

## Featured Farmer: Kevin Flanagan SeaSons Organics, Waimanalo, O'ahu



**Area under production:** 4 Acres

**Years farming in Hawai'i:** 5 years

**Crops grown, animals raised, other products/services:**

Turmeric focused, cultivating many varieties such as Black, Hawaiian Red, Mango ginger, and Indria yellow. We also produce mangos, moringa, coconut, and hot house tomatoes.

**Number of employees and/or family members involved:**

We have 3-4 family members that work on the farm; in addition there is one part-time worker.

### Production System

**Fertility management:** As a certified organic farm we utilize natural fertility inputs to support a healthy cycling of nutrients for our crops. We make use of a cover cropping system incorporating sunn hemp, buckwheat, and sorghum Sudan grass into the soil as green manures. To help supply phosphorous, we mainly apply bone and fish meal to beds before planting. Additionally, we produce our own biochar on site to help soil structure and nutrient uptake.

**Pest Management:** Consistent employment of integrated pest management techniques, such as rotation and scouting, is what helps us keep our pest pressures at bay. To help attract a diverse array of beneficial insects to the growing site, we integrate an array of flowers into cultivation.



**Food Safety:** Always being aware of possible sources of contamination, and maintaining good common sense, we ensure sanitary practices. Currently the farm is working towards its GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) certification.

**Strategies for controlling costs:**

By understanding the costs incorporated with production, we can continuously work towards creating more efficient and cost effective methods of growing. Currently labor is the most costly input into almost all farms; I make investments towards machinery that in the long run will help us keep our labor costs down.

**Marketing Strategy**

**Pricing:** Recently turmeric has rapidly gained more public interest for its health benefits. Generally we can retrieve higher prices online from mainland purchasers based in areas where turmeric isn't as abundant. For local sales we keep an eye on the market value and set our prices accordingly.

**Promotion:** Focusing on the quality and service of our product is essential to promoting ourselