



# 2023 Food+ Policy Internship

[www.foodpluspolicy.com](http://www.foodpluspolicy.com)

**Food+ Policy** is an internship program that gives Hawai'i college students and young farmers experience in civic engagement, a professional work environment, and problem solving through the lens of food systems advocacy.

## Who should join?

Applicants should be

- Passionate and knowledgeable about some aspect of Hawai'i's food system
- Want to learn about the legislative process, policy, and advocacy
- Willing to enter a dynamic working environment that demands adaptability and problem solving
- Are available on Fridays 3-4pm and Tuesdays 6-7pm for mandatory team meetings

There are currently 5 positions available for young adults (ages 18 - 28), OR currently enrolled students (grade 12 to undergraduate and graduate level).

There are four internship roles that participants may engage with to enhance their personal and professional skills:

<i>Research</i>	Focused research on any food policy and food systems transformation efforts in Hawai'i
<i>Creative</i>	Building skills in graphic design, art, video, and other creative means
<i>Community</i>	Engagement in outreach and networking with various Hawai'i communities focused on food systems advocacy
<i>Data/Tech</i>	Building dashboards and data products to further our food systems advocacy

### What is the time commitment and what do interns do?

The internship will run from **January 5 to April 28, 2023**. Most of the internship work can be done remotely and via Zoom, so neighbor island applicants are welcome and encouraged.

Interns will attend a weekly 1-hour team meeting at 3pm on Fridays and a 1-hour learning session at 6pm on Tuesdays throughout the semester. Team meetings are a working check-in meeting. Learning sessions are presentations, discussions, or activities designed to deepen your understanding of the legislative process. They may feature guest speakers who are actively involved in food systems advocacy.

In addition to these two weekly meetings, we estimate that interns will put in around 2 to 8 additional hours doing work such as: Tracking bills related to food and agriculture as they progress through the state legislative process, developing written testimony on bills and communicating with the larger Hawai'i community about important legislation through newsletter campaigns, social media, opinion pieces, community outreach events, and other creative means.

### Is this a paid internship?

Yes. We're offering \$2,000 stipends for the legislative session / semester (Jan-April 2023).

### How do I apply?

Fill out [the application](#) by Nov. 1, 2022

### Do you have any questions?

Feel free to reach out to us at our email, [food@purplemaia.org](mailto:food@purplemaia.org), with any further inquiries.

## 2023 Food+ Policy Guiding Priorities:

### **1. Increase opportunities and remove barriers for young people to engage in small farming for local consumption – as a lifestyle or a career.**

**Why?** In 2017 the average age of a farmer in Hawai'i was ~60 years old, indicating that many young people today do not see farming as a good career or lifestyle option. The problem of an aging agricultural workforce persists despite the success and popularity of programs, such as MA'O, KUPU, Go Farm, and numerous others, that provide young people with training to do culturally meaningful work as farmers and land/water managers.

Perhaps part of the problem is that Hawai'i's post plantation era approach to agriculture has been primarily corporate, focusing on producers that operate at a large scale with little regard for 'āina stewardship. For example, since 1993 the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) has leased most of its lands to chemical corporations such as Dow, Dupont, and Syngenta/Hartung, who have a history of using chemicals that eventually pollute waterways and surrounding lands.

Instead, the government should focus on increasing opportunities and removing barriers for young people to engage in small farming and food production for local consumption. We need to build a food system where Native Hawaiians and a diversity of people can own, access and participate in caring for 'āina, where farmers and farm workers can make a living wage with benefits, and where cooperatives and community-based organizations provide the connective tissue to facilitate exchange between many small producers and consumers.

### **2. Incentivize and support regenerative and Native Hawaiian traditional farming and fishing practices.**

**Why?** Conventional agriculture releases carbon and other emissions into the atmosphere, accelerates global warming, and contributes to ecosystem damage. Regenerative agriculture counters climate change by sequestering carbon in the soil and creating habitat for diverse species.

In Hawai'i, regenerative agriculture has a role to play in healing degraded 'āina from the plantation era. Native Hawaiian traditional farming, fishing and land/water management practices--which are uniquely suitable to these islands--must be part of the way forward as a

matter of practicality in facing climate change, as well as a matter of justice for Native Hawaiians.

### **3. Create access to healthy, culturally appropriate foods for food insecure communities and demographics.**

**Why?** Low income families stretch their buying power by purchasing cheap, convenient, but unhealthy food items that usually contain a much higher concentration of sugar, salt and other complex preservatives that are harder for the human body to metabolize. This contributes to the development of non-communicable diseases such as cancer, obesity, allergies, high blood pressure, arthritis, diabetes and stroke.

The prevalence of non-communicable diseases in Indigenous and low income migrant families emanates from adopting western diets and being cut off from the ability to grow/harvest and eat healthy, traditional foods.

### **4. Provide farm to school programming--production, education & local procurement--for all learners.**

**Why?** Our kids deserve to eat the best food. Farm to School programs enhance the health and nutrition of students and families, teach important life skills, encourage waste reduction, reduce carbon emissions, and help make better connections between food, people, and 'āina.

Locally sourced food tends to be more nutritious, and because processed foods are known to lack important nutrients, there are health advantages to localizing relationships between schools and producers. By focusing on partnerships that regionalize the menu, keiki will have access to more culturally appropriate foods, such as kalo, sweet potatoes, breadfruit, local bananas, etc.

Farm to School connects keiki to local producers and creates relationships that enhance childrens' understanding of the food system. Many keiki do not know where or how their food grows, and this is reflected in large amounts of cafeteria waste.<sup>1</sup> As we push to get more ancestral foods like kalo and 'ulu into our school cafeterias, we must ensure our keiki know what these foods are and have some type of pilina with their origin and mo'olelo.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Windward Zero Waste School Hui, school cafeterias generated over 35.5 tons of food waste in 2021.