategies and resources during this prolonged time of crisis.

Respondents: 136*
> *Majority of responses were received between 9/15/2024 and 10/30/24

Number of people covered by each survey respondent

> Collectively, the respondents of this survey accounted for the responses of 478 individuals. The majority of respondents reported covering between two to four people with their responses. This included a combination of adults and children.
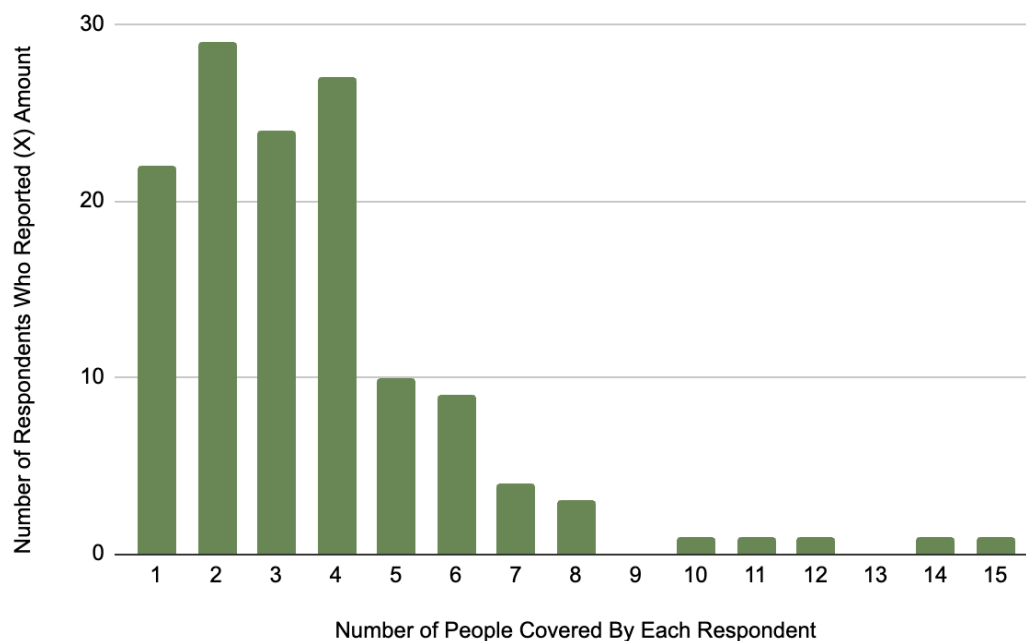
How respondents' place of residence was affected by the fires

Slightly more than half (53.7%) of respondents reported that their place of residence was lost in the fires. An additional 12.5% of respondents are not able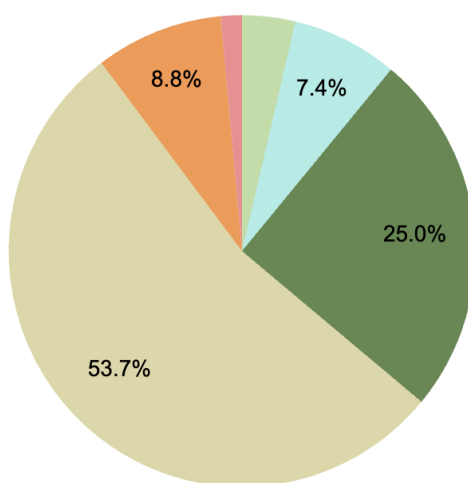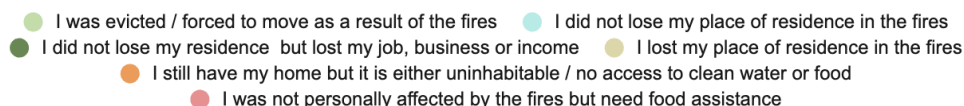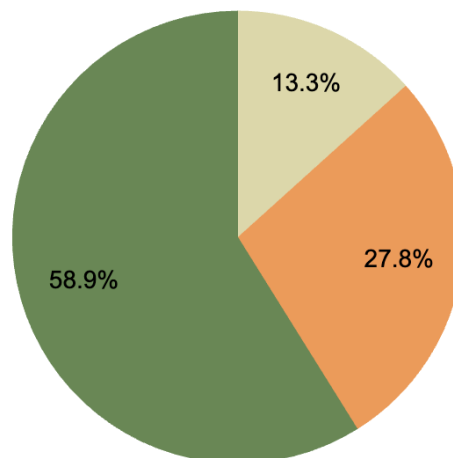 to reside in their place of residence, as it was either uninhabitable, has no access to clean water or food (8.8%); or they had been forced to move or evicted as a secondary result of the fires. A quarter of respondents (25%) reported having a residence, but experienced a direct loss of business, job, or income as a result of the fires.

Legend:
- I was evicted / forced to move as a result of the fires
- I did not lose my residence but lost my job, business or income
- I still have my home but it is either uninhabitable / no access to clean water or food
- I was not personally affected by the fires but need food assistance
- I did not lose my place of residence in the fires
- I lost my place of residence in the fires

Pie chart values: 8.8%, 7.4%, 25.0%, 53.7%

Emergency shelter provided by FEMA or the Red Cross

Of the respondents who reported that their place of residence was either lost in the fires, uninhabitable, or they have been forced to move or evicted as a secondary result of the fires – slightly more than half of respondents (58.9%) reported being provided shelter by FEMA or the Red Cross.

More than a quarter of respondents (27.8%) reported not being provided shelter by FEMA or the Red Cross. Thirteen-percent of respondents reported staying with friends or family.

Legend:
- I am staying with family or friends
- No
- Yes

Pie chart values: 13.3%, 27.8%, 58.9%

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Types of Shelter

AirBnB or Direct Lease Program ● Condo ● Hotel ● Other ●

5.7% 5.7%

30.2%

58.5%
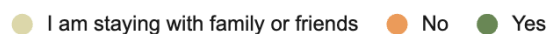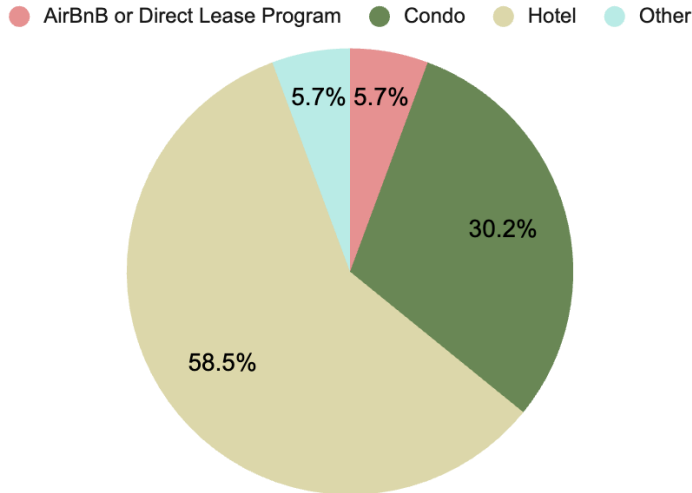
Of those placed in emergency shelter, slightly more than half of respondents (58.5%) reported being placed in hotels. Close to one-third of respondents (30.2%) reported being placed in a condo. The remaining respondents reported being placed in an AirBnB, receiving housing through the Direct Lease Program, or another type of temporary housing solution was obtained.

Access to sufficient food

Close to half of respondents (45.6%) reported having access to sufficient food. Roughly one-third of respondents (32.3%) reported a *lack* of access to sufficient food. Roughly a quarter of respondents (22.1%) reported "Other" and elaborated this to mean the following:

> *"Sometimes"; "somewhat"; "limited amount"; "need more"; "for today"; "running out of funds"; "only if present at hotel designated meal times".*

No ● Other ● Yes ●

32.4%

45.6%

22.1%

These responses indicate that at least part of the time or in a short amount of time, access to sufficient food is not or will not be met for this quarter of respondents.
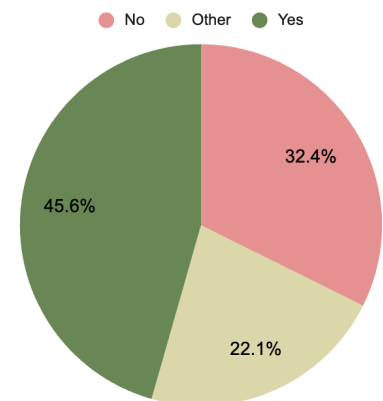
Ways food is accessed

Half of respondents (50.7%) reported accessing food through more than one source. The most common ways that respondents reported accessing food were through:
- Picking up ingredients from a community hub or distribution center (41.9%)
- Food boxes (38.2%)

- Hot meals from distribution sites (23.5%)
- Relying on family and friends (24.3%)
- Hot meals from the hotel where I am being housed (21.3%)
- Hot meals from a community hub or distribution center (20.6%)
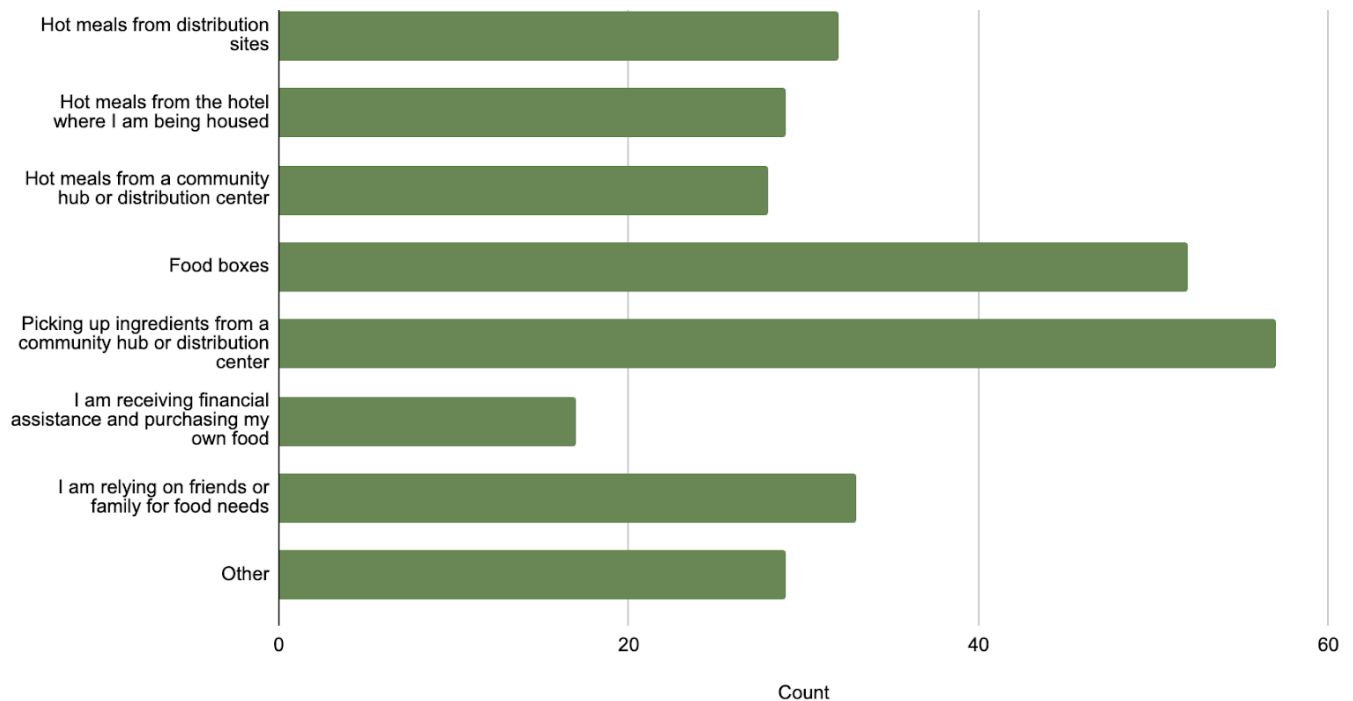
A small percentage of respondents (12.5%) reported purchasing their own food with financial assistance being received.

Roughly one-fifth (21.3%) of respondents reported a means of accessing food that was not identified by the survey. These included: "Using own savings, money"; "food stamps"; and "relying on donations".

Preferred food assistance

For those lacking access to sufficient food, respondents were asked about the type of food assistance that they would like to have provided and the meals they would like covered (i.e., breakfast, lunch, dinner)/ For both questions, respondents were asked to check all that apply.

Types of food assistance preferred

The most common response (43.1%) was "Food boxes", followed by "Frozen ready to cook family meals" (27.7%) and then "Hot individual meals" (20.8%). "Fresh produce" was the most common written response (6.9%).

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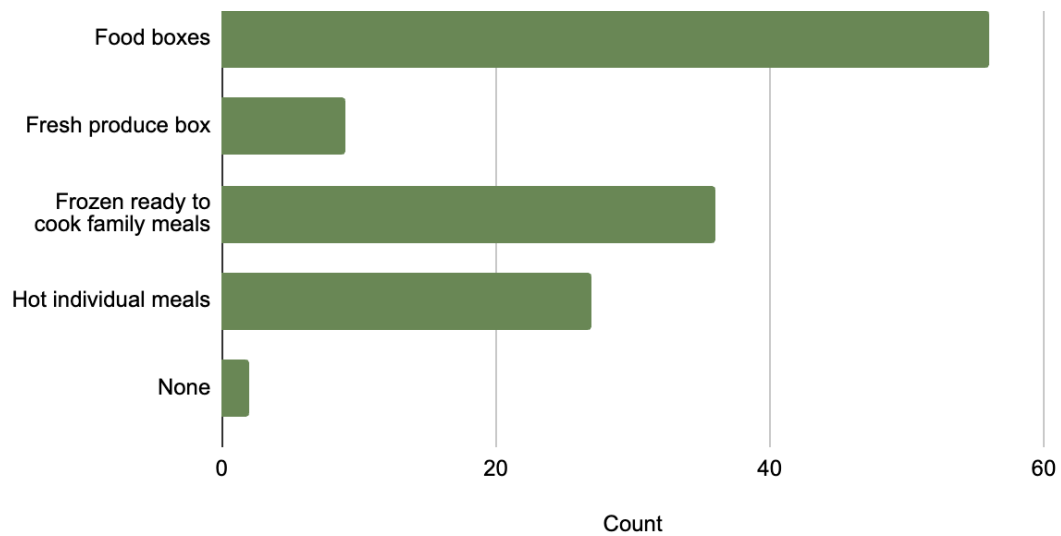
Meal preferred to be covered

The most common response (40.6%) was "Dinner", followed by "Lunch" (30.8%) and then "Breakfast" (21.1%).

Fifty-four percent (54%) of respondents reported a preference to have more than one meal covered.
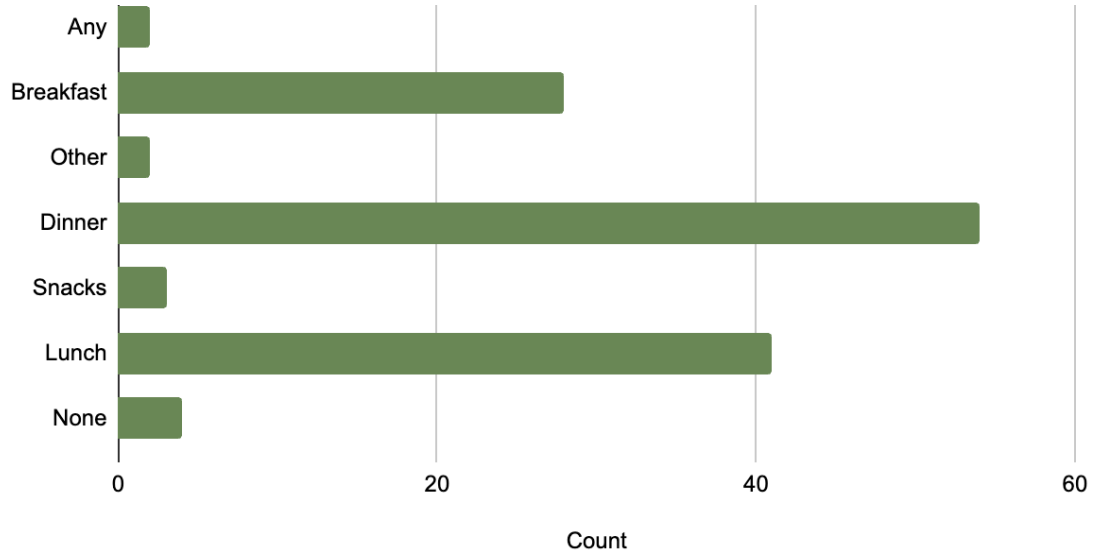
Need for baby formula / food

Close to 12% of respondents reported a need for formula for a baby or child. Of these, one to two children were reported by each respondent (or roughly 15 to 25 children total).

Dietary restrictions

Close to one-third (30.1%) of respondents reported that a member of their household had a dietary restriction. Of those, the most common dietary restrictions identified were:

- Vegetarian or vegan
- An allergy
- Diabetic diet
- Lactose intolerance

Access to food storage and preparation utilities

A strong majority of respondents (92.6%) reported having access to a refrigerator. This was followed by a smaller, but still majority, of respondents who had access to a utility to prepare food – such as a stove (80.9%); microwave (73.5%); or oven (72.1%).
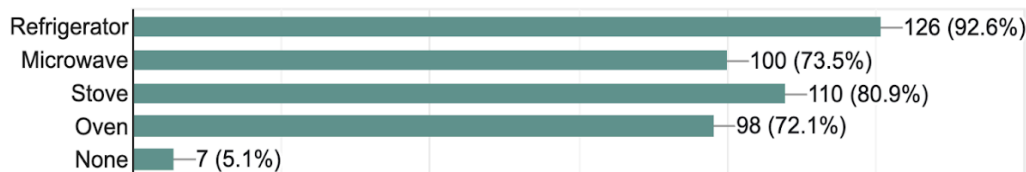
Access to SNAP

Respondents were asked if SNAP had been applied for, and if so, what the outcome was. Less than half of respondents (46) responded to this question.
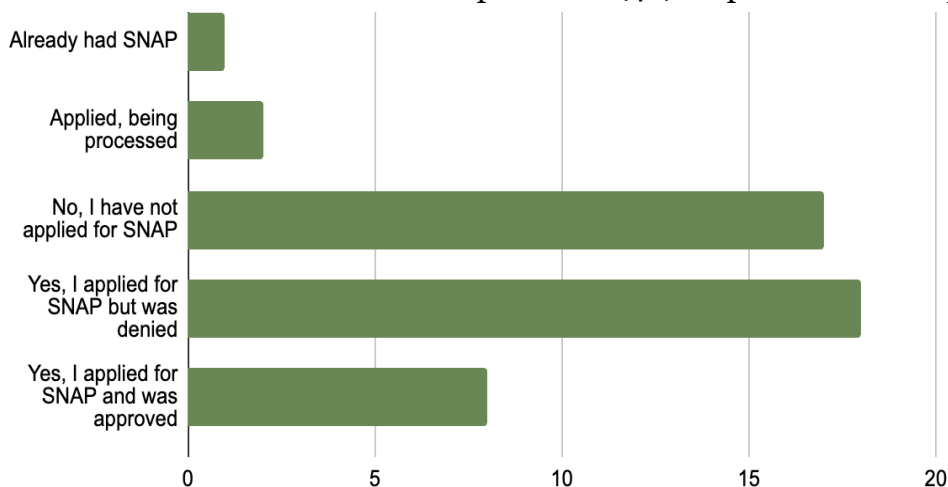
Of the 136 respondents to this survey, only eight respondents reported applying and being approved for SNAP. A slightly larger, but also relatively small number (16) of respondents reported applying but being denied for SNAP. Fifteen respondents reported SNAP had not yet been applied for.

