



## For Immediate Release

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### Conference set to address increasing local food in Hawai‘i schools

KAMUELA, Hawai‘i—September 2, 2014—“Re-Growing Community Food Systems” is the theme of an upcoming conference that will bring together education, health, and agricultural stakeholders from across the islands to raise awareness and facilitate discussions about increasing the supply, distribution, and procurement of locally grown food for Hawai‘i’s schools.

Presented by the [Hawai‘i Farm to School and School Garden Hui](#) and [The Kohala Center](#), the Hawai‘i Farm to School Conference will be held at Kamehameha Schools’ Kapalama Campus in Honolulu from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Friday, October 3. Registration is \$50 per person and includes breakfast and lunch. More information and registration are available online at [hif2sc.eventbrite.com](http://hif2sc.eventbrite.com) or by calling The Kohala Center at (808) 887-6411.

Conference sponsors include [Kamehameha Schools](#), [Kokua Hawai‘i Foundation](#), [Slow Food of Hawai‘i](#), the [Johnson Ohana Charitable Foundation](#), and the [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\) Farm to School Program](#).

“Farm to school is a local, national, and international movement that is simultaneously making positive and significant strides in the areas of agriculture, education, and health,” said Hawai‘i Farm to School and School Garden Hui coordinator Lydi Morgan Bernal. “This conference will promote the knowledge and best practices needed to develop and sustain a statewide farm to school program to re-grow Hawai‘i’s agricultural economy, future farmers, and healthy schools and communities.”

Keynote speaker Kacie O’Brien, farm to school regional lead for the Western Region of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, will provide federal-level guidance and support for strengthening Hawai‘i’s farm to school efforts. Featured panelists include Hawai‘i Department of Agriculture chair Scott Enright, state procurement administrator Sarah Allen, Hawai‘i Department of Education school food services branch director Glenna Owens, and other distinguished leaders from across the state. Slow Food of Hawai‘i and many of O‘ahu’s local farmers and chefs will provide an “‘ono and pono” breakfast, and Hale Kealoha ‘Ai Pono will offer attendees a model school lunch featuring fresh, locally sourced ingredients.

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Two scholarships programs are available to help offset conference registration fees and travel costs. Educators and students may apply for scholarships of up to \$200 per person (total of up to \$1,000 per school) from the Kokua Hawai‘i Foundation for reimbursement of conference registration fees and/or neighbor island flights and rental cars as needed. For non-educators, a limited number of conference registration scholarships of \$50 each are available. More information and applications are available online at [hif2sc.eventbrite.com](http://hif2sc.eventbrite.com). The application deadline for both scholarship programs is Monday, September 15.

Farm to school enriches the connection communities have with fresh, healthy food and local food producers by changing food purchasing and education practices at schools and preschools. The local farm to school movement seeks to effect meaningful food systems change in Hawai‘i by connecting island agricultural producers and distributors with public, charter, and independent schools across the state, and by increasing youth and community awareness, interest, and involvement in local agriculture. With well over 100,000 school meals served daily in Hawai‘i and a growing interest in fresh fruit and vegetable snack programs for schools, the potential is great for a significant expansion of Hawai‘i’s agricultural economy. Additionally, studies have shown that farm to school programs increase student knowledge about and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, contribute to improvements in health and social behaviors, and can boost academic achievement.

Kokua Hawai‘i Foundation will be coordinating visits to O‘ahu farm to school sites for interested conference attendees on Saturday, October 4. Farm to school site visits will also be offered statewide throughout October in conjunction with [National Farm to School Month](#).

**About The Kohala Center**

Founded in the year 2000, The Kohala Center (<http://www.kohalacenter.org>) is an independent, community-based center for research, conservation, and education. We turn research and traditional knowledge into action, so that communities in Hawai‘i and around the world can thrive—ecologically, economically, culturally, and socially.