Aloha kākou,

The Kohala Center’s Rural and Cooperative Business Development Services team is dedicated to strengthening Hawai‘i’s rural and agricultural businesses. There are several events on the horizon supporting Hawai‘i Island’s agricultural producers, including workshops on seed saving and agroforestry, and opportunities for producers to increase sales through The Food Basket’s CSA program and a new farmers market in Kailua-Kona. Please visit our website at kohalacenter.org/business for more information about our services, upcoming events, microloan programs, and other resources.

Mahalo,
Nicole, Melanie, Anna-Lisa, Derrick, Anthony, and Zoe
Rural and Cooperative Business Development Services
The Kohala Center

OPPORTUNITIES:

Farmers Wanted!
The Food Basket wants to connect hungry customers to your farm’s fresh produce! The Food Basket’s island-wide Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) program is looking for more locally grown produce to supply customers’ food boxes. Local greens, fruits, squashes, root crops, and other interesting crops will be considered. Please contact The Food Basket’s Hilo office at 808-933-6030 today to sell your produce to us! For more information about The Food Basket, Hawai‘i Island’s Food Bank, visit hawaiifoodbasket.org.

Help us build a commercial kitchen and contract packing facility that meets your needs
The Kohala Center is currently conducting a survey of Hawai‘i Island food producers. With investment from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, we’ll be building a commercial kitchen and contract packing facility as part of our new campus on Kohala Mountain Road, and we’re seeking the community’s input on features and amenities that will meet their needs. The survey is available online until March 1at koha.la/survey-fp or by calling Nicole Milne at 808-987-9210.

High School Agriculture Internship Program
Applications are now being accepted for the spring cohort of our High School Agriculture Internship Program. The internships offer paid stipends to Hawai‘i Island high school students interested in learning more about farming, ranching, food production, and sustainability. Interns take field trips to island farms, gain hands-on experience in organic and natural farming methods, and learn more about career opportunities in agriculture. The program runs March 16–20 (during spring intersession) from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with each day beginning and ending in Honoka‘a. For more information and to apply,
New Farmers Market Seeking Farmers and Food Entrepreneurs
Wednesdays from 2 p.m. to sunset
Kailua-Kona
The Kona Sunset Farmers Market is expanding! The market is seeking farmers and food entrepreneurs who share its mission of supporting sustainability and self-reliance in our local food economy. The market is held every Wednesday from 2 p.m. until sunset, at the northwest end of the Kmart parking lot. New and seasoned farmers are encouraged to apply, as well as food entrepreneurs committed to using the freshest, most locally grown ingredients possible. Part-time, full time, and occasional booth spaces are available. Please email konasunsetmarket@gmail.com or call 808-895-8665 for an application or to request more information.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Basic Seed Saving for Home Gardeners
Presented by Linda Larish through The University of Hawai‘i at Hilo’s College of Continuing Education and Community Service (CCECS)
March 7, 2015
9 a.m.–Noon
Room 116, 891 Ululani Street, Hilo (map and directions)

Are you an avid home vegetable gardener? Would you like to save seeds from your favorite varieties of vegetables or develop varieties of your own? This class will equip you with the ability to recognize the type of flowering and reproductive cycle of the vegetables you are growing and teach you how to collect process and store your own seed. You will learn about strategies to maintain seed purity and viability. Gardeners can play a role in the preservation of their favorite heirloom varieties or develop vegetable varieties that are adapted to their own microclimate. For more information about the class and to register, visit http://hilo.hawaii.edu/academics/CCECS/BasicSeedSaving.php or call CCECS at 808-974-7664.

Agroforestry for Hawai‘i Farmers and Ranchers
Presented by The University of Hawai‘i at Hilo’s College of Continuing Education and Community Service (CCECS)
March 14–April 11, 2015
The course runs for 5 Saturdays, 9 a.m.–4 p.m. (30 hours total). Classes may also be taken individually.
UH-Hilo College of Ag Building (CAB), Room 102 and adjacent Greenhouse (map and directions)

This five-session course explores the concepts and practices of agroforestry that are most appropriate for farms and ranches on Hawai‘i Island, including useful agroforestry plants, animal-based management strategies, and diversified farm design. For more information about the course schedule, topics covered, and how to register, visit http://hilo.hawaii.edu/academics/ccecs/Agroforestry.php or call CCECS at 808-974-7664.