Access to transportation

The strong majority of respondents (90.4%) reported having some access to transportation, either independently, through a ride, or for a short distance.
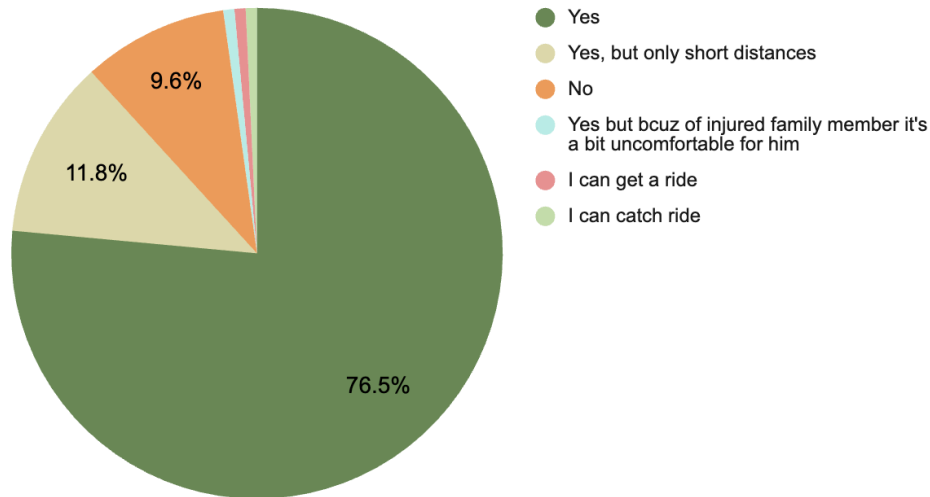
Barrier and / or challenges faced

Survey respondents were asked to share any barriers or challenges they have encountered. Nearly all respondents elected to share something and the range of what was shared was diverse. This is a summary for what was shared:

- Every day and everything feels challenging (i.e., working, mental health, stress, housing, finances, injury, caregiving, lack of transportation, loss of job, lack of income, uncertainty of future)
- Produce, meat, healthy foods, basic baking ingredients are needed.
- Work schedules make it challenging to make it to meal distribution times.
- Food is too expensive.
- There is a longing for familiar food (i.e., Filipino).
- It is challenging to find central, reliable, up-to-date information about assistance available.
- Appreciation of any support offered.

Appendix D. Hot Meal Provider Survey

In partnership between Common Ground Collective and the MEFT, hot meal providers were asked to share about their experiences to aid coordination and fair food assistance to affected populations post-2023 Maui wildfires. Sixteen organizations responded to the survey between October 9, 2023 and November 20, 2023.

Types of Business
> Businesses were asked to check all that apply.
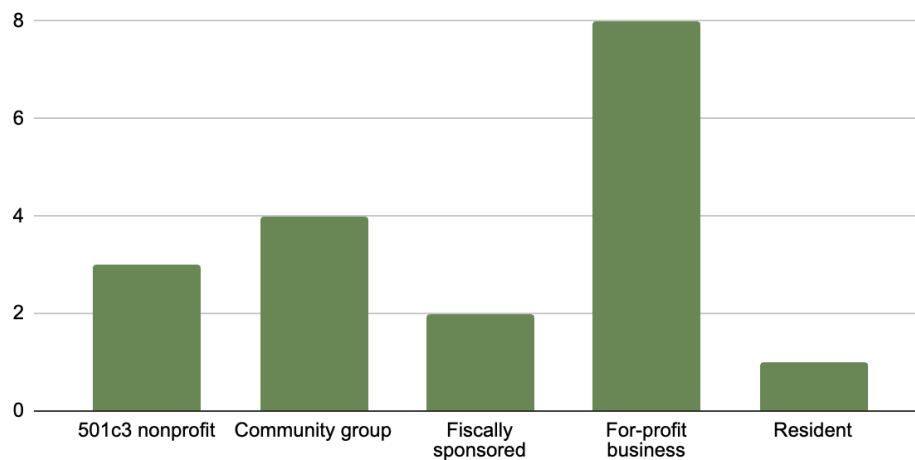
Prior experience providing emergency or food insecure meal programs
> Only one responding organization reported providing emergency or food insecure meal programs prior to the 2023 Maui wildfires. This organization expanded their existing program to serve additional needs following the fires.

Number of meals served daily
> Individually, organizations reported serving anywhere from fifty to 1,200 meals daily. Collectively, these organizations reported serving between 4,520 to 5,648 meals daily.

Number of meals served to date
> At the time of survey response (October through November 2023), fifteen responding organizations reported having served a total over 307,000 meals to the Maui community.

Method food is served

Businesses were asked to check all ways in which they served food.

Where/how do you serve food? (Check all that apply)
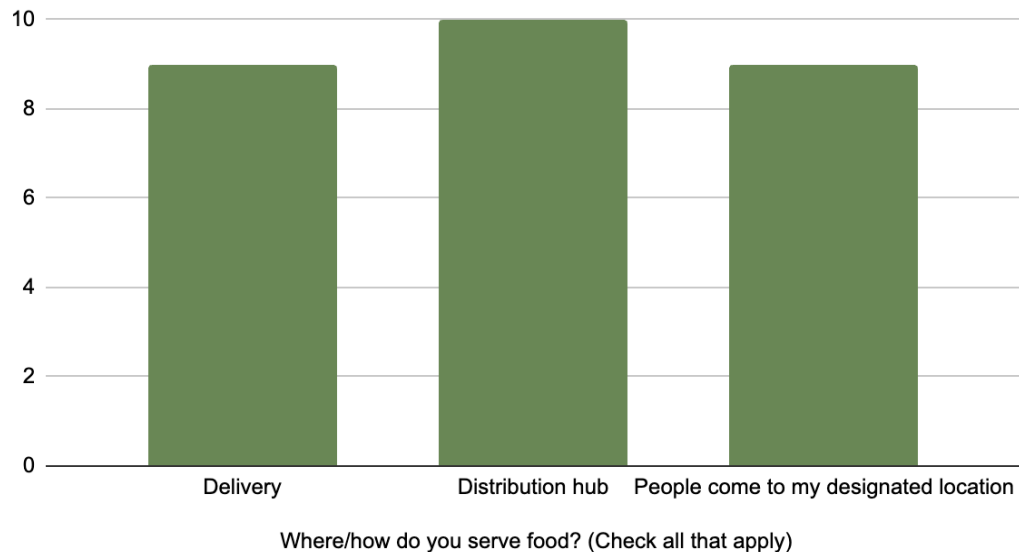
Half (50%) of responding organizations reported using more than one method.

Locations where meals were served

The following locations were identified:

- Honokōwai Beach Hub
- Kelawea Mauka Park
- Napili Park Hub
- Pu'uhonua
- S turns
- Pohaku park
- Lāhainā Civic Center
- Kaʻanapali Beach
- Hua Momona Farm
- W. Lipoa Street in Kihei
- Waikapū, Wailuku, Waiehu, Waiheʻe, Kahului
- South Maui to the homebound
- Central Maui
- Upcountry
- Upper Lahainaluna Area
- Hawaiian Homes
- Lower Honoapiilani Hwy
- Kahana Boat Ramp
- Kaanapali Fairway
- Kahana Distribution Center
- Olowalu
- Waipuna Chapel and UH Maui

Means of delivery

Of those organizations who reported providing meal delivery, less than half (42%) had temperature control measures for transportation. Such measures include using hot meal boxes and coolers; taking temperature before a meal leaves for delivery and notifying individuals; and using tagging to discard meals after a certain time.

Volunteers were the most frequently identified manpower for delivery.

If you deliver, how do you do that? (Check all that apply)

Days and times of food services

The majority of responding organizations (60%) reported providing meals seven days a week. The meal offered by the majority of organizations was dinner (73%), followed by lunch (67%). Three organizations reported serving all three meals (i.e., breakfast, lunch and dinner).

Eligible recipients of meals

The majority of responding organizations offered meals to anyone. Only three organizations reported using a vetting process to verify eligibility.

- Lahaina address only
- Anyone
- Displaced and affected
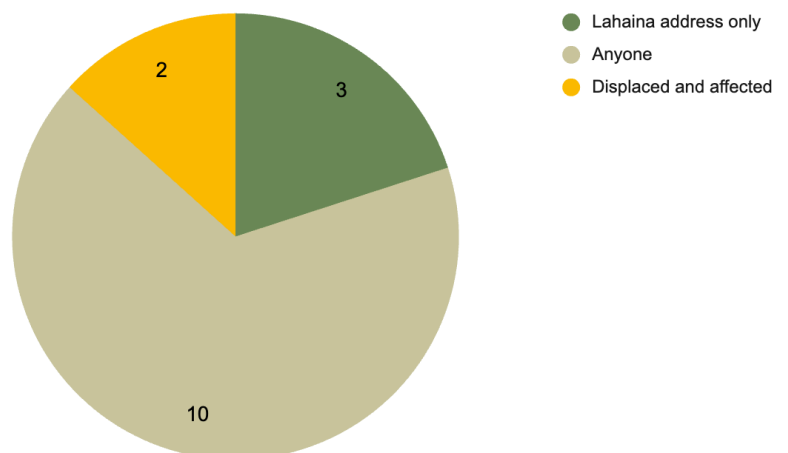
Location of food preparation and cooking

The majority of responding organizations reported they cooked or prepared food at an onsite location (75%). Of these, half (50%) also used a commercial kitchen to prepare and cook food.

Where is the food prepared/cooked? (Check all that apply)
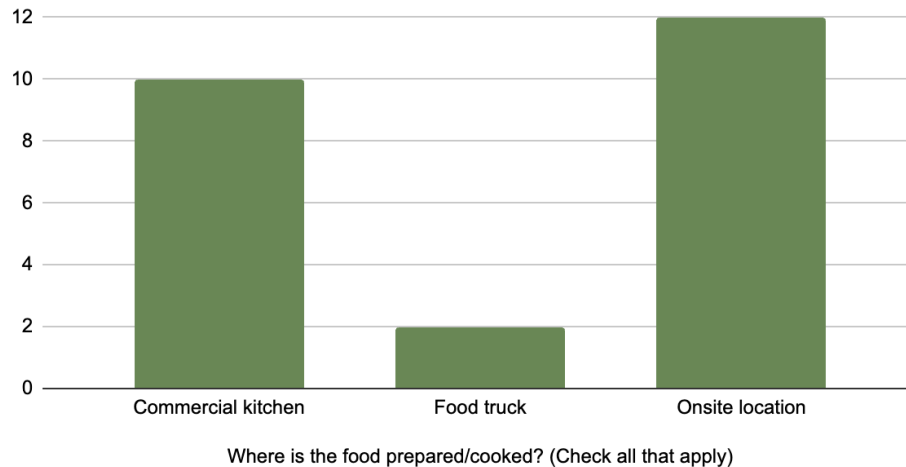
Department of Health permit

Nine of sixteen (56%) of responding organizations reported having a Department of Health (DOH) permit. The remaining seven reported having no (DOH) permit.

Methods of receiving ingredients

All but one responding organization reported using more than one method of obtaining ingredients. The most common method of obtaining ingredients was by using whatever was donated (75%), followed by grocery shopping (69%), and ordering through a distributor (69%).

How do you receive ingredients (check all that apply)
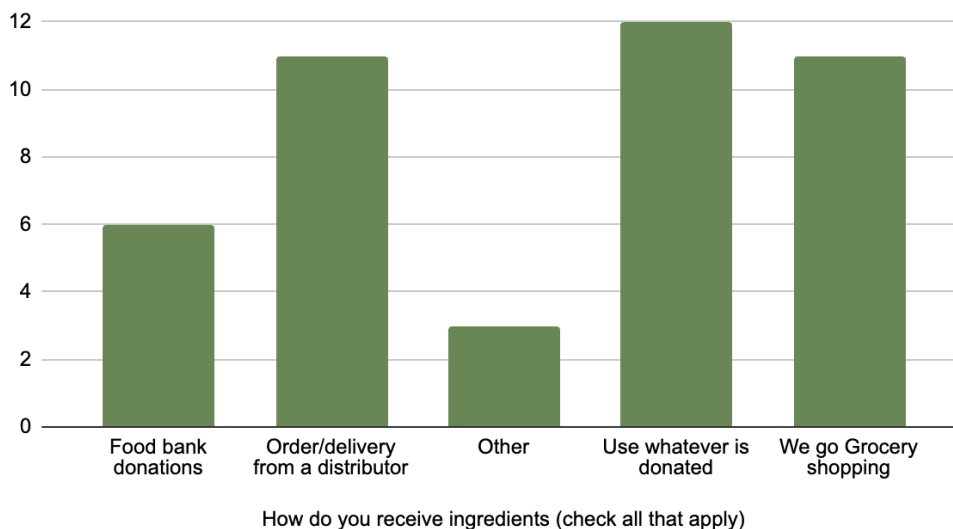
Means of paying for supplies

The majority of responding organizations (75%) reported paying for either some or all supplies with their own money. Significantly less than half (38%) reported supplies were paid for with nonprofit or contract funding.

How do you pay for your supplies (check all that apply)
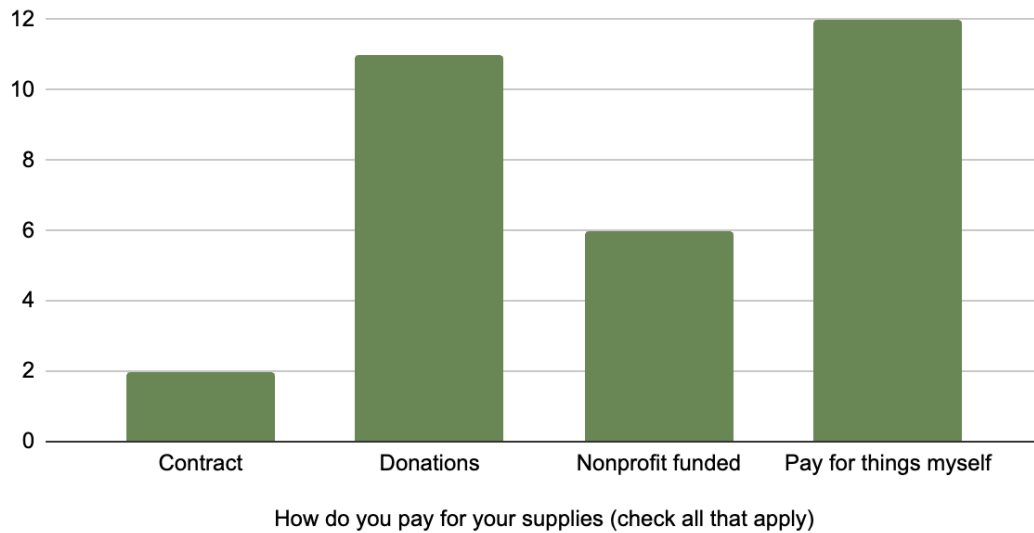
Similarly, less than half of responding organizations (44%) reported that their staff was paid. The majority were volunteers.

Community Partners

Responding organizations reported working with the following community partners:

- Chef Hui
- Salvation Army
- Hawaiʻi Farmers Union
- Common Ground Collective
- Hungry Heroes Hawaiʻi

- Maui Food Bank
- Feed My Sheep
- Keolahou Church
- Maui Rescue Mission

Strengths

Location was the top identified strength by responding organizations, followed by staffing and infrastructure.

What are your strengths? (Check all that apply)
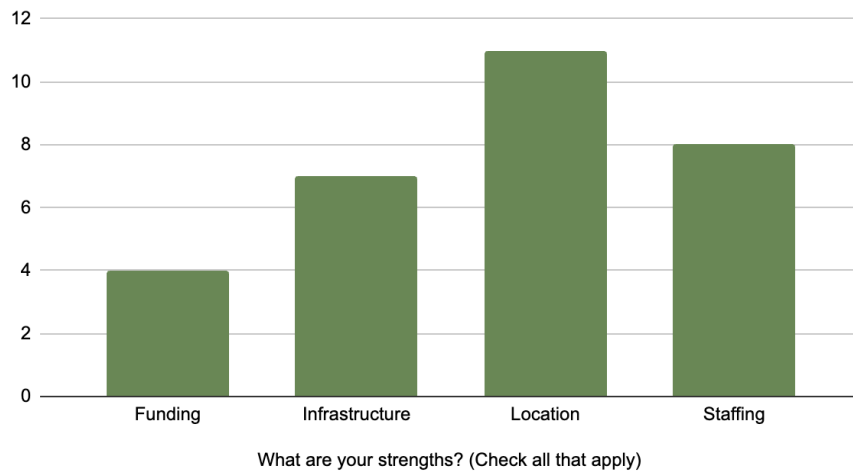
Areas for Improvement

Funding was the top identified area for improvement by responding organizations, followed by infrastructure, and staffing.

What areas do you see for improvement? (Check all that apply)
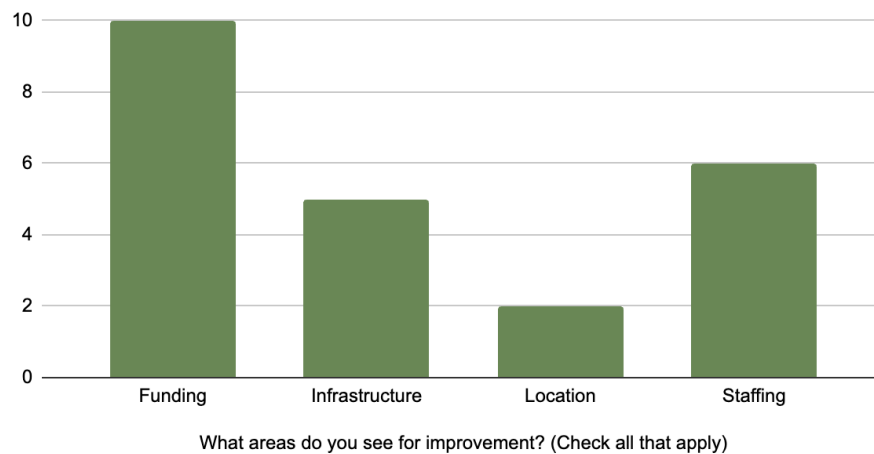
Sustainability of system

Length of time organization can continue to provide support to the community

- 1 year - 2 years
- 2 years - 3 years
- 4 years +
- 6 months - 1 year
- Less than 6 months
- We have already discontinued
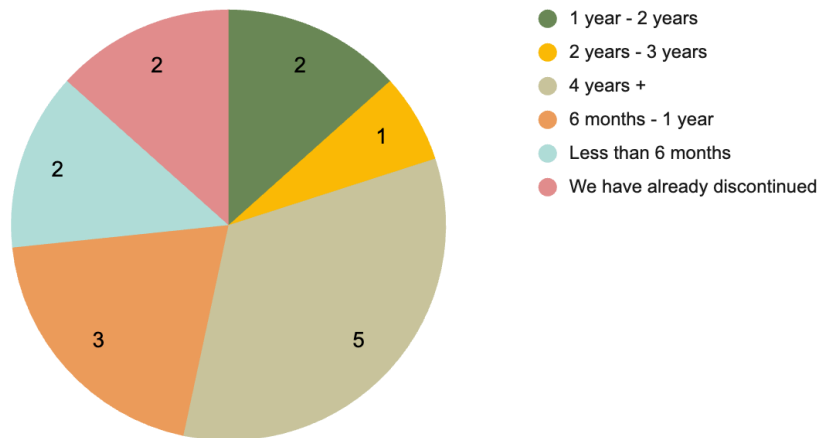
Barriers to serving the community

The most frequently identified barrier to serving the community was funding, followed by communication, staffing and supplies.
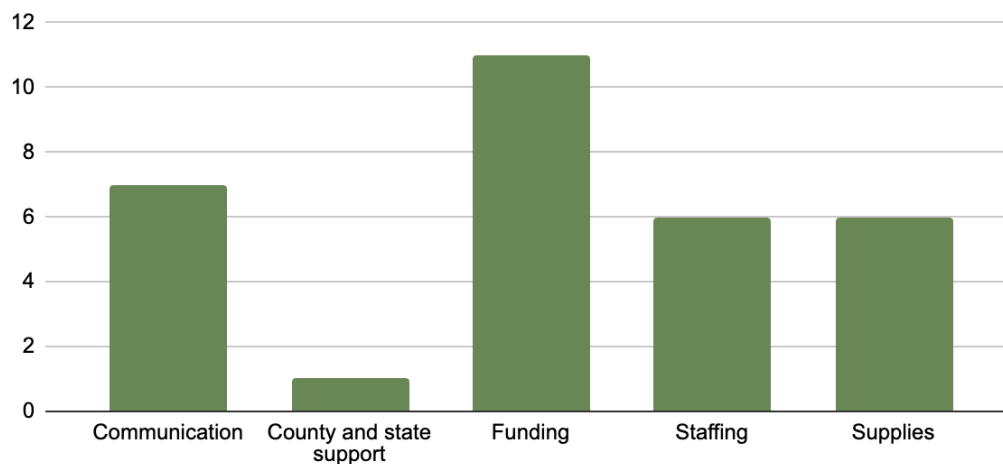
What do you see as the biggest barriers to serving the community? (Check all that apply)

Discontinuing efforts

Organizations were asked, *What does it look like for you to feel confident discontinuing this effort?* Responses are summarized as:

- Knowing that our communities' needs are being met: displaced people are being taken care of, farmers are supported, jobs are secured, Maui is being fed, housing is solved, the economy is stabilized, and people have access to their own kitchens.
- I don't see any end in sight for us. If there is a need, there is a kuleana to continue.

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Was feeding an unmet need?

Organizations were asked if feeding was an unmet need prior to the 2023 Maui wildfires. The majority of responding organizations (74.1%) reported that they believed it was.
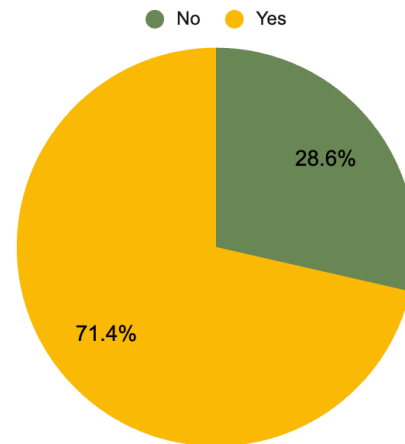
Appendix E. Grocery Distribution & Food Box Survey

In partnership between Common Ground Collective and the MEFT, food box distributors were asked to share about their experiences to aid coordination and fair food assistance to affected populations. Only three organizations responded to the survey. Data analysis was limited due to small response size.

Types of Business
Businesses were asked to check all that apply.

For-profit business	33.33%
501(c)3 nonprofit	100.0%
Community group	0.0%
Fiscally sponsored	0.0%
Other (please specify)	0.0%

Did you provide food boxes prior to the fires?

Yes	100.0%
No	0.0%

If yes, have you expanded your program?

Yes	100.0%
No	0.0%

Where do you distribute? (Check all that apply)

Neighborhood distribution	66.67%
People pickup at my location	33.33%
Other (please specify)	66.67%

If you deliver, how do you do that? (Check all that apply)

Volunteers	50.0%
Paid Staff	100.0%
Paid Service	0.0%

Do you consistently have enough drivers?

Yes	100.0%
No	0.0%

Do you have temperature control measures for transportation?

Yes	100.0%
No	0.0%

What days do you distribute? (Check all that apply)

Monday	33.33%
Tuesday	0.0%
Wednesday	33.33%
Thursday	33.33%
Friday	66.67%
Saturday	66.67%
Sunday	0.0%

Who can receive boxes?

Anyone	0.0%
Lāhainā address only	66.67%
Kula address only	33.33%
Other (please specify)	100.0%

Do you use any vetting process for box giveaways?

Yes	33.33%
No	66.67%

How do you pay for your supplies? (Check all that apply)

Nonprofit funded	66.67%
Contract	0.0%
Donations	100.0%
Pay for things myself	0.0%
Other (please be specific)	33.33%

How do you receive supplies? (Check all that apply)

We go Grocery shopping	0.0%
Order/delivery from a distributor	33.33%
Food bank donations	33.33%
Use whatever is donated	33.33%
Other (please specify)	100.0%

Are your staff paid?

Yes	66.67%
No	33.33%

What are your strengths? (Check all that apply)

Location	66.67%
Staffing	66.67%
Funding	33.33%
Infrastructure	100.0%

What areas do you see for improvement? (Check all that apply)

Location	50.0%
Staffing	50.0%
Funding	100.0%
Infrastructure	50.0%

How long do you see being able to do this community support?

Less than 6 months	0.0%
6 months - 1 year	0.0%
1 year - 2 years	66.67%
2 years - 3 years	0.0%
3 years - 4 years	0.0%
4 years +	33.33%
We have already discontinued	0.0%

What do you see as the biggest barrier to serving the community?

Staffing	0.0%
Funding	100.0%
Communication	0.0%
Supplies	0.0%

Do you think this was an unmet need prior to the wildfires that should continue long-term?

Yes	100.0%
No	0.0%

Appendix F. Distribution Hub Survey

In September 2023, members of the MEFT individually met with the leaders of five distribution hubs that had been stood up in response to the 2023 Maui wildfires: Honokowai Beach Park, Kelawea Mauka Park, Napili Noho, S-Turns and Sheraton. The goal of these meetings was to gather information for the MEFT to support the hubs and community in a more organized way moving forward. The information shared throughout these meetings has been summarized below.

Hub Identified Goals

Collectively, the interviewed hubs reported wanting to accomplish the following: Serve the people that really need it through the provision of consistent and reliable services, supplies and comfort using island family values that support health, wellness and community building.

Hub Operations

All interviewed hubs reported being open at least five days per week, with varying days of operation between them. This varying schedule ensured at least four community hubs were open every day of the week, with the exception of Sunday.

Number of Hubs Open Each Day
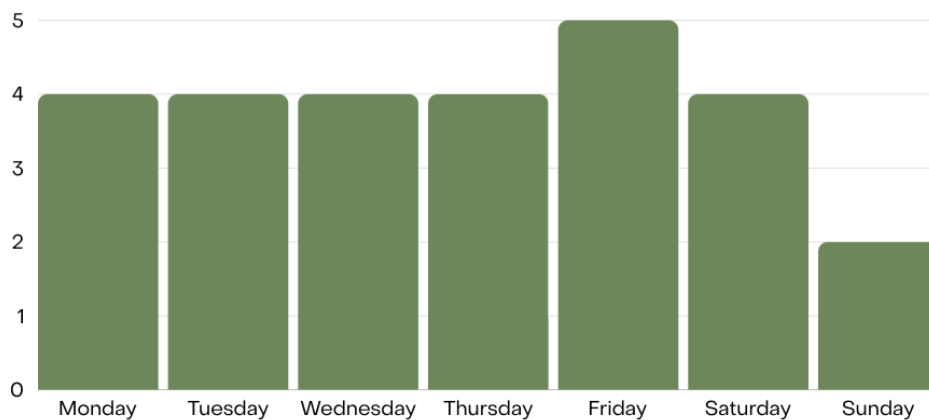
Hours of Operation

All interviewed hubs reported operating hours between 10:00am - 3:00pm. Outside of these core hours, two to three hubs reported extended hours past 3:00 p.m. and one hub reported opening at 9:00 a.m.

Hours of Operation
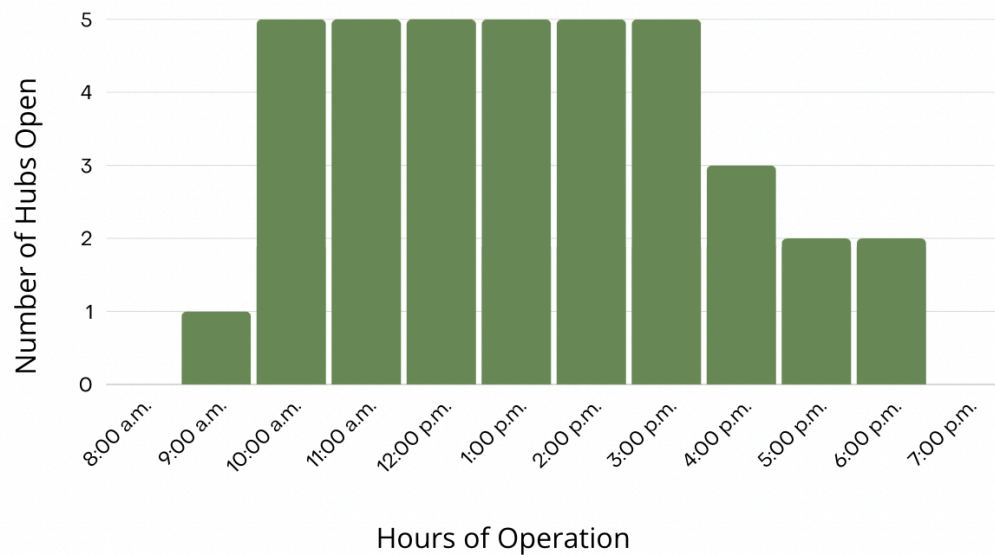
Recipient Eligibility

Three interviewed hubs (60%) reported anyone could receive supplies at their hub, and two hubs (40%) reported supply eligibility was limited to those with a Lāhainā address only.

Lahaina address only
40.0%

Anyone
60.0%
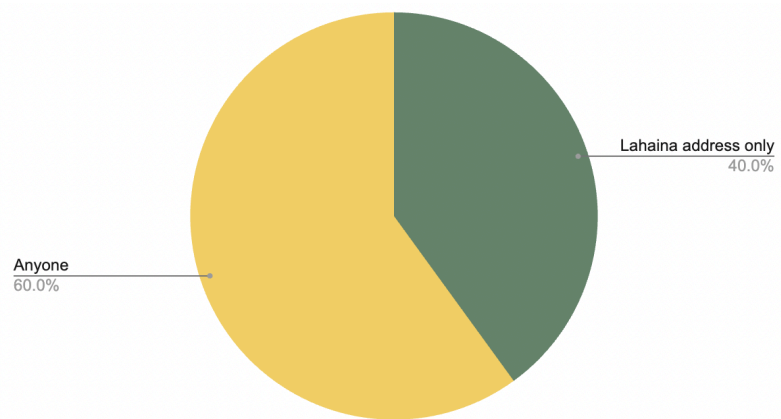
Existing Systems

The majority of interviewed hubs (80%) reported having a Check-In Process in place. Existing systems to track ordering and inventory were reported the least by interviewed hubs. This was also an area of requested support from the MEFT.
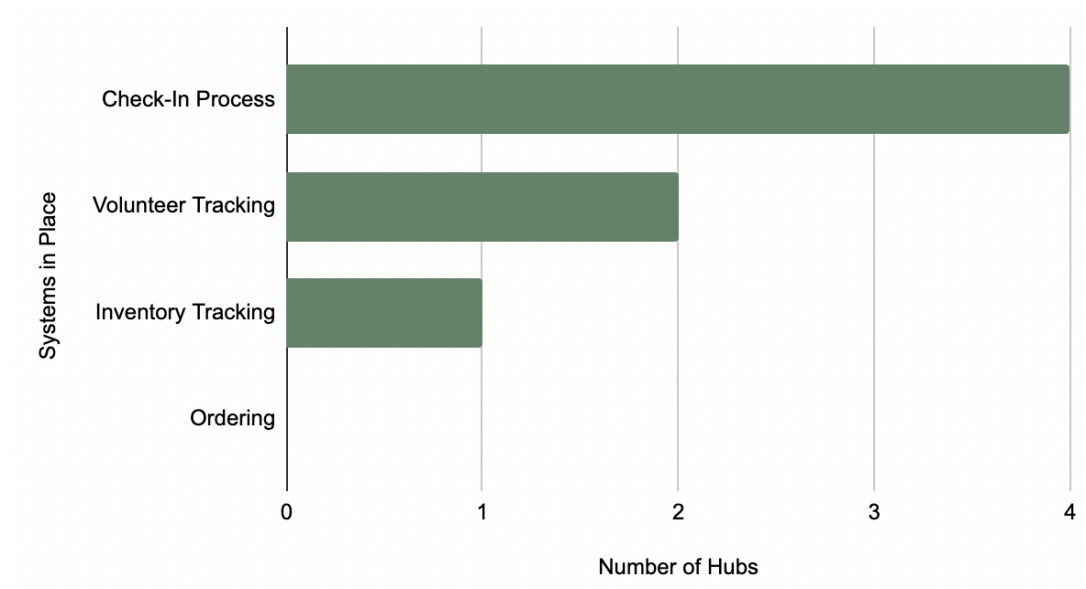
Existing Processes to Obtain Supplies

A specific process for obtaining supplies was not mentioned by any of the interviewed hubs. Interviewed hubs reported reaching out to the following organizations to request supplies:

- Maui Rapid Response (MRR), Brown Kross Hui, Maui Food Bank, Common Ground Collective (CGC), Local Harvest, StayFresh, Safeway

Nonprofit Status & Collaboration

Sixty-percent (60%) of the interviewed hubs reported that they are housed under a nonprofit.

Other nonprofits, groups, and organizations that the interviewed hubs reported collaborating with included:

- Mauna Medics
- Maui Rapid Response (MRR)
- Brown Kross Hui (BKH)
- Helping Hands Hawai'i (HHH)
- Common Ground Collective (CGC)
- Maui Food Hub
- Maui Food Bank
- Local Harvest

- Kamehameha Schools
- Hope Chapel
- Pacific Whale Foundation
- Pacific Birth Collective
- Safe Havens Maui
- NDN (Native American Land Back Organization)
- Red Cross
- FEMA

Strengths

The following strengths were reported by interviewed hubs:
- Comprehensive community building
- Availability of fresh hot meals at all times
- Mental health and healing support
- Space
- Structure
- Crew

Areas of Need and For Improvement

The following areas for improvement and need for support were identified:
- Manpower, staffing and staffing benefits – only 20% of interviewed hubs reported having paid positions, and 80% expressed interest in receiving staffing support.
- Overall help with infrastructure, organization, and communication (i.e., improve communication with and follow through from State, County and Federal government entities; improve communication with each other and the community; improved consistency; smoother operations; utilization of Square system).
- Equipment (e.g., forklift, refrigerators, freezers, freezer truck, tents, lighting, pallets, golf carts).
- Volunteer availability and tracking (i.e., more volunteers, support to improve reliable volunteer systems, iVolunteers).
- Security – 80% of interviewed hubs expressed interest in having security that was not police, particularly overnight security.
- Translation services – 80% of interviewed hubs reported Filipino, ASL, Spanish, and Papakolea Tongan translation services would be beneficial.
- Inventory tracking and supply ordering (e.g., daily order list, designated drop-off and unload stations).
- Delivery – 60% of interviewed hubs reported having a delivery driver would be helpful; cost and location was a reported area of concern.
- Check-in process (i.e., consistently ask for and track name, address, number of people in household, and ages).
- Trash, recycling, and a process for getting unneeded things out of the hub circulation – none of the interviewed hubs reported having a process for removing unneeded things out of the hub circulation.
- Fuel – 40% of interviewed hubs reported a need for diesel fuel, particularly as a back-up for solar energy during rainy or winter months.
- Site permitting – 40% of interviewed hubs reported interest in support for site permitting, another 40% reported having already pursued this.

- On-site childcare and school (i.e., advocate to DOE to allow educational sites and curriculum flexibility).
- Bathrooms, sanitary stations, dishwashing stations, and handwashing stations.
- Technology.

Sustainability and Longer Term Need

The length of time each interviewed hub reported foreseeing being able to provide continued community support varied. Responses included:

- 1-2 years
- 2-3 years
- 4 + years
- As long as financially able
- As long as it is needed

Two interviewed hubs reported that the current system is not sustainable, and 60% of hubs reported sustainability is reliant on positions that pay more than unemployment (i.e., more than $16/hr; $4 -5k/monthly).

Sixty-percent (60%) of the interviewed hubs reported that this either was or possibly was an unmet need prior to the wildfires that should continue sustainably longer term.

Interviewed hubs consistently reported they would only feel confident decommissioning hub support when the need was no longer there. This would require the following:

- Operational, logistical, and infrastructure systems are incorporated into the reconstruction of our town (i.e., local food systems, clean energy, elderly on fixed incomes are being cared for, circular economy gaining traction within our community).
- Community members are back in their long-term homes, the housing crisis is addressed, people are able to be back at work and families are no longer financially burdened. (State benefits / SNAP are not sufficient to allow people to have their needs met given the high cost of living.)
- Opportunities for healing are available through community building events, music and low cost entertainment.

Appendix G. Agricultural Industry Survey Results

The Hawaiʻi Farmers Union United (HFUU) gathered feedback on local farm impacts post-2023 Maui wildfires through the *Maui Producer Impact & Support Survey*. The survey and corresponding results were used to shape HFUU's response and link producers to recovery resources. Sixty-seven (67) responses were received. A snapshot of results were shared with the MEFT and have been included here for reference.

Agricultural Operation Type

The largest operation types who responded were orchard or field crop.

Operation Type	Count
Orchard or Tree Nursery	35
Field Crops	30
Specialty Nursery and Flower Production	22
Livestock	20
Value–Added Products	19
Agroforestry	13
Beekeeping and Honey Production	10
Other	7
Forestry	4
Fisheries and Aquaculture	1
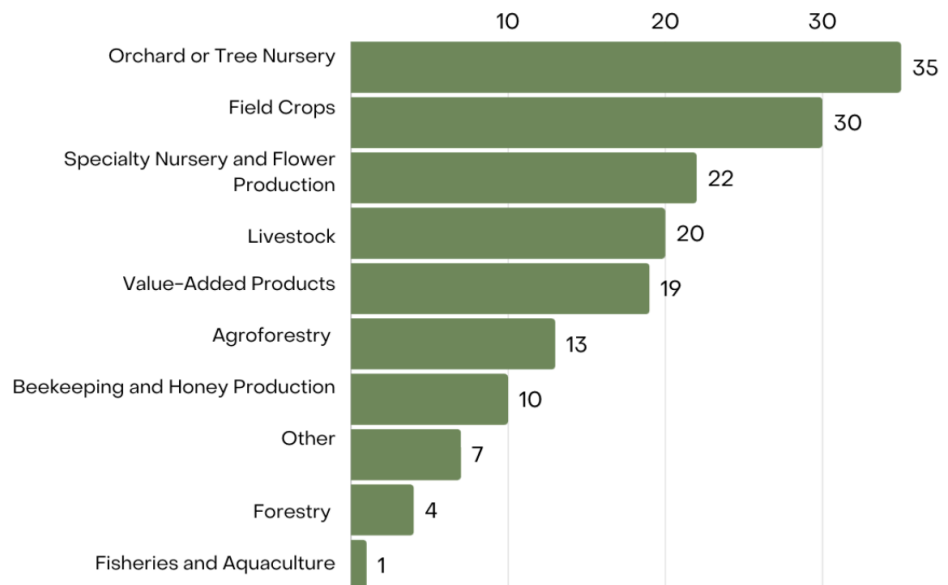
Damage or Loss

The majority of respondents reported a decline in farm sales or market loss, followed by crop damage or loss, and damage to structures.

Damage or Loss	Count
Decline in Farm Sales or Market Access	51
Crop Damage or Loss	28
Damage to Structures	21
Equipment Damage or Loss	15
Damage to Conservation Structures	14
Irrigation System Damage / Malfunction	13
Other	12
Pastureland Degradation or Loss	7
N/A – No damage or loss sustained	5
Livestock Loss or Injury	2
Loss of Essential Documents	2
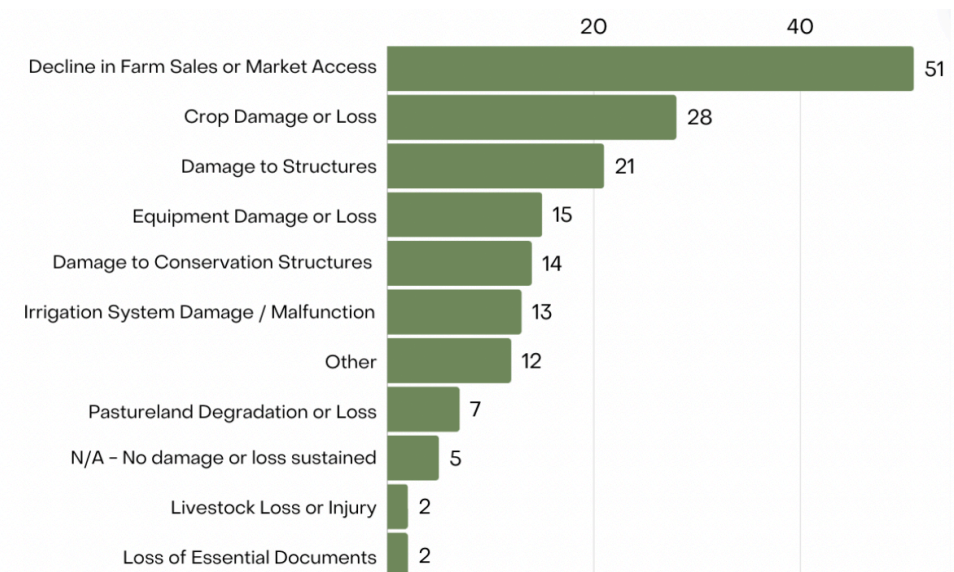
Market Sales Loss Percentage

Of those reporting market loss, the majority (nearly 60%) lost 75-100% of their markets.

Legend:
- 1 – 25%
- 26 – 50%
- 51 – 75%
- 76 – 100%

Pie chart values:
- 8.8%
- 21.1%
- 12.3%
- 57.9%
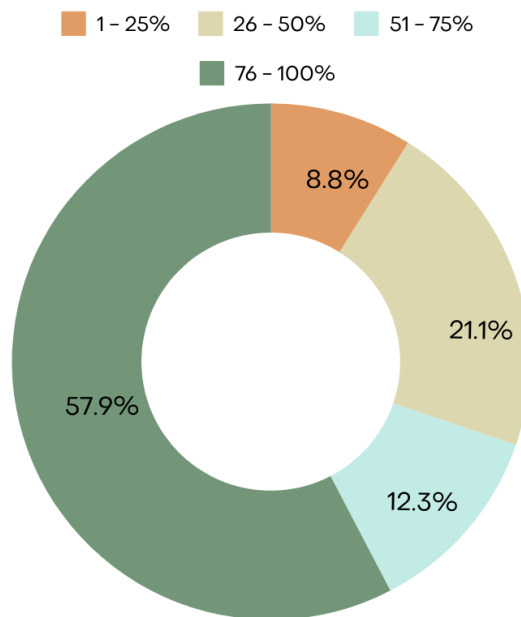
Immediate Needs

The most frequently reported immediate need was for financial relief or grants.

Immediate Need	Count
Financial Relief or Grants	55
Equipment and Infrastructure	24
Agricultural Supplies	19
Livestock Support	12
Conservation Practice or Structure Restoration	11
Technical Advice or Consultation	9
N/A or None	6
Temporary Housing or Shelter for Affected Individuals	6
Land Access Options	4
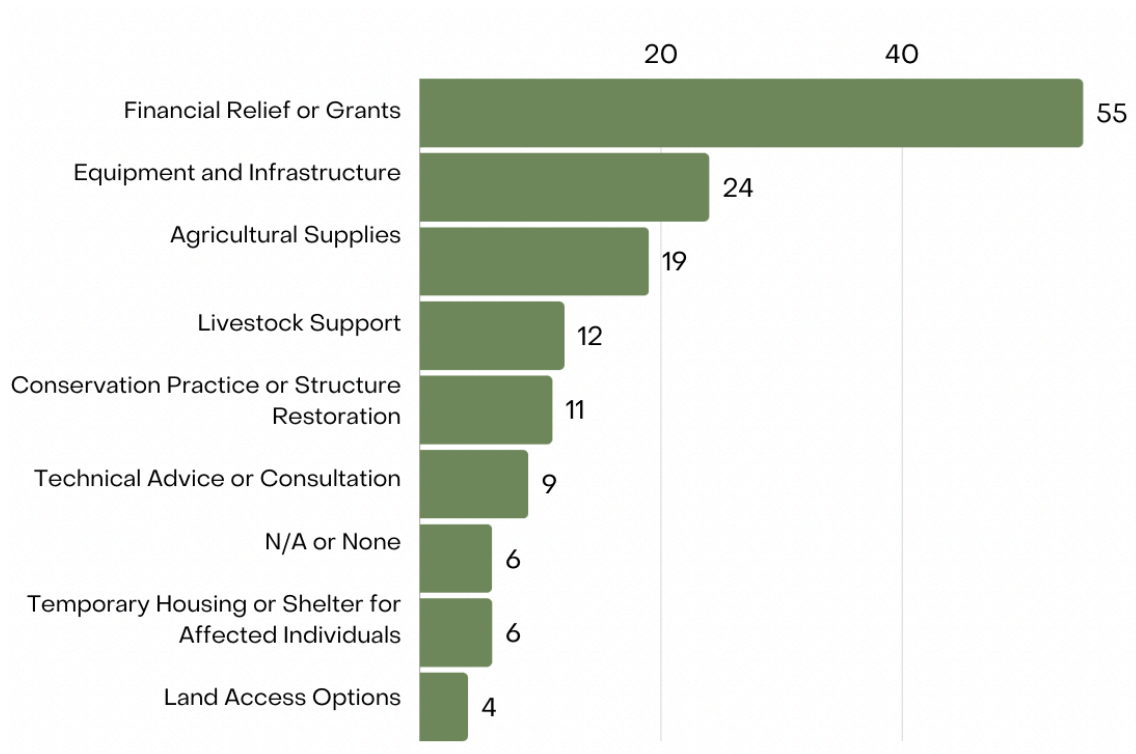
Appendix H. Restaurant and Small Business Maui Fire Relief and Economic Impact Survey Results

The Restaurant and Small Business Maui Fire Relief and Economic Impact Survey was created by Leanne Wong in partnership with Common Ground Collective to collect vital data detailing the roles small businesses and restaurants served in the weeks following the Maui wildfires, and the resulting economic impact. Participants were informed that this data would be shared with County and State officials to shape a long-term emergency feeding infrastructure and secure future funding.

Fifty-seven (57) Maui-based restaurants and small businesses responded to the survey.

Location of Restaurants and Small Business Respondents (By Zipcode)

The largest percentage of responding restaurants and small businesses identified as being located in Lāhainā, followed by Upcountry, then South Maui, and Central Maui.
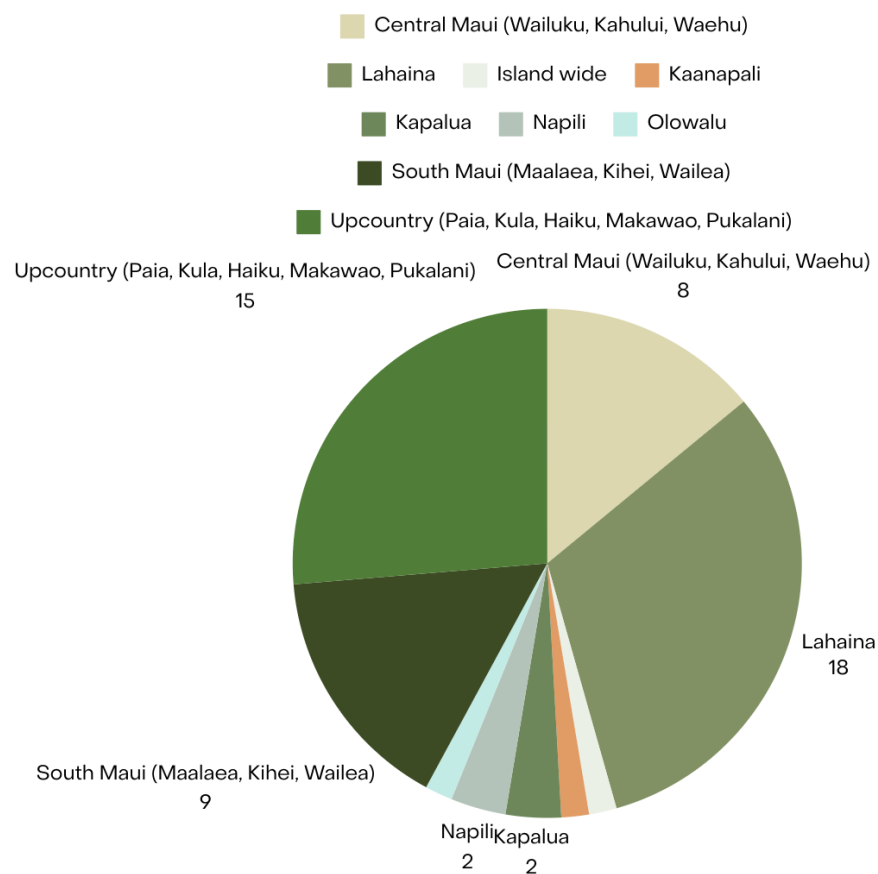
Type of Business

Responding restaurants and small businesses were asked to check all that apply. Respondents identified being largely family owned-operated restaurants (13) and non-restaurant small businesses (13). This was followed by food truck operators.

The majority (77%) of these businesses reported having only one location.
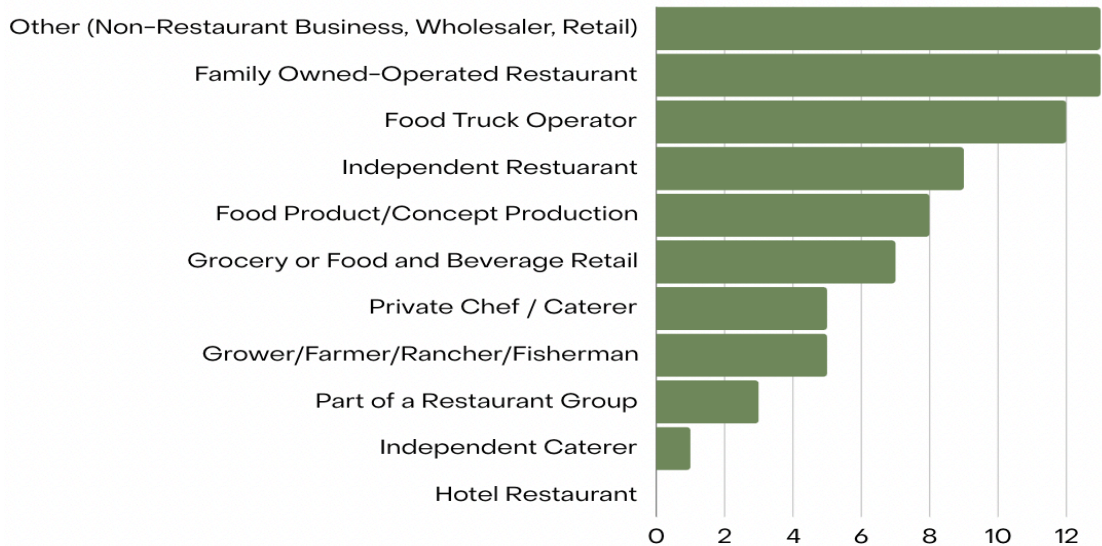
Food Demographic and Culture

Restaurants and small businesses were asked, 'What is your food demographic/culture?'. Respondents answered this question differently. Some responded with the demographic and cultures of the population being served, while others responded with the culture or type of food provided. Responses included:

- **Residency Demographic**: Locals, Tourists
- **Cultures:** Asian, Caribbean, Chinese, Filipino, Hawaiian, Thai, Vietnamese, Laotian, Cambodian, Indonesian, Japanese, American, Puerto Rican
- **Foods:** Comfort foods, shave ice, seafood, craft burgers, plant-based, farmers market, cheese, fusion, beef, pork, lamb, coffee, pizza, pastries, teas, beer, seltzer, soda, spirits, wine,
- **Goods:** Men and women apparel, jewelry, accessories, supply equipment, smallwares

Operational Status of Restaurants and Small Businesses:

Roughly 16% of responding restaurants and businesses reported to have lost their building in the fires. The majority of other respondents reported that either the location of their business was still standing and operationable (42 %) or still standing but closed (16%).

Legend:
- building is still standing but inoperable and in the impact zone.
- building is still standing, operable, and currently making hot meals for the community only
- building is still standing, operable, and currently making hot meals for the community while also open to the public for normal business
- building is still standing, operable, and currently only open to the public for business.
- building is still standing, operable, but currently shut down due to government order
- building is still standing, operable, but currently shut down due to lack of business
- I do not have a primary location for my business, but am currently available for normal business engagement with the public.
- I do not have a primary location for my business, but am currently shut down due to lack of business
- Other (please specify)
- was destroyed in the fires

Pie chart values: 3.5%, 8.8%, 14.0%, 19.3%, 10.5%, 5.3%, 3.5%, 17.5%, 15.8%

Percentage of responding restaurants and small businesses that have been involved in the emergency food relief effort since August 8th: 77%

Percentage of responding restaurants and small businesses that suspended normal business to volunteer in the food relief effort: 39%

This included providing meals directly to the community, at drop-off locations, Maui Humane Society, Kula Hub, UH Maui Culinary Kitchen, Tails Up Kitchen, Lahainaluna area, and Sugar Beach events.

Percentage of responding restaurants and small businesses that have donated services, products, space, or resources toward the food relief effort: 91%

Donations included:

- **Goods and Products:** Majority of inventory to feed the community; prepared food; all our cold and shelf-stable food, canned food, bottle water, beverages, cheese, pizza, coffee, leftover produce, ground beef, beef stew, kitchen supplies and equipment, storage racks, totes, fuel, propane, internet.
- **Time and Skills:** Labor; Chef skills, cooking; food delivery services; coordination; marketing; haircuts; jewelry making; location/space.
- **Money:** Raised funds through sales; personal donations All sales from cocktails went to relief efforts.

Percentage of responding restaurants and small businesses that have been used to prepare hot meals: 37%

The estimated range of number of meals prepared daily/weekly by responding restaurants and small businesses:

- **Daily:** 20 - 1,500
- **Weekly:** 300 - 10,500

Of the responding businesses who provided hot meals (21), only four (19%) had been compensated for meal preparation by a NGO nonprofit group.

- Those who received financial compensation reported invoicing the following groups for the following number of meals at the following rates:
  - World Central Kitchen: 6700 meals @ $9 - $12/meal
  - World Central Kitchen: 40k in the beginning was for the first few weeks only
  - Salvation Army: 500 meals @ $12/meal
  - Chef Hui: 4400 meals @ $4.50/ meal

Responding restaurant and small business volume capabilities:

up to 600 meals per day (…
17.2%

up to 1000 meals per day…
13.8%

up to 1500 meals per day…
3.4%

up to 3000 meals per day…
3.4%

up to 300 meals per day (…
62.1%
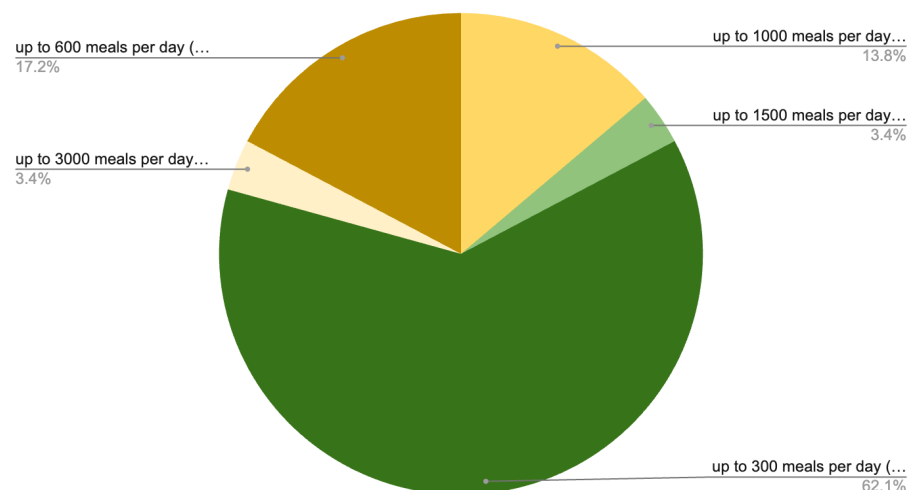
Percentage of responding restaurants and small businesses that have been able to secure donations of food and non perishable items: 28%

Groups responding businesses worked with to assist in securing donations:
- Chef Hui
- World Central Kitchen
- Sysco
- Common Ground Collective
- Operation BBQ Relief
- Salvation Army
- Rimfire
- HIRABARA farms
- Okoa Farms
- Lopes Family Farm
- South Maui Gardens
- Maui Nui Venison
- Rice Factory Honolulu
- TS Restaurants Legacy of Aloha
- Culinary academy at UHMC
- Hawaiʻi Coffee Association
- Westin Maui Hub
- The public and community

Percentage of responding restaurants and small businesses receiving financial aid, rent relief, or abatement from their landlord for their business: 12%

Percentage of responding restaurants and small businesses seeking money via crowdfunding, sponsorship, or other means (e.g., nonprofit, private donor, etc.):
- Not seeking any: 52%
- For Business and/or Employees: 40%
- For Personal Self: 5%

Percentage of responding businesses seeking money via banking and/or govt financial assistance programs: 28% Not seeking any: 72%

Of the responding businesses seeking this support, these businesses reported seeking it from the following:
- SBA: 31% of responding businesses reported carrying debt from financial loans or aid (Economic Injury and Disaster Loan or PPP) received during COVID. This reportedly prohibited SBA EIDL loan eligibility.
- FEMA
- Red Cross

Estimated total weekly operating costs to continue food relief operations

- Min: $500
- Max: $50,000
- Average: $8,900

Estimated total weekly operating costs to continue regular business operations for the public

- Min: $350
- Max: $250,000
- Average: $20,500

Estimated business loss since August 8th, 2023

90%-99% loss weekly
9.6%

80%+ loss weekly
17.3%

70-75% loss weekly
11.5%

50-65% loss weekly
7.7%

100% – my business is clo…
40.4%

20-30% loss weekly
3.8%

30-40%+ loss weekly
9.6%
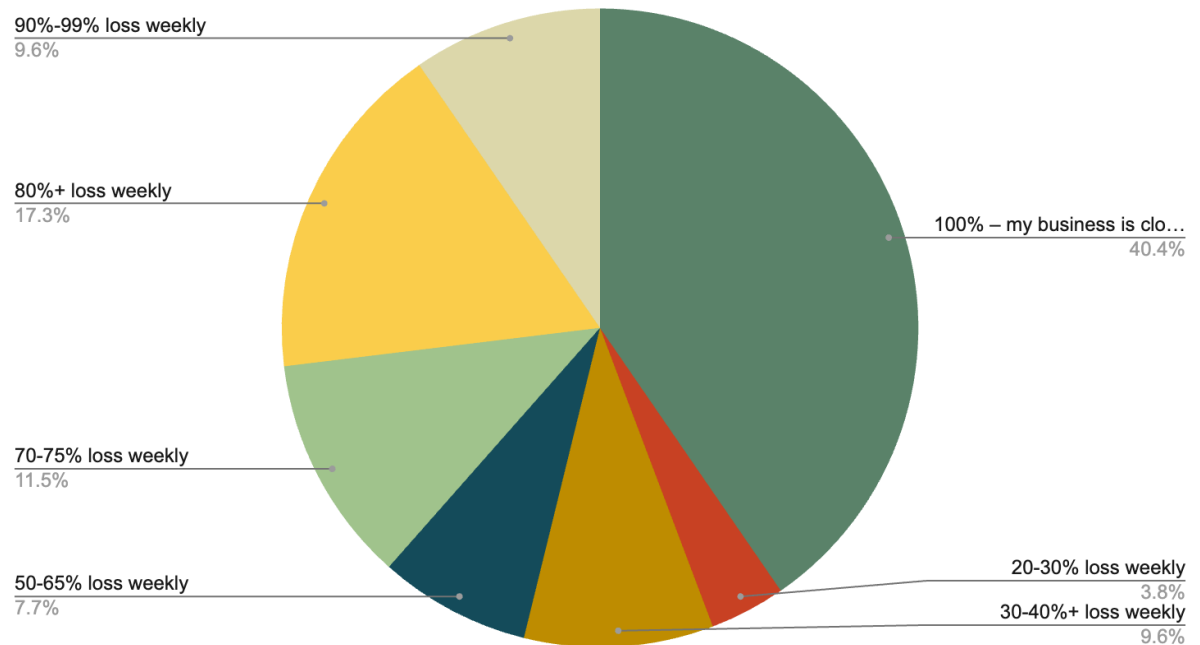
Estimated money spent by 44 responding businesses overall on food relief efforts (e.g., supplies, labor, overhead, etc.)

- Sum: Over $800,000
- Average spent: $18,400
- Max reported by a single business: $200,000

Percentage of responding restaurants and small businesses in need of additional assistance connecting with resources for financial aid: 56%

This specifically includes: money to continue to live and operate; cash flow; business grants; government grants; any financial aid that does not require payback; loan forgiveness.

Following financial aid, the most immediate needs of responding restaurants and small businesses included: more business, more tourists, marketing to locals and tourists, housing, and water.

Percentage of responding businesses still interested in being contacted to assist in Emergency Food Relief: 74%

Appendix I. Emergency Feeding Support To Date (August 2024)

One year post-wildfire, the *Emergency Feeding Support To Date Survey* was sent to the organizations and groups that have supported the emergency feeding efforts on Maui. This survey aimed to capture and quantify the approximate amounts of support provided by these organizations over the past year. In the corresponding data, "to date" is reflective of August 2023 to August 2024. Where indicated, the specific number of responding organizations has been identified to provide context to amounts.

While the specific responses of each organization have been made anonymous, the identities of the responding organizations have been listed below to honor the immense support they have provided to the community over the past year.

Responding Organizations
- Citizen Church Maui
- Common Ground Collective
- Feed My Sheep, Inc.
- Fresh Help Maui
- Holomua Outreach
- Hua Momona Foundation
- Hungry Heroes Hawai'i
- Living Pono Project
- Maui Food Bank
- Napili Noho
- Our Kupuna
- S—Turns Community Hub
- Upcountry Strong

Number of meals served to date *(8 organizations):*
- Individual organization total range: 850 to 626,915 meals
- Median: 76,232 meals
- Average: 194,645 meals
- Approximate collective total: 1,557,160 meals

Number of food boxes served to date *(9 organizations):*
- Individual organization total range: 1,184 to 110,00 food boxes
- Median: 10,860 food boxes
- Average: 24,155 food boxes
- Approximate collective total: 217,398 food boxes

Collective estimated number of pounds of food served to date *(11 organizations):* Over 6,095 tons

Estimated number of individuals* served to date (12 organizations):
*Individual counts based on daily/weekly totals and may include repeated servings to an individual throughout the course of time. Count of unique individuals unknown.
- Range: 80 to 504,322 individuals
- Median: 17,371 individuals
- Average: 111,616 individuals
- Approximate collective total: 1,339,401 individuals

Estimated total funds/dollars spent on emergency feeding to date *(11 organizations):*
- Range: $2,000 to $15.8 million
- Median: $750,000
- Average: $2.4 million
- Approximate collective total: $25.9 million

Approximate percentage of total funds that went towards local purchasing for emergency feeding *(11 organizations):*
- Individual organization total percentage range: 15% to 100%
- Average percentage: 79%
- Median percentage: 85%

Number of staff positions created to support emergency feeding:
- Individual organization total range: 0 to 15 positions
- Approximate collective total positions created between 13 respondents: Over 79 positions
- Average positions created within each organization: 6 positions

Number of volunteer hours utilized/documented to support emergency feeding *(12 organizations):*
- Average number of volunteer hours utilized by each organization: 28,712 hours
- Median number of volunteer hours utilized by each organization: 8,582 hours
- Approximate collective total number of volunteer hours utilized between 10 respondents: 224,554 hrs

Open-ended sharing
Responding organizations were asked to share any additional thoughts. These have been themed and summarized.

- Funding is still critical to sustain our feeding. While the needs shift, we continue to see a huge need for food in the community as inflation continues to climb and other relief efforts move off island. We are continuing to take care of our community, but we have been paying for things out of our own pockets and would really like to get reimbursed as promised.
- Food is a basic necessity that cannot be overlooked when helping a family recover from a disaster. Food and housing are main stressors that affect mental health and recovery. Federal, state, and county funds dedicated to addressing the everyday stressors post-disaster are needed to help families positively deal with the long-term impacts and to support their recovery and mental health in the future.
- Our organization provides solely emergency feeding. Fiscal Year data shows that 66% of our 8900 clients participated due to the fires and 52% were Lāhainā residents.
- 100% of our funds came from nonprofit organizations and donations.
- Mahalo for your support.

Appendix J. Emergency Feeding Planning Survey

The *Emergency Feeding Planning Survey* was administered to organizations that had played a role in emergency feeding to date. In the corresponding data, "to date" is reflective of August 2023 to September 2024. The survey was administered from August to September 2024 and had twelve (12) respondents.

Type of Organization

The majority of respondents (58%) identified as Nonprofit Businesses, followed by For-Profit Businesses (17%), Grassroots Organizations (17%) and one Higher Education Organization.

- Non-Profit Business
- For-Profit Business
- Other: Higher Education
- Grassroots Organization
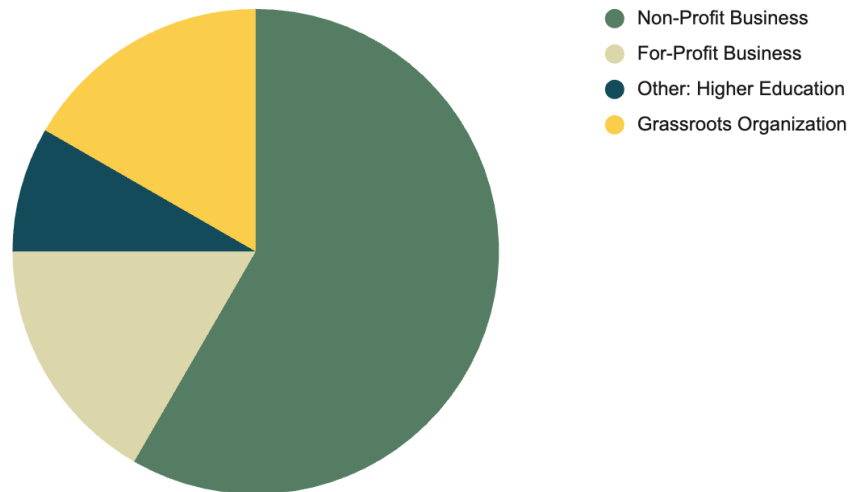
Future interest in emergency feeding efforts

Organizations were asked about their level of interest in being contracted in times of emergency to support emergency feeding efforts on Maui.

100% of responding organizations reported interest in supporting future emergency feeding efforts on Maui.

The twelve responding organizations reported ability to provide support in the areas below. The most common area of support that can be offered is through the provision of food boxes and coordination, followed by transportation/delivery and local product aggregation/distribution. None of the responding organizations reported an ability to offer fiscal sponsorship or shipping support.

Areas of Support Organizations Can Offer in the Future
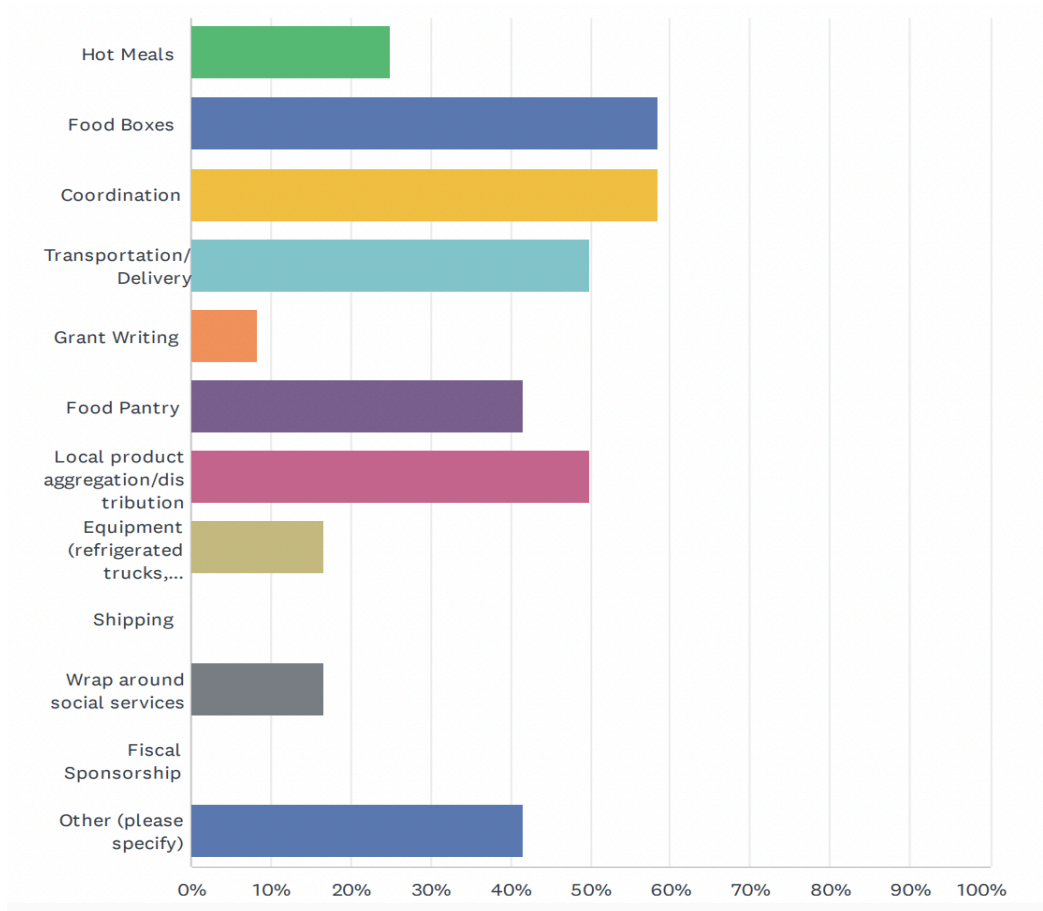
Approximate number of individuals that could be served

Organizations were asked to share how many individuals each could anticipate to be able to serve on a daily basis during a future emergency feeding response.

Responses varied greatly in what each organization could offer. This included a range of individual daily meals from zero to 100,000; 240 to 400 weekly fresh produce boxes; and up to 2,500 lbs of ground meat. Many of the respondents specified that these amounts are dependent on appropriate funding, planning, and manpower; and could only be sustained on a short-term basis. Responses included:

Meals:
- Range: 0 - 100,000 Meals
- Median: 500 Meals

Fresh Produce: Range of 240 - 400 boxes/weekly

Other: Up to 2,500lbs ground meat

Approximate length of time services could be provided for on a daily basis during emergency feeding response

- Nine to eighteen months with appropriate resources and partnership (40%)
- Indefinitely with the appropriate level of support. Some organizations were or are already incorporating emergency feeding into day-to-day operations outside of emergency times. (40%)
- Less than 1 week without additional resources (20%)

Nine (9) to eighteen (18) months

Indefinitely with the appropriate level of support.

Less than 1 week without additional resources
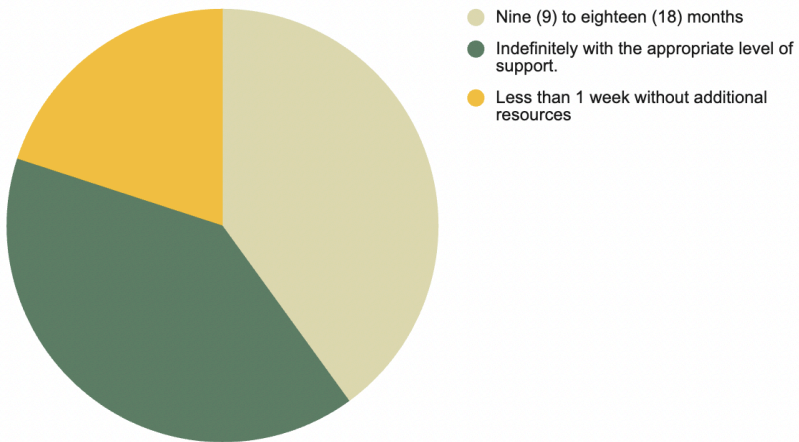
Additional comments

The majority of the comments offered by respondents centered around the need for and importance of funding to support emergency feeding efforts. Organizations were able to provide past support by stretching grant funds, utilizing their own finances and through donations; however these did not sufficiently cover expenses. Having an emergency budget to support these efforts, outside of what nonprofits can supply, is an essential component to planning ahead.

Appendix K: [MEMA Human Services Specialist Job Description Draft](#)

Appendix L: Key Components of Resource and Agricultural Hubs + Sample Budgets

*Note: Additional input and quotes will be needed to finalize these budgets as projects are developed

Key Components of Resource Hubs

Hub Identification:
- Prioritize food pantry locations in Central, South, North, West and East Maui, Molokai and Lānaʻi. Work with local organizations that already have partnerships with Maui Food Bank to serve as long-term hubs. Work together to secure areas large enough to house necessary infrastructure and space for additional needs. and have strategic locations (referencing the Food Pantry Assessment conducted in early 2023 by Maui Food Bank).
- Identify strategic locations for Resource Hubs, with consideration for locations which are accessible to remote communities and where county or state land leases are available.
- Assess locations strategically to maximize efficiency and accessibility for the community consider traffic, parking spaces, access to utilities, and room for storage and growth.
- Prioritize groups and local organizations to run the hubs to allow county personnel to concentrate on broader assistance initiatives.
- Request assistance from the Real Property Tax (RPT) and the State to identify government-owned lands suitable for hub locations.
- Reference smaller pantries and community efforts when making decisions about the available supplies in order to have secondary smaller resources available and that can pull supplies from the Resource Hubs in times of crisis.
- Request a list from local realtors to identify any empty warehouse spaces suitable for hub establishment.

Infrastructure Requirements:
- Ensure selected hub spaces or plans include proper shelter, electricity, water, and adequate space for walk-in cold storage and storage shelving, dry food storage, adequate traffic flow and parking. Include space for mobile kitchens.
- When build out is necessary it is recommended to start with lower cost solutions such as warehouse kits, portable bathrooms and State or County land leases.
- Leverage existing networks, data and supplies to build community and trust, minimize gaps in service, data collection and help with cost savings.

- Warehouse kits can be stood up and designed to meet the needs without being too costly. Then work towards more comprehensive sites to house resilience hubs.

Operational Efficiency:
- Tap into the experience of individuals that are currently running or have run hubs in the past to minimize training needs and disruptions to services for those in need.
- Once locations are decided, work to ensure proper streamlined logistics coordination of hub needs are established (i.e., this could be water filling, waste pumping, traffic flows, hours of operation etc., but may be different for each hub). Create distribution routes that can be relayed and executed easily or added on to commercial routes to allow for temperature control distribution when needed and to minimize cost.
- Create a triage and resource allocation system to ensure an organized and fair distribution process.
- Establish flexible operating hours, including nights and weekends, with alternating days off to ensure continuous service availability.

Mobile Emergency Kitchens:
- Allocate space in hub locations for parking mobile emergency kitchens.
- Explore pre-manufactured options for mobile kitchens and price initial orders accordingly.
- Build out a database of chefs who can be contracted to cook while prioritizing those directly impacted by the fire and those already providing services.

Nonprofit Collaboration:
- Identify dedicated nonprofits or fiscal agents willing to oversee hub operations independently or on behalf of community groups.

Possible Partnerships:
- Maui Food Bank and Affiliate partners
- Napili Noho
- Upcountry Strong
- Feed My Sheep
- HFUU in East Maui and on Lanai
- Sustainable Molokai

Utilize Technology to develop a Unified system to assist with Registration, check ins, check out and Data Collection:

- Procure or design a system similar to the kiosk setup at Kaiser, which allows for initial registration, ticket printing, and follow-up questions upon check-in
- Build out the system to minimize onsite conflicts over resource allocation and ensure accurate, real-time information is available to all participating entities and facilitate efficient referrals for wraparound services, ensuring that individuals and families receive comprehensive support tailored to their needs.
- Assessment ease
- Inventory/ Costs tracking
- Data Points for supply information
- Wrap around services referrals- Action and Data Point for social indicators of recovery/ gaps in resources
- Item limits
- Visits
- Provides insight into response satisfaction discrepancies

Mobile Kitchen [Manual/Specs](#) & [Cost Estimate](#)

Resource Hub [Budget](#)

Key Components of Agricultural Hubs

Establishment of Agricultural Hubs:
- Identify suitable locations within the community to establish Agricultural Hubs. These hubs should be strategically located to ensure accessibility and proximity to areas prone to natural disasters.
- Consideration should be given to factors such as infrastructure, security, and ease of transportation.
- Ideally these hubs can be located on State or County land in order to have affordable leases and minimize costs of implementation.

Procurement and Stockpiling of Supplies:
- Procure and stockpile essential supplies, including equipment, tools, generators, protective gear, gas cans, water buffalos and water tanks, at each Agricultural Hub.
- Nonprofits can help manage comprehensive inventory management systems to track the availability and condition of supplies, ensuring readiness for emergency deployment.

Implementation of Rental Program:
- Introduce a rental program for community members to access equipment and tools from the Agricultural Hubs during non-emergency periods.
- Establish a nominal fee structure to cover maintenance and insurance costs and generate revenue for sustaining hub operations.
- Prioritize accessibility and affordability to encourage widespread participation in the program.

Emergency Response Protocol:
- Develop clear protocols and procedures for the utilization of Agricultural Hub resources during times of emergency.
- Designate trained personnel to oversee hub operations and coordinate resource allocation based on emergency needs and priorities.
- Establish communication channels and partnerships with local authorities and emergency response agencies to facilitate seamless collaboration and support.
- Bi-annual training and re-familiarization of this protocol is recommended to ensure that systems work properly when they are needed.

Community Engagement and Education:
- Conduct outreach and educational initiatives to raise awareness about the Agricultural Hubs and their role in emergency preparedness.

- Engage community members through workshops, training sessions, and informational materials to promote understanding of emergency response protocols and the benefits of participation in the rental program.

Kiosk or Technology toAssist with Registration, Check-ins, Check- out, Referrals and Data Collection:
- Resource referrals
- Data Points for indicators or potential issues and gaps in resources
- Item limits/ Inventory and Rental tracking
- Community utilization and satisfaction

Benefits:
- Enhances Community Resilience: Agricultural Hubs provide communities with centralized access to essential supplies, enabling prompt and effective emergency response actions and support for the agricultural sector.
- Cost-Effective Solution: By establishing a self-sustaining rental program, Agricultural Hubs can minimize reliance on external funding sources and generate revenue to cover operational expenses.
- Promotes Resource Sharing and Collaboration: The rental program fosters a culture of resource sharing and collaboration within the community, strengthening social cohesion and mutual support networks.

Potential Community Partners (Alphabetical order):
Common Ground Collective
Hawai'i Farmers Union United
Hawai'i Taro Farm
Kula Community Watershed Alliance
Living Pono Project
Maui Cattlemen's Association
Maui Farm Bureau/ 4H
Maui Farmer Network
Sustainable Molokai

Agricultural Hub Budget

Appendix M: Kaiser Kiosk

Appendix N: Agricultural Emergency Fund

Guide to Establishing an Agricultural Emergency Fund:

1. **Develop a Support Network:**
   - Recruit Farmers, Ranchers, Agricultural Producers, Legislators, Grant Writers, Financial Advisors and Ag and Finance Department Representative to develop a support team to work with throughout the strategization and implementation process.

2. **Identify Funding Opportunities:**
   - Collaborate with NRCS, FSA, Hawaiʻi Department of Agriculture and the County Grants Team to identify potential grant opportunities aimed at covering damage costs for agricultural operations following natural and man-made disasters.
   - Research available grants from government agencies, foundations, and other organizations that support disaster relief and agricultural recovery efforts.
   - Work with the support team to find ways to leverage any existing emergency funding that may be available.

3. **Assess Community Needs:**
   - Conduct a needs assessment by working with your support team and local organizations who may have already gathered this data to understand the specific challenges and vulnerabilities faced by farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural producers in your community during emergencies.
   - Identify the types of assistance and financial support needed to help agricultural operations recover and rebuild their livelihoods.

4. **Develop a Funding Strategy:**
   - Work with the support team to develop a comprehensive funding strategy for establishing an Agricultural Emergency Fund.
   - Determine the target amount of funding needed to adequately support agricultural recovery efforts, taking into account potential damage costs and ongoing operational expenses.

5. **Collaborate on Grant Applications:**
   - Collaborate closely with governmental and non-profit grant writers to prepare and submit grant applications for funding to establish the Agricultural Emergency Fund.
   - Ensure that grant proposals clearly articulate the need for the fund, the intended use of funds, and the expected outcomes in terms of supporting agricultural recovery and resilience.

6. **Advocate for Support:**
   - Advocate for support from local government officials, agricultural organizations, and community stakeholders to garner broader support for the establishment of the Agricultural Emergency Fund.
   - Highlight the importance of proactive measures to provide financial assistance to farmers, ranchers, and agricultural producers in times of crisis.

7. **Secure Funding and Establish the Fund:**
   - Work diligently to secure funding through successful grant applications and other fundraising efforts.
   - Once sustained funding is secured, it is structured to provide rapid access to sufficient funds in order to support agricultural recovery efforts during emergencies.

8. **Promote Awareness and Accessibility:**
   - Promote awareness of the Agricultural Emergency Fund among agricultural producers and stakeholders in the community.
   - Ensure that farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural producers are aware of the application process and eligibility criteria for accessing financial assistance from the fund, and examine a pre-disaster vetting process to allow ag producers to submit any necessary information that can be gathered ahead of a disaster in order to minimize additional stress and trauma directly after an emergency. This process will also help to strengthen ties with the local ag sector.

9. **Monitor and Evaluate:**
   - Establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the utilization of funds from the Agricultural Emergency Fund.
   - Regularly assess the impact and effectiveness of the fund in supporting agricultural recovery efforts and adjust strategies as needed to optimize outcomes.

10. **Build Partnerships and Collaborations:**
   - Build partnerships and collaborations with government agencies, agricultural organizations, and other stakeholders to strengthen the impact and reach of the Agricultural Emergency Fund.
   - Leverage existing networks and resources to maximize support for agricultural recovery efforts during emergencies.

11. **Plan for Sustainability:**
    - Develop a long-term sustainability plan for the Agricultural Emergency Fund to ensure its continued availability and effectiveness in supporting agricultural resilience.
    - Explore opportunities for ongoing funding and partnerships to sustain the fund and enhance its capacity to respond to future emergencies.

Examples of Farmer Relief Fund Models:

- Hawaiʻi Food Producers Fund: Provides 0% interest loans to Hawaiʻi food producers through Kiva. The Kohala Center created the Fund to increase the amount of capital available to local food producers and stimulate local food production in Hawaiʻi, https://kohalacenter.org/business/microloan-kiva
- Farm Aid Family Farm Disaster Fund: Providing emergency funds to farm families for family household and medical expenses. www.farmaid.org/our-work/family-farm-disaster-fund/
- USDA Pandemic Assistance for Producers: www.farmers.gov/coronavirus/pandemic-assistance
- USDA FSA Emergency Relief Program: www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/emergency-relief/index
- List of US Agricultural Funding for Operations Experiencing Disaster Relief: https://ambrook.com/funding/loss/disaster-relief
- OACA's list of Grants & Loans For Farmers and Ranchers: https://www.oahuaca.org/farmers-and-ranchers

Notes:
This fund ought to include access to unrestricted funds (to help producers who have lost income to be able to pay for bills and other emergency needs) and there should also be separate funding or County/State programs to help fund infrastructure/repair damaged infrastructure, irrigation, and fencing.

Appendix O: Emergency Contracts: Advocating for Local Product Purchasing and Local Business and Nonprofit Contractors

By following these steps, you can effectively advocate for the inclusion of local product purchasing and local business and nonprofit contracting requirements in emergency response contracts, thereby supporting the local economy, conserving resources, and promoting overall economic resilience in your community.

1. Understand and Educate on the Importance:
- Identify the significant benefits including cost- analysis of prioritizing local product purchasing and contracting of local businesses and nonprofits in emergency response contracts.
- Educate how supporting local producers, locally owned and operated businesses, and nonprofits strengthens the local economy, conserves resources, and promotes economic resilience.

2. Research Local Suppliers:
- Conduct research to identify local producers, businesses, and nonprofits that offer products or services relevant to emergency response needs.
- Explore the variety of goods and services available locally, including food products, services, equipment, transportation, and logistical support.
- Compile this information in a database with contact information and a way for businesses to update their services
- Make this list available to agencies, NGOs, nonprofits and community groups working in the feeding sector

3. Build Coalitions:
- Collaborate with local stakeholders, including community organizations, chambers of commerce, and economic development agencies, to build coalitions advocating for local procurement and contracting.
- Work together to amplify collective voices and advocate for policy changes that prioritize local sourcing in emergency contracts.
- Provide financial support and assistance to help implement local purchasing programs and contracts.

4. Engage with Decision Makers:
- Reach out to government officials, HI-EMA and FEMA Leaders as well as procurement departments to advocate for the inclusion of local product purchasing and contracting requirements in emergency response contracts.

- Present compelling arguments highlighting the economic, social, and environmental benefits of supporting local businesses and nonprofits during emergencies.

5. Highlight Success Stories:
- Share success stories and case studies showcasing the positive impact of local procurement and contracting initiatives in the 2023 Maui Fires emergency response and other previous efforts.
- Highlight examples where local suppliers effectively met emergency needs, supported community resilience, and conserved resources.

6. Provide Data and Evidence:
- Provide data and evidence demonstrating the economic benefits of local procurement, such as job creation, increased tax revenue, and enhanced economic resilience.
- Present evidence of the quality, reliability, and efficiency of local products and services compared to non-local alternatives.
- Cite studies and articles that show the negative impacts of imported food for example climate emissions and other hidden costs, that can be mitigated through locally sourcing food supplies.

7. Advocate for Policy Changes:
- Advocate for the adoption of policies and guidelines that require the inclusion of local product purchasing and contracting preferences in emergency response contracts.
- Work with decision makers to draft and implement policies that prioritize local sourcing while ensuring compliance with procurement regulations.

8. Foster Partnerships:
- Foster partnerships between emergency response agencies and local suppliers to establish pre-existing relationships and streamline procurement processes.
- Encourage collaboration and communication between emergency responders and local businesses and nonprofits to better meet emergency needs.

9. Educate and Raise Awareness:
- Educate stakeholders, including government officials, emergency responders, and the public, about the benefits of local procurement and contracting in emergency response.
- Raise awareness about the importance of supporting local businesses and nonprofits during emergencies and the positive impact it has on the community.

10. Monitor and Evaluate:
- Monitor the implementation of local procurement and contracting requirements in emergency response contracts.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of these initiatives in supporting local businesses and nonprofits, conserving resources, and promoting economic resilience, and advocate for adjustments as needed.

Appendix P: Guide to Collaborating with the Department of Health on Emergency Feeding and Agricultural Support Protocols:

The following are recommendations that can help effectively collaborate with the Department of Health to develop realistic feeding protocols for emergencies and address barriers to ensuring safe and nutritious food distribution that meets the needs of communities during times of crisis. This collaborative approach will help prevent frustrations caused by regulatory constraints and enhance the effectiveness of emergency response efforts.

1. **Establish Communication:**
   ● Initiate contact with the Department of Health (DOH) to express interest in collaborating on developing feeding protocols for emergencies.
   ● Identify key stakeholders within the DOH who are responsible for food safety and emergency response.

2. **Understand Existing Regulations:**
   ● Review existing regulations and guidelines enforced by the DOH related to food distribution during emergencies.
   ● Identify the challenges and frustrations experienced by community members during the Maui Fires Relief response efforts due to regulatory requirements.

3. **Schedule Meetings:**
   ● Arrange meetings with representatives from the DOH to discuss the development of realistic feeding protocols.
   ● Clearly communicate the need for protocols that balance food safety requirements with the practicalities of emergency response and community support.

4. **Share Insights and Feedback:**
   ● Share insights and feedback gathered from community members, emergency responders, and other stakeholders regarding past experiences with food distribution during emergencies.
   ● Highlight specific challenges or frustrations encountered due to regulatory constraints and the impact on community members seeking and providing support.

5. **Collaborative Brainstorming:**
   - Engage in collaborative brainstorming sessions with DOH representatives to explore potential solutions and modifications to existing protocols.
   - Identify areas where flexibility can be introduced to streamline food distribution processes without compromising food safety standards.

6. **Develop Draft Protocols:**
   - Work together with the DOH to draft realistic feeding protocols that address the concerns and needs identified during the collaboration process.
   - Ensure that the protocols are practical, adaptable to various emergency scenarios, and align with existing regulatory frameworks.

7. **Identify Any Needed Infrastructure or Legislative Changes:**
   - Identify infrastructural barriers or gaps in the current systems that prevent safe distribution of emergency feeding and the costs or actions needed to address.
   - Identify legislation, policies or regulations that hinder emergency feeding efforts and propose amendments and draft language to streamline efforts.

8. **Seek Input and Feedback:**
   - Solicit input and feedback from relevant stakeholders, including community members, emergency responders, and food service providers, on the draft protocols, budgets and legislation.
   - Incorporate constructive feedback and suggestions to refine and finalize the feeding protocols, budget and draft legislation and work with Federal, State and County leaders to complete the changes.

9. **Training and Implementation:**
   - Develop training materials and resources to educate stakeholders on the new feeding protocols and ensure their effective implementation during emergencies.
   - Conduct training sessions for relevant personnel, including volunteers and community organizations involved in food distribution efforts.

10. **Evaluation and Revision:**
    - Establish mechanisms for ongoing evaluation and revision of the feeding protocols based on feedback, lessons learned from real-world emergencies, and evolving best practices.
    - Maintain open communication channels with the DOH to address any challenges or issues that may arise during the implementation of the protocols.

11. **Publicize and Communicate:**
   ● Publicize the finalized feeding protocols through various channels to ensure awareness and understanding among community members, emergency responders, and other stakeholders.
   ● Provide clear guidance on how the protocols will be implemented and how community members can access support during emergencies.

Appendix Q: Develop a Network of Tools and Translators for Emergency Preparedness

Developing a network of communication tools and translators for those with communication disabilities and non-English or ESL speakers is crucial for ensuring effective communication and access to essential resources. By following these action steps, you can effectively develop a network of translators and technology to support community members in accessing vital information, resources, and services, ultimately promoting their success and recovery after an emergency. Here are some actionable steps to guide the establishment of such a network:

1. Needs Assessment:
- Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment using the August 8th Maui Fires Disaster to identify communication disabilities and the languages most spoken in Maui County.
- Determine the specific communication barriers that survivors and residents faced during the disasters both immediately and through long-term recovery.
- Determine average language proficiency levels of current translation services available and preferred communication channels for each sub-sector.

2. Recruitment of Translators:
- Reach out to bilingual individuals and various cultural associations within the community who are fluent in the languages identified during the needs assessment.
- Collaborate with local language schools, community organizations, and cultural groups to identify potential translators and tools.
- Recruit volunteers who are willing to dedicate their time and skills to support survivors in accessing information and resources.

3. Training and Capacity Building:
- Provide training sessions for translators to develop their skills in interpretation and translation.
- Offer cultural competency and sensitivity training to ensure translators understand the cultural nuances and context of the communities they will be serving.
- Provide resources and guidance on best practices for effective and trauma-informed communication and support.

4. Utilize translation equipment and technology:
- Research companies who offer translation services integrated in their technology in order to translate documents rapidly and efficiently. (Example: [Xerox has a program that can translate print into various languages](#))
- Make technology available to local nonprofits and community groups to promote the sharing of information and community building.
- Research new technology as it comes out and implement the usage for more efficient and effective communication

5. Establish Communication Channels:
- Set up communication channels for those with disabilities and each language with translators, such as dedicated hotlines, email addresses, or online platforms.
- Ensure confidentiality and privacy measures are in place to protect sensitive information shared during translation sessions.

6. Outreach and Engagement:
- Launch awareness campaigns to inform the community about the availability of translation services and how to access them.
- Partner with local nonprofits, businesses, agricultural organizations, and community centers to promote the network of translators.
- Host informational sessions and workshops to introduce community members in need to the tools and translators to familiarize them with the available services.

7. Feedback and Continuous Improvement:
- Establish mechanisms for collecting feedback from the community subsets regarding their experiences with the translation services.
- Use feedback to identify areas for improvement and refine the translation process and support services.
- Maintain open communication channels with translators to address any challenges or issues that arise and ensure ongoing support for community members.

8. Sustainability and Expansion:
- Explore opportunities for securing funding or grants to support the ongoing operation of the translator network.
- Consider expanding the network to include additional languages and dialects based on the evolving needs of the community.
- Foster partnerships and collaborations with other organizations and agencies to enhance the reach and impact of the translator network.

Appendix R: Establish an Agriculture Emergency Response and Resource Network

Establishing an Agriculture Emergency Response and Resource Network aims to connect impacted producers with available federal, state, county, NGO and non-profit assistance and mental health resources. By creating a phone-tree, list-serv, and resource-sharing network, this initiative helps coordinate efforts, share resources, and facilitate outreach during times of crisis. This can also help to build connectivity and networks in non-times of emergency as well. It can serve a channel for information about resources, invasive species warnings as well as education about various issues within the ag sector.

Steps to Establish the Network

1. Identify Key Stakeholders and Resources
- Identify Stakeholders
    - Federal Agencies: USDA, FEMA, Farm Service Agency (FSA)
    - State Agencies: State Department of Agriculture, State Emergency Management Agency
    - County Offices: County Extension Services, County Emergency Management Offices
    - Non-Profits: Agricultural non-profits, food banks, mental health organizations
    - Local Farmers, Producers and Distributors: Engage local agricultural communities and leaders
- Compile Resources
    - Gather information on available assistance programs from federal, state, county, and non-profit organizations.
    - Create a database of mental health resources specifically targeted at agricultural producers.

2. Develop Communication Tools
- Phone-Tree System
    - Structure: Organize a phone-tree with multiple levels, starting from key leaders who can cascade information down to smaller groups.
    - Volunteers: Recruit and train volunteers to manage and activate the phone-tree during emergencies.
    - Contact Information: Collect and regularly update contact information for all participants.

- List-Serv
    - Platform: Choose an appropriate email platform (e.g., Mailchimp, Google Groups) to manage the list-serv.
    - Subscription: Set up an easy subscription process for stakeholders to join the list-serv.
    - Content Management: Develop guidelines for regular updates and resource sharing through the list-serv.
- Resource-Sharing Network
    - Online Platform: Utilize an online platform (e.g., a dedicated website, social media group, or community forum) to share resources.
    - Content Categories: Create categories for different types of resources (financial assistance, mental health support, disaster relief services).
    - User Engagement: Encourage users to share resources, experiences, and updates to keep the network active and relevant.

3. Establish Coordination and Outreach Mechanisms
- Coordination Team
    - Formation: Establish a coordination team comprising representatives from key stakeholder groups.
    - Roles and Responsibilities: Define clear roles for coordination, communication, and resource management.
    - Meetings: Schedule regular meetings (virtual or in-person) to discuss network operations and improvements.
- Outreach Strategies
    - Awareness Campaigns: Launch campaigns to raise awareness about the network and encourage participation.
    - Workshops and Trainings: Organize workshops and training sessions on disaster preparedness, resource utilization, and mental health awareness.
    - Community Engagement: Engage with local agricultural communities through events, meetings, and direct outreach to build trust and collaboration.

4. Implement and Maintain the Network
- Launch the Network
    - Soft Launch: Conduct a soft launch with key stakeholders to test and refine the systems.
    - Full Launch: Roll out the network to the wider community with an official launch event and press releases.
- Continuous Monitoring and Updates
    - Feedback Mechanism: Establish a system for continuous feedback from network participants to identify areas for improvement.

- Regular Updates: Regularly update contact lists, resource databases, and communication tools to ensure accuracy and relevance.
- Evaluation: Conduct periodic evaluations to assess the network's effectiveness and make necessary adjustments.

By establishing an Agriculture Emergency Response and Resource Network, our agricultural sector can enhance their resilience and ability to respond effectively to crises. This network not only connects impacted producers to essential resources but also fosters collaboration and support among stakeholders, ensuring a coordinated and comprehensive response to disasters and emergencies.

Appendix S: Increase Capacity of Local Protein Production

The following are actionable steps that can be taken to help increase the capacity of local protein production, strengthen the local economy, and ensure a steady supply of essential protein during emergencies, thereby enhancing community resilience and food security. We understand that there are many current efforts happening in this area but by pulling together the current efforts into a unified plan it will help with the overall efficiency, support and speed at which this reform may take place.

1. Assess Current Capacity:
- Begin by assessing the current capacity and issues that occurred at the local slaughter facilities and within the ranching community during the fires.
- Identify any gaps or limitations in capacity that may hinder the ability to meet local protein needs, especially during emergencies.

2. Identify Opportunities for Improvement at Current Facilities and the Development of Additional Infrastructure and Mobile Units:
- Identify opportunities to enhance the capacity of existing local slaughter facilities through infrastructure upgrades, technology investments, process improvements and current management structures.
- Identify any current or proposed projects to build additional local slaughter facilities through new construction, off-site capacity building projects and mobile units.
- Research design and technology used in other areas that may be efficient and easily introduced here in Maui to save time and resources through the development process

3. Collaborate with Stakeholders:
- Collaborate with local farmers, ranchers, and agricultural organizations to understand their needs and preferences regarding protein production.
- Engage with slaughterhouse owners, processors, and other stakeholders to discuss potential improvements, innovations or support needed in local protein production.

4. Seek Funding and Resources:
- Explore funding opportunities from government grants, agricultural development programs, and private investment sources to support capacity-building initiatives to fund existing new infrastructure.

- Seek resources and technical assistance from agricultural extension services, industry experts, and relevant organizations to facilitate project planning and implementation.

5. Invest in Infrastructure and Technology:
- Invest in infrastructure upgrades, equipment purchases, technological solutions and new proposed projects to improve the efficiency and productivity of local slaughter facilities.
- Consider implementing best practices in animal welfare, food safety, waste reduction and environmental sustainability to ensure high-quality protein production.

6. Provide Training and Support:
- Provide training and technical assistance to local farmers, ranchers, and slaughterhouse operators to enhance their skills and knowledge in protein production and processing.
- Offer educational programs on best practices in animal husbandry, slaughter techniques, and meat processing to improve product quality and safety.

7. Promote Local Protein Production:
- Promote the benefits of local protein production to consumers, businesses, and policymakers, highlighting its role in supporting food security, economic development, a circular economy and community resilience.
- Collaborate with local markets, restaurants, and food service providers to increase demand for locally produced protein and create market opportunities for local producers.

8. Monitor Progress and Evaluate Impact:
- Monitor the progress of capacity-building initiatives and evaluate their impact on local protein production, economic development, and community resilience.
- Collect feedback from stakeholders and adjust strategies as needed to address emerging challenges and opportunities.

9. Foster Collaboration and Partnerships:
- Foster collaboration and partnerships among stakeholders across the food supply chain, including farmers, processors, distributors, retailers, and consumers, to support local protein production initiatives.
- Leverage collective expertise, resources, and networks to overcome barriers and create a sustainable and resilient local protein supply chain.

Appendix T: Increase the Supply of Local Produce and Products in Maui County

Increasing local food production in Maui County is essential for strengthening food security, supporting the local economy, and building resilience against natural disasters and global supply chain disruptions. This guide provides practical strategies for funders and government entities to invest in and support the growth of Maui's agricultural sector. By fostering financial support, developing key infrastructure, promoting sustainable practices, and enhancing biosecurity, this guide outlines a comprehensive approach to ensuring Maui's food systems can thrive in the face of future challenges. Through collaboration with farmers, policymakers, and community stakeholders, Maui can create a sustainable, self-sufficient food system that meets the needs of its people while protecting the environment.

1. Provide Financial Support for Local Farmers:
- Establish Agricultural Grants and Subsidies: Develop grant programs and subsidies to help farmers expand production, purchase equipment, build fencing, and adopt sustainable practices. Prioritize crops and products essential for food security.
- Offer Low-Interest Loans: Create loan programs with favorable terms to support capital improvements, land acquisition, and infrastructure development, giving farmers the resources needed to scale production.

2. Invest in Agricultural Infrastructure:
- Build Regional Agricultural Hubs: Fund the development of agricultural hubs that offer shared processing facilities, cold storage, and distribution networks to reduce costs and ensure a steady supply of local food.
- Mobile Processing Units: Invest in mobile food processing and packaging units to support rural and remote farms, allowing them to process and distribute products efficiently.
- Develop Water and Wastewater Infrastructure: Work with the Department of Health Department of Planning and Department of Public Works to implement alternative water and wastewater solutions. The development and agreement on alternative systems are critical for farmers without access to county infrastructure, ensuring safe food production.

3. Fund and Develop Safe Composting and Mulching Programs:
- Develop Commercial Composting Facilities: Invest in expanding commercial composting sites throughout the County to process organic waste into compost and eliminate invasive species such as the coconut rhinoceros beetle. This will

improve soil health, increase local food production, reduce landfill waste and contribute to sustainable farming practices.

- Develop Mulch Programs: Support large-scale mulch programs that convert green waste into mulch that is safe for use in farms and community gardens. Mulch enhances soil moisture retention, reduces erosion, and improves crop resilience, key for sustainable agriculture in Maui.

4. Support Policy Development for Local Purchasing:

- Work to Implement Local Food Procurement Policies: Collaborate with government entities to implement the mandated local food purchasing in public institutions (e.g., schools, hospitals, and government facilities), creating consistent demand for local produce.
- Identify roadblocks to implementation and work to address them. For example, providing education on the modification of the school menu uniformity would allow for more seasonal products to be incorporated and also allow for diversity based on the availability of products in order to better meet the needs and then scale the production over time.
- Expand Farm-to-Institution Programs: Increase support for farm-to-school, farm to correctional facilities and farm-to-hospital programs to strengthen connections between local agriculture and public institutions.

5. Build Long-Term Resilience and Emergency Preparedness:

- Establish Food Reserves, and Seed Banks: Work with local food banks, nonprofits and pantries to create stockpiles of non-perishable, locally grown products and support and seed banks to ensure key crops are available after natural disasters.
- Work to establish and grow on-island regenerative soil amendment, livestock feed, and biofuel industries to ensure adequate support of the agricultural sector in times of long-term crises.
- Create an Agricultural Emergency Fund: Establish a fund to assist farmers recovering from natural disasters, ensuring continuous local food production during crises.

6. Facilitate Education and Capacity Building:

- Promote Longer Lease Terms for Agricultural Land: Educate landowners and farmers on the benefits of longer lease terms, which allow farmers the time needed to achieve a return on investment. Longer leases provide financial stability and incentivize sustainable farming practices, making agricultural operations more viable.
- Fund Agricultural Training Programs: Provide training programs on sustainable farming methods, crop diversification, and water management. Offer technical assistance on disaster preparedness and recovery.

- Promote Urban Farming and Community Gardens: Support urban farming initiatives and community gardens, increasing local food production and food security at the community level and on County and State lands when possible.

7. Strengthen the Agricultural Value Chain:
- Support Local Supply Chain Development: Facilitate partnerships between farmers, distributors, and retailers to streamline local food distribution, ensuring efficient delivery of locally grown products.
- Enhance Value-Added Product Capacity: Provide grants and loans to help farmers develop value-added products, such as jams or dried fruits, which increase profitability and market reach.

8. Collaborate with the Department of Agriculture on Biosecurity:
- Increase Inspections at Ports and Airports: Work with the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture to increase biosecurity measures at ports and airports, minimizing the introduction of invasive species that threaten local crops.
- Increase funding at the state level for Invasive Species Mitigation: Invasive species management is primarily the responsibility of the state; however, Maui County has been forced to allocate millions of dollars each budget cycle to address mitigation efforts, a burden exacerbated by inadequate state prevention measures. Local farmers, especially small-scale producers, also bear significant costs to repair damage and implement mitigation strategies, further straining their operations. Increasing state funding for invasive species control is critical to protect Maui's agricultural sector and reduce the financial burden on both the county and farmers.
- Invest in Early Detection Programs: Fund programs that monitor and manage invasive species threats to protect Maui's agricultural ecosystem.

9. Encourage Research and Innovation:
- Fund Research on Climate-Resilient Crops and Soil Remediation: Support local research institutions in developing climate-resilient crops that can thrive in Maui's environment, and soil remediation ensuring agricultural sustainability.
- Promote Technological Innovations: Invest in agricultural technologies such as equipment and tool libraries, water-saving systems, and soil health monitoring to increase yields and sustainability.

10. Collaborate with Community Stakeholders:
- Engage Local Farmers and Organizations: Include farmers, agricultural cooperatives, and community groups in planning and implementing initiatives, ensuring programs meet the unique needs of Maui's agricultural sector. Ensure the inclusion of minority and smaller farm and businesses in this process as well

- Foster Public-Private Partnerships: Encourage partnerships between government entities, private businesses, and funders to pool resources and expertise for expanding local food production.

By providing financial support, developing infrastructure, promoting long-term agricultural leases, and implementing innovative programs like composting and biosecurity, funders and government entities can significantly enhance local produce and product supply in Maui County. Integrating biosecurity measures, alternative water solutions, and education on sustainable leases will create a robust, resilient, and sustainable food system. These efforts will strengthen local economies, enhance food security, and build resilience against future emergencies.

Appendix U: Guide to Conducting Training Sessions on Fire Prevention and Land Maintenance

This guide outlines the key steps for organizing and conducting training sessions on fire prevention and land maintenance, specifically focusing on the implementation of fire breaks and maintaining agricultural lands to prevent fires. The objective is to equip farmers and landowners with the necessary knowledge and skills to mitigate fire risks, and to open lines of communication with key stakeholders to safeguard agricultural assets and protect communities from wildfire threats. This can be done in house via the County for continuity or via a 3rd party contractor. If a contractor is used a multi-year contract would be recommended. If an in-house program is developed, a partnership between the Department of Agriculture, Department of Water Supply and Department of Fire and Public Safety to conduct training as a united front would be ideal.

1. Planning the Training Sessions
- Identify Objectives
  - Understand the importance of fire prevention and land maintenance.
  - Learn the techniques for creating and maintaining fire breaks.
  - Acquire knowledge on best practices for agricultural land maintenance to reduce fire risks.
  - Research other areas in the United States and abroad with training, and programs use those models to build off of to create a place-based training specific for Maui.
  - Discuss issues that may not be easily identified through one Department alone. Survey the Department of Transportation, Department of Planning and Department of Public Works as well to ensure that the objectives of the course are well-rounded and comprehensive.
- Identify Target Audience
  - Farmers
  - Landowners
  - Agricultural workers
  - Community leaders
  - Public Safety Officials
- Schedule and Location
  - Work with the Department of Fire and Public Safety to schedule training during low fire risk seasons.
  - Select dates and times that are convenient for the target audience.
  - Choose a location that can accommodate practical demonstrations, such as a farm or community center.

- Materials and Resources Development

- Develop Training manuals, handouts, Visual aids (slides, videos) in various languages for both print and media that can be shared with those attending the training and with the public at large.
- Work with to source tools and equipment for practical demonstrations (e.g., plows, rakes, fire extinguishers). Much of this equipment should be available through the County.

2. Developing the Training Content (Example Below)

Module 1: Understanding Fire Risks
- The impact of wildfires on agriculture and communities.
- Common causes of wildfires in agricultural settings.
- The importance of proactive fire prevention measures.

Module 2: Creating Fire Breaks
- Definition and purpose of fire breaks.
- Types of fire breaks (e.g., plowed, grazed, mowed).
- Step-by-step guide to creating fire breaks.
- Tools and equipment needed.
- Practical demonstration on-site.

Module 3: Maintaining Agricultural Lands
- Best practices for land maintenance to prevent fires.
- Techniques for reducing flammable vegetation.
- Proper disposal of agricultural waste.
- Importance of maintaining equipment to prevent accidental fires.
- Seasonal maintenance schedules and checklists.

Module 4: Emergency Preparedness
- Developing a fire emergency plan.
- Using fire extinguishers and other firefighting tools.
- Evacuation procedures and safety measures.
- Gather contact information from participants into a database to allow for easier collaboration with local fire departments and emergency services.

3. Conducting the Training Sessions

Introduction and Overview
- Welcome participants and introduce the training objectives.
- Brief overview of the agenda and what to expect.

Interactive Presentations
- Use visual aids to explain key concepts.

- Encourage questions and discussions to ensure understanding.

Practical Demonstrations
- Conduct hands-on sessions for creating fire breaks and land maintenance techniques.
- Provide participants with opportunities to practice under supervision.

Group Activities
- Organize group discussions and problem-solving exercises.
- Case studies on past fire incidents and lessons learned.

Feedback and Evaluation
- Distribute feedback forms to gather participants' opinions on the training.
- Conduct a Q&A session to address any remaining questions.

4. Follow-Up and Continuous Support

Resource Distribution
- Provide participants with training materials and contact information for further support.
- Share additional resources, such as websites and local organizations that can offer assistance.

Annual Trainings
- Schedule follow-up sessions or check-ins to reinforce learning and address ongoing concerns.
- Update contact information in the database.
- Encourage the formation of local fire prevention groups or committees.

Monitoring and Assessment
- Monitor the implementation of fire breaks and land maintenance practices.
- Assess the effectiveness of the training and make necessary adjustments for future sessions.
- Assess whether training and education alone are enough and use feedback on possible legislation or fines that could be implemented to prevent neglectful land practices.
- Research safeguards and citation systems in other areas and to discuss with Fire Department and Legislators if additional measures need to be put in place.

By providing effective training on fire prevention and land maintenance, we can significantly reduce the risk of wildfires, protecting both agricultural assets and our communities. By following this guide, the State and County can ensure that they are doing their part to make sure farmers and landowners are well-equipped to implement fire breaks and maintain their lands, fostering a safer and more resilient environment, while also possibly saving lives and billions in spending.

Appendix V: Guide to Develop Clear Protocols for Land Clearing After Disasters

Establishing clear protocols for land clearing after disasters is crucial to ensure the safety and well-being of volunteers and community members involved in cleanup efforts. This guide outlines the steps to create standardized procedures that mitigate health risks and streamline post-disaster or emergency recovery activities, including the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) and testing kits. It is important to consider that during a disaster there may be several areas affected with degrees of impact so ensuring the proper protocols and safety measures are in place no matter what is key to ensuring that the public's health and safety are being considered. While most attention may be focused on the largest impact zone, this information and assistance can be provided to other impacted areas to prevent both immediate and long-term health risks.

1. Assessing the Need for Protocols
> Understanding the Context
>> ● Recognize the types of disasters common in the area (e.g., hurricanes, wildfires, floods).
>> ● Identify potential hazards associated with land clearing after these disasters.
>> ● Identify proper protocols for collection and disposal of various potential hazards and substances as well as the tools and PPE needed to address them.
>> ● Work with the EPA and CDC to develop exposure protocols based on the type of hazardous materials

> Stakeholder Engagement
>> ● Involve Department of Fire and Public Safety, local medical and emergency services, community leaders, and volunteers in the protocol development process.
>> ● Collect input on past experiences and lessons learned both here in Hawaiʻi and abroad.
>> ● Develop a database of agencies and nonprofits who can assist when needed for testing, land clearing, disposal and remediation.
>> ● Set up a network of key locations such as community centers, schools, and emergency shelters to place PPE and testing kit distribution stations in times of emergency.

2. Developing the Protocols

Risk Assessment
- Conduct a comprehensive risk assessment to identify hazards such as unstable structures, hazardous materials, and contaminated water that could be encountered in times of disaster.
- Work with the Department of Defense to incorporate the known hazards and where overlap might occur that may require additional measures or protocols.
- Evaluate the physical and mental health risks to those involved in cleanup efforts.
- Evaluate potential costs and barriers to clean up efforts to identify solutions or funding that can be worked on in advance.

Health and Safety Protocols
- Establish protocols for regular health check-ups and monitoring for workers and volunteers.
- Provide guidelines for hydration, rest breaks, managing heat stress or cold, and hazardous material exposure.
- Establish clear safety guidelines to address identified risks.
- Include procedures for the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, masks, boots, and helmets.
- Develop protocols for safe handling and disposal of hazardous materials.
- Include procedures for dealing with injuries and mental health support.
- Establish a reporting system database for incidents, accidents and exposure during the land clearing process.

Training Requirements
- Specify training requirements for volunteers and community members.
- Develop training materials (manuals, handouts, visual materials and videos) covering safety guidelines, proper use of equipment, and emergency procedures.

Equipment and Supplies
- List necessary equipment and supplies for land clearing, such as PPE, chainsaws, shovels, wheelbarrows, and first aid kits.
- Include guidelines for the maintenance and safe use of equipment.
- Set up PPE and testing kit distribution stations in accessible locations within the community.

Communication Plan
- Develop a communication plan to ensure timely dissemination of information.
- Develop a list of agencies who can help with land clearing and hazardous material disposal.
- Include methods for reporting hazards, injuries, and other issues during cleanup efforts.

3. Implementing the Protocols

Pre-Disaster Preparation
- Distribute the protocols to all relevant stakeholders ahead of time.
- Conduct regular training sessions and drills to ensure preparedness.
- Maintain an inventory of necessary equipment and supplies.

During Disaster Response
- Activate the communication plan to inform volunteers and community members of the protocols.
- Set up a command center to coordinate land clearing activities and monitor compliance with safety guidelines.
- Assign trained supervisors to oversee cleanup efforts and provide on-site guidance.
- Ensure PPE and testing kit stations are fully operational, staffed, and stocked with necessary supplies.

Post-Disaster Assessment
- Conduct a debriefing session with all participants to review the effectiveness of the protocols.
- Collect feedback to identify areas for improvement.
- Review the incidents, accidents and exposure database to see where additional prevention measures can be implemented and to set up a system to monitor the health of those exposed.
- Establish a reporting system for incidents and accidents during the land clearing process
- Update the protocols based on lessons learned and new insights.

4. Ensuring Continuous Improvement

Regular Review and Updates
- Establish a schedule for regular review and updates of the protocols.

- Incorporate new information, technologies, and best practices as they become available.

Community Engagement
- Encourage ongoing community involvement in the protocol development and review process.
- Promote awareness and education on disaster preparedness and land clearing safety.

Monitoring and Evaluation
- Develop metrics to assess the effectiveness of the protocols in reducing health risks and improving safety.
- Monitor the implementation of protocols during actual cleanup efforts and make adjustments as needed.
- Monitor the health and well-being of those in the incidents, accidents and exposure database to identify potential long-term effects and/ or health cluster events.

By developing and implementing clear protocols for land clearing after disasters, including the provision of PPE and testing kits, communities can ensure the safety and well-being of those involved in recovery activities in both the immediate and long-term. Additionally, this can protect the overall community and future generations by working to ensure that hazardous materials do not remain in the soil or infiltrate waterways or aquifers. This proactive approach helps mitigate health risks, streamline operations, and foster a resilient and prepared community.

Appendix W: Guide to Collaboration with Local Organizations and Researchers for Disaster Mitigation, Recovery and Bioremediation Strategies

Collaborating with local organizations and researchers and working to ensure agricultural operations are properly insured and recognized for FEMA reimbursement is crucial for developing effective disaster mitigation, recovery and bio-remediation strategies for agricultural lands. These strategies aim to safeguard and restore soil health and productivity, promoting the long-term resilience of agricultural operations. This guide outlines the steps to foster collaboration and create a comprehensive list of suggested strategies.

1. Establishing Partnerships
- Identify Potential Partners
    - Local universities and research institutions.
    - Agricultural extension services.
    - Non-profit organizations focused on agriculture and environmental conservation.
    - Government agencies (e.g., Department of Agriculture, Environmental Protection Agency).
    - Local farming cooperatives and community groups.

- Initiate Contact
    - Reach out to potential partners with a clear proposal outlining the objectives and benefits of collaboration.
    - Arrange introductory meetings to discuss mutual interests and establish rapport.

- Formalize Agreements
    - Develop Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) or partnership agreements to formalize the collaboration.
    - Clearly define roles, responsibilities, and expectations for each partner.

2. Collaborative Research and Data Collection
- Joint Research Initiatives
    - Develop joint research proposals to study disaster impacts on agricultural lands and effective mitigation strategies.
    - Apply for funding from government grants, private foundations, or industry sponsors to support research efforts.

- Data Sharing and Analysis
  - Create a centralized database for sharing research data, case studies, and best practices.
  - Conduct joint data analysis to identify patterns, trends, and gaps in current mitigation strategies.

- Field Trials and Demonstrations
  - Collaborate on field trials to test various bio-remediation and disaster mitigation techniques.
  - Set up demonstration plots to showcase successful strategies to the wider farming community.

3. Developing Suggested Strategies
- Literature Review and Expert Consultation
  - Review existing literature on disaster mitigation and bio-remediation strategies.
  - Consult with experts in soil science, agronomy, environmental science, and related fields.

- Workshops and Focus Groups
  - Organize workshops and focus groups with farmers, researchers, and local organizations to discuss and develop strategies.
  - Gather input and feedback on proposed strategies to ensure they are practical and effective.

- Drafting the List of Strategies
  - Compile a comprehensive list of suggested disaster mitigation and bio-remediation strategies.
  - Categorize strategies based on different types of disasters (e.g., floods, droughts, wildfires) hazardous materials and specific bio-remediation needs and standards.

- Review and Validation
  - Circulate the draft list among partners for review and validation.
  - Incorporate feedback and finalize the list of strategies.

4. Implementing and Disseminating Strategies
- Pilot Programs
  - Implement pilot programs to test the effectiveness of the suggested strategies on local farms.

- ○ Monitor and document outcomes to refine and improve strategies.

- ● Educational Outreach
  - ○ Develop educational materials, such as guides, brochures, and videos, to explain the strategies.
  - ○ Conduct training sessions, workshops, and seminars to educate farmers and community members.

- ● Online Resources
  - ○ Create a dedicated section on your organization's website to host the list of strategies and related resources.
  - ○ Use social media and online forums to share information and engage with the farming community.

- ● Continuous Support and Feedback
  - ○ Establish a support network to assist farmers in implementing the strategies.
  - ○ Create feedback mechanisms to gather ongoing input from farmers and adjust strategies as needed.

5. Coverage for Insurance
- ● Collaborate with insurance providers to educate farmers about available disaster insurance options.
  - ○ Develop guidelines to help farmers choose the right insurance policies to cover potential losses from disasters.
  - ○ Provide information on how to file insurance claims effectively and promptly after a disaster.
  - ○ FEMA Reimbursement Process

6. Work to get FEMA to recognize agricultural operations as a business that qualifies for FEMA Reimbursement
- ● Gather Supporting Documentation
  - ○ Collect all necessary documentation that proves the agricultural operation is a business. This includes business licenses, tax returns, financial statements, payroll records, and any other legal documents that establish the operation as a legitimate business entity.
  - ○ Prepare a detailed description of the agricultural business, including its structure, operations, revenue sources, and impact on the local economy.

- ● Engage with Local and State Officials

- ○ Contact local and state government officials to advocate for the recognition of agricultural operations as businesses eligible for FEMA reimbursement. Present your case and provide them with the collected documentation.
- ○ Request letters of support from local and state officials that endorse the recognition of agricultural operations as businesses. These letters can be influential when communicating with FEMA.

- ● Submit a Formal Request to FEMA
  - ○ Prepare a formal request to FEMA, including all supporting documentation and letters of support from local and state officials. Clearly outline the reasons why agricultural operations should be recognized as businesses eligible for reimbursement.
  - ○ Address the request to the appropriate FEMA regional office and include a cover letter summarizing the key points and emphasizing the economic and community impact of the agricultural operation.

- ● Follow Up and Advocate
  - ○ Regularly follow up with FEMA officials to track the progress of your request. Be prepared to provide additional information or clarification if needed.
  - ○ Engage with agricultural industry associations and other stakeholders to build broader support for your cause.
  - ○ Collective advocacy can strengthen the case and increase the likelihood of FEMA recognizing agricultural operations as businesses.
  - ○ Once it is accepted: Educate farmers on how to apply for assistance.
  - ○ Educate farmers about the FEMA reimbursement process and the types of assistance available for agricultural land recovery.
  - ○ Develop a step-by-step guide on how to apply for FEMA assistance, including necessary documentation and deadlines.
  - ○ Offer workshops or informational sessions to help farmers understand the eligibility requirements and navigate the application process.

6. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement
Regular Assessments

- ● Conduct regular assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented strategies.
  - ○ Use metrics such as soil health indicators, crop yields, and resilience to future disasters.
- ● Ongoing Collaboration

- Maintain regular communication with partners to share findings and discuss improvements.
- Organize annual or biannual meetings to review progress and update strategies.

Adaptation and Innovation
- Stay informed about new research and emerging technologies in disaster mitigation and bio-remediation.
  - Adapt and innovate strategies to incorporate new knowledge and techniques.

By fostering collaboration with local organizations and researchers, and including education on insurance coverage and the FEMA reimbursement process, we can develop and implement effective disaster mitigation and bio-remediation strategies for agricultural lands. These strategies will help safeguard soil health, restore productivity, and promote the long-term resilience of agricultural operations. Continuous collaboration and adaptation are key to ensuring these strategies remain effective and relevant in the face of evolving challenges.

Appendix X: Homelessness Service Gaps and Other Gaps in Service Post Disaster & Recommendations

Challenges in Providing Food Services to the Houseless Population with Emergency Funding

One of the significant challenges faced during the response to the 2023 Maui wildfires was providing food services to the homeless population under existing emergency funding guidelines. Most emergency funding streams were designated to help individuals directly impacted by the fire, and identification was often based on addresses within the burn zone or surrounding areas. However, for the houseless population and others in unconventional living situations, who lack a fixed address or lived on a compound with multiple units, this method of identification proved insufficient. Many individuals dealing with homelessness, who were already residing in or near impacted areas, found themselves in a 'gray area' when it came to qualifying for food services and other relief efforts. This situation created both logistical and funding challenges for agencies providing food assistance.

A notable difficulty was differentiating between houseless individuals who were already residing in the area before the fires, and those who may have traveled to impacted zones seeking services in the aftermath. While it is clear that those who come for food are in need, agencies are often put in a difficult position of deciding whether to provide services without jeopardizing their compliance with funding restrictions. This challenge is further compounded by the difficulty in securing additional funding specifically for homeless populations, as current emergency relief programs often do not account for their unique circumstances.

Recommendations:

1. Adjust Funding Guidelines to Account for 'Gray Areas': Funders should consider modifying emergency funding guidelines to allow for more flexibility when providing services to houseless populations. Acknowledging that those experiencing houselessness often lack fixed addresses and may not fall into the traditional identification methods for disaster aid, funding should allow agencies to support these individuals without the risk of losing compliance with grant terms.

2. Collaboration with Homeless Shelters and Outreach Groups: Homeless shelters, outreach programs, and other community-based organizations that serve the houseless population should work together to identify individuals who were already residing in impacted areas before the disaster. This collaboration would help ensure that individuals experiencing houselessness who were directly affected by the fires receive

the necessary food and services. These groups could also help differentiate between existing houseless individuals and those seeking services from outside the impacted zones.

3. Develop Dedicated Funding Streams for Houseless Populations During Disasters: Establishing a dedicated funding stream for houseless populations in disaster response frameworks would enable relief organizations to address the needs of this vulnerable demographic without the current limitations imposed by traditional funding methods. This approach would allow agencies to better plan and respond to the needs of individuals experiencing houselessness, ensuring that they receive the necessary support during emergencies.

Challenges in Feeding Houseless Populations Unable to Prepare Food for Themselves

Another challenge in providing food services to the homeless population is that many houseless individuals are unable to prepare food for themselves due to various factors, such as lack of access to cooking facilities, mental health issues, or physical limitations. Traditional food boxes and pantry programs, which typically provide ingredients for meals, are often unsuitable for this demographic. While hot meals are ideal, delivering these meals to various encampments and roadside locations presents a logistical burden for agencies, which often lack the resources and manpower to efficiently reach homeless individuals across a wide geographic area.

This challenge is compounded by the fact that many houseless individuals are not congregated in a central location, making it difficult to deliver hot meals efficiently. The strain on agencies to provide these services during times of emergency and non-emergency can limit their ability to adequately serve the population in need, leading to gaps in food provision for houseless individuals.

Recommendations:

1. Deploy District Mobile Hot Kitchens: District mobile hot kitchens could be an effective solution to provide ready-to-eat hot meals directly to houseless individuals. These kitchens could be stationed at various locations across the island, where houseless individuals can access meals without the need for delivery to specific encampments. This approach reduces the logistical burden on agencies and ensures that individuals receive nutritious, prepared meals without requiring ingredients or cooking skills. In non-emergency periods, these mobile kitchens could be rented by various community groups, nonprofits, or

organizations that serve the houseless population. This provides a consistent and sustainable model for feeding individuals who are unable to cook for themselves while generating revenue to maintain the kitchens for emergency use.

2. Provide Access to Outreach Groups for Meal Distribution: In addition to direct access, outreach groups working with the houseless population could utilize these mobile kitchens to pick up hot meals and deliver them closer to the individuals they serve, particularly those in more remote or scattered areas. This collaboration would extend the reach of meal services and ensure that vulnerable populations are not left without food due to logistical constraints.

3. Tailored Meal Boxes: Maui Food Bank and food box distributors could design tailored meal boxes to address diverse client needs, including dietary restrictions (meeting the need for low-sugar, nut-free, and soft food diets) and food preparation restrictions, for individuals who lack access to kitchens to refrigerate and prepare their foods.

Challenges in Differentiating Impacted Individuals and Service-Seekers During Disaster Relief

Another challenge faced by relief organizations during the 2023 Maui wildfires was distinguishing between individuals directly impacted by the disaster and those who came into impacted areas seeking services. The influx of people from non-affected regions added complexity to the distribution of food and resources, creating logistical hurdles for agencies trying to provide assistance within the limitations of their funding mandates. Relief funding was often allocated based on the geographic impact zones, which are defined by addresses. Individuals who lived in the burn zones or surrounding impacted areas were easier to identify, but others, such as those displaced before the fires or those seeking help after losing access to jobs or essential services, also sought food and support, often without official documentation of residence.

The result was confusion among agencies tasked with managing food distribution, as they struggled to comply with their funding requirements while providing services to all those in need. This uncertainty placed a strain on organizations trying to ensure their services reached the most vulnerable populations, including individuals who may not have official documentation or those temporarily displaced from their homes due to the disaster.

Recommendations:

1. Flexible Funding Criteria for Non-Traditionally Impacted Individuals: Funders should consider adjusting their criteria to account for individuals who may not have permanent addresses but are still affected by the disaster, such as those displaced temporarily or those who lost jobs or access to resources. This flexibility would allow agencies to help meet the needs of all individuals affected by the disaster, regardless of their housing or documentation status.

2. Enhanced Screening and Documentation Processes: Agencies can develop standardized but non-invasive screening processes to help identify individuals who are genuinely in need of services. This could include collaboration with local organizations that have existing relationships with at-risk populations, ensuring that relief efforts are directed to those who are most vulnerable.

3. Collaboration Between Relief Agencies to Avoid Duplication: Relief agencies, food banks, and outreach programs should collaborate more closely to track the distribution of resources and avoid duplication of efforts. By sharing data and coordinating efforts, agencies can reduce confusion and ensure that services reach those who are truly in need. This collaboration will help maintain the integrity of the relief effort and ensure funding is used effectively.

Challenges from Tertiary Impacts of the Fire on Housing that impact Food Security

The 2023 Maui wildfires also caused tertiary impacts that worsened poverty and homelessness due to housing displacement and skyrocketing rental costs. As the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) program was implemented, landlords, facing their own housing crises after losing homes in the fire, may have either reclaimed rental properties to move into themselves or displaced tenants through lease terminations or non-renewals in order to secure FEMA funds, which were significantly higher than normal rental rates. As landlords withdrew from the traditional rental market to qualify for FEMA assistance, many families found themselves unable to secure new housing in an already severe housing shortage. Rental rates surged, making it nearly impossible for these individuals and families to find affordable housing and put food on the table.

This housing displacement forced many to leave the island due to the high cost of living, while those who remained faced increased food insecurity and homelessness. Because these individuals were displaced indirectly by the fire (via landlord decisions or

rising costs), they did not qualify for fire-related assistance, creating a gray area in emergency response efforts. The lack of support for these populations placed a tremendous strain on local agencies already struggling to manage homelessness and food insecurity.

Recommendations:

1. Implement Renter Protections During Disasters: To address the housing crisis exacerbated by the FEMA program, stronger renter protections should be implemented to prevent landlords from terminating or refusing to renew leases or increasing rent during or after a disaster, within reason. It also requires diligent enforcement on the County level to ensure that renters have protections in place when these situations are reported. Currently, there is little assistance for renters in these situations. This could help stabilize the rental market and reduce the number of people displaced during an already challenging time which in return would also lessen the burden on the feeding sector.

2. Federal Assistance to Offset FEMA Program Impacts: Either the FEMA program should be more careful about inflating the housing market after a disaster or additional Federal assistance should be provided to local governments to compensate for the impacts of the FEMA program on local housing markets. By addressing the inflationary pressures caused by FEMA rental reimbursements, the Federal government can help mitigate rising rental costs and reduce the strain on displaced families and the local agencies serving them.

3. Create Emergency Housing Support and Feeding Programs for Displaced Renters: Developing a dedicated housing assistance program for individuals who are displaced due to secondary impacts of a disaster, such as increased rent or lease termination, would ensure that those who do not qualify for direct disaster aid still receive the support they need. This program could offer rental subsidies or temporary housing solutions to prevent further displacement and homelessness.

4. Coordinate Housing and Food Assistance for Displaced Individuals: Relief agencies should collaborate with housing programs to offer an integrated approach that addresses both housing and food insecurity for displaced individuals. By coordinating services, agencies can better manage the needs of those who fall into the gray area of eligibility, ensuring that displaced families do not slip through the cracks of the response system.

5. Utilize RVs as Temporary Housing: Another potential solution to the housing crisis would be the utilization of RVs as alternative temporary housing for displaced individuals. Unlike hotels, which are costly and not sustainable for long-term use or the FEMA model which can displace other residents, RVs could provide immediate housing with essential amenities such as kitchens, bathrooms, and laundry facilities. These RVs could be centrally located in cleared areas, which would make it easier to centralize pumping, water, and waste services, as well as access wraparound services and public transportation. Once homes are rebuilt, RVs could be relocated to cleared residential lots, where residents could manage pumping and utility costs. After their use is no longer needed, these RVs could become assets either for the displaced residents or for the state or county, allowing for future disaster,response needs, homeless housing options or resale to recoup funds. This would create a more cost-effective and flexible housing solution during recovery efforts and significantly lower feeding costs and logistics.

Appendix Y: Accomplishments and Setbacks

Maui Emergency Feeding Task Force Accomplishments and Setbacks

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- **Benchmarks**
    - Compiled a list of stakeholders and contacts within emergency feeding on Maui (1/2024)
    - Created email (feedingmaui@gmail.com), [website](eftformaui.org) (eftformaui.org) and IG handle @eft_maui to support this Task Force initiative (12/2023)
    - Commenced and facilitated the MEFT [bi-monthly meetings](#) since November 13, 2023 to present to support the needs of emergency feeding on Maui. 87 invitees are on our meeting invitation and anywhere between 6-20 attendees attend each meeting, representing interests from all over the island. (ongoing)
    - Commenced and facilitated the MEFT bi-monthly admin/planning. Meetings from mid-November to present to support the needs of emergency feeding on Maui (ongoing)
    - Collected survey data and had informational meetings on emergency feeding from organizations doing emergency feeding on Maui. Identified many areas such as accessibility, translation services, etc. to be addressed through the Task Force. (early 2024)
    - Researched USDA thrifty plan guidelines to compare national average food costs with those on Maui (early 2024)
    - Researched types and cost of mobile kitchen set ups for batch cooking to acquire on island and deploy as a resiliency building measure. (early 2024)
- **Successes/Wins**
    - Provided feeding and resiliency hub surveys on our website. (12/2023)
    - The MEFT created a Task Force outline, core principles, overarching goals, action roles, and a place to record issues, needs and barriers. This was reviewed, edited, amended and voted on by the members of the MEFT and approved to create a task force structure and framework to be provided in our final report. (12/2023)
    - The MEFT bi-monthly meetings helped in live-time to identify the needs and barriers at a regular cadence. Coordination and collaboration was strong amongst all attendees and there was the ability to mobilize and address emergency feeding collaboratively with this space to create the most impact within the community and address the most needs. American

Red Cross representatives also joined so that we received live-time feedback as situations changed within NCS. (ongoing)

○ Disaster Case Management Program via DHS along with grassroots case management organizations were made aware of the emergency feeding services organizations within the MEFT were providing to support survivors. (2/2024)

○ We mapped the existing hot meals and food boxes provided throughout the island and the capacity of the organizations providing them. (early 2024)

○ We started to gather contract templates to be able to utilize as samples and will be drafting one to support emergency feeding so that if/when another emergency happens, we have existing templates to utilize to provide support to the community from existing farmers, restaurants, etc. (ongoing)

○ We created a finalized a Resource Hub Plan for the MEFT to provide in our report. (3/2024)

○ We invited funders like Hawai'i Community Foundation, Kaiser and Maui United Way to our meetings to allow for them to hear first-hand what the community needs were. Funds were distributed in a collective model to stop-gap when NCS stopped emergency feeding in hotels suddenly and there were funders who knew the emergent needs thanks to the MEFT meetings. (ongoing)

○ We met with Josiah from the County to discuss emergency feeding needs and request support with who in the County should take point on addressing this need. (1/2023)

○ We created draft recommendations to Enhance Emergency Preparedness in the Agricultural Sector to provide in our report and for key stakeholders from the Ag sector to review and provide comments. (6/2024)

○ The process of aligning emergency feeding mapping via 2-1-1 for community facing and Hulihia for organizational mapping has begun and the MEFT is working to collaborate with Hawai'i Data Collaborative, Maui Food Bank and others to create a synthesized database that can be maintained and updated on a regular cadence in calmer times, and weekly during times of emergency. This will be embedded into key stakeholder websites and shared out broadly to increase resiliency within the community. (6/2024)

○ The County Department of Agriculture and Department of Housing and Human Concerns (DHHC) has been tasked with supporting and leading emergency feeding as we move forward, and this role clarity is a step in the right direction. (6/2024)

- **Setbacks**
  - We attempted to request feeding information utilizing the Office of Information Practices and the Uniform Information Practices Act (UIPA) to gather feeding contract information from the State and County because of lack of responsiveness from them, and we also requested contracts from American Red Cross so that community feeding efforts could dovetail into what was being paid out via contracts. None of these organizations provided this information to us despite multiple efforts from the Task Force. (early 2024)
  - Coordinating with the County of Maui outside of the Department of Agriculture was initially cumbersome, and it was difficult to get a department to take responsibility for emergency feeding needs as there appeared to be concern that the MEFT was trying to place blame on the County. Since then, more collaboration has been created due to meetings with Josiah Nishita and others who now better understand the MEFT is only working to support the work of the County in serving the community. (early 2024)
  - HI-EMA has yet to reimburse many of the nonprofit organizations who took on the bulk of the emergency feeding needs in the immediate aftermath of the 2023 Maui Wildfires. This financial burden therefore continues to fall on the nonprofits who serve our community until reimbursement contracts are executed. This is scheduled to happen by the end of 2024, but the lag time has inhibited nonprofits from being as financially stable as they usually are due to the burden of carrying this financial kuleana for almost a year now, which should have fallen on emergency management. (ongoing)
  - With the closure of NCS, the ability for emergency feeding organizations to get food to our community members has become more complex since everyone is now dispersed throughout the community. (6/2024)

REQUEST TO ACCESS A GOVERNMENT RECORD

This is a model form that may be used by a Requester to provide sufficient information for an agency to process a record request. Although the Requester is not required to use this form or to provide any personal information, the agency needs enough information to contact the Requester with questions about this request or to provide its response. This request may not be processed if the agency has insufficient information or is unable to contact the Requester.

DATE: ___11/20/23_____

TO: _The State of Hawaii_____
Agency that Maintains the Government Record

__Governor Josh Green_____
Agency's Contact Information

FROM: ____Maui Emergency Feeding Taskforce_____
Requester's Name or Alias

____Feedingmaui@gmail.com_____
Requester's Contact Information

_____

AS THE REQUESTER, I WOULD LIKE THE FOLLOWING GOVERNMENT RECORD:

Describe the government record as specifically as possible so that it can be located. Try to provide a record name, subject matter, date, location, purpose, or names of persons to whom the record refers, or other information that could help the agency identify the record. A complete and accurate description of the requested government record will prevent delays in locating the record. Attach additional pages if needed.

The Emergency Feeding Task Force is a group of Maui Fire Relief Response Stakeholders looking to better understand and serve the public. Since the fires there have been tremendous gaps in information about who is doing what, where, when, for whom and for how long and how much they are receiving to do this. To understand and plan for the long-term needs of the community it is important for everyone to know who is responsible for what and if funding has been allocated to who and what their roles and responsibilities are so that we can maximize resources minimize duplications but ensure that no one is falling through the cracks. We have all been doing our best without this information but are encountering major barriers and this information is pertinent to the work we all do.

We have reached out to the Governor's office, the Mayor of the County of Maui and the Red Cross via email to request this information a week ago but have not heard back from the State or County and red cross gave a brief synopsis but has not provided the

contract to verify. We are requesting copies of <u>ALL</u> Contracts and Subcontracts, pertaining to the Maui Fires and Emergency Relief that involve the State of Hawaiʻi, with budget breakdowns for each contract and subcontract included.

These records are not readily available in the public domain but are public information and should be readily available from the state Department of Budget and Finance to provide to us.

 Mahalo for your assistance with this request.

I WOULD LIKE: (Please check one or more of the options below, as applicable)

☐   **To inspect the government record**

☒   **A copy of the government record:**   **(**Please check only one of the options below.) See the next page for information about fees and costs that you may be required to pay for agency services to process your record request. Note: Copying and transmission charges may also apply to certain options.

□ Pick up at agency (**date and time**):
_____

□ Mail (address):
_____

☒ E-mail (address):
__Feedingmaui@gmail.com_____

□ Fax (toll free and only if available; provide fax number):
_____

□ Other, if available (please specify):

_____

☒   If the agency maintains the records in a form <u>other than paper</u>, please advise in which **format you would prefer to have the record**.

☒ Electronic   □ Audio □ Other (please specify):_____

☒   Check this box **if you are attaching a request for waiver of fees in the public interest**
 (See waiver information on next page).

Fees for Processing Public Record Requests

    You may be charged fees for the services that the agency must perform when processing your request for public records, including fees for making photocopies and other lawful fees. The first $30 of fees charged for searching for a record, reviewing, and segregating will not be charged to you. Any amount over $30 will be charged to you. Fees are as follows:

Search for a Record	$2.50 for 15 minutes
Review and Segregation of a Record	$5.00 for 15 minutes

Generally, no search, review, and segregation fees may be charged if you are making a request for personal records that are about you.

Waiver of Fees in the Public Interest

As an <u>alternative</u> to the $30 fee waiver (not in addition to), the agency may waive the first $60 of fees for searching for, reviewing and segregating records when the waiver would serve the public interest. If you wish to apply for a waiver of fees in the public interest, you must attach to this request a statement of facts, including your identity as the requester, to show how the waiver of fees would serve the public interest. The criteria for this waiver, found at section 2-71-32, Hawaii Administrative Rules, are

(1)   The requested record pertains to the operations or activities of an agency;
(2)   The record is not readily available in the public domain; and
(3)   The requester has the primary intention and the actual ability to widely disseminate information from the government record to the public at large.

Costs

The Agency may charge you any other lawful fees and the costs to copy and deliver your personal or public record request.

Agency Response to Your Request for Access

The agency to which you addressed your request must respond within a set time period. The agency will normally respond to you within 10 business days from the date it receives your request; however, in ***extenuating circumstances,*** the agency must respond within 20 business days from the date of your request. If you have questions about the response time or the records being sought, you should first contact the agency and request to consult with the agency's UIPA contact person.

Please note that the Office of Information Practices (OIP) does not maintain the records of other agencies and a requester must seek records directly from the agency. If the agency denies or fails to respond to your written request for records or if you have other questions regarding compliance with the UIPA, then you may contact OIP at 808-586-1400, <u>oip@hawaii.gov</u>, or 250 South Hotel Street, Suite 107, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813.

Requester's Responsibilities

You have certain responsibilities under section 2-71-16, Hawaii Administrative Rules, which include making arrangements to inspect and copy records, providing further clarification or description of the requested record as instructed by the agency's notice, and making a prepayment of fees and costs, if assessed. The rules and additional training materials are available online at **oip.hawaii.gov** or from OIP.

Waiver of Fees in the Public Interest Request:

The Emergency Feeding Taskforce is a group of Maui food security stakeholders looking to better understand and hold accountable agencies that have contracts to support the food security of our island after the wildfires. We have reached out to the Governor's office via email to request this information a week ago, but have not heard back. These records are not readily available in the public domain and we are looking to widely disseminate information from the government record to the public at large to streamline and create efficient emergency feeding systems on Maui. Mahalo for your consideration.

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DATE: _11/20/23_

TO: _The County of Maui_
Agency that Maintains the Government Record

Mayor Richard Bissen
Agency's Contact Information

FROM: _Maui Emergency Feeding Task Force_
Requester's Name or Alias

Feedingmaui@gmail.com
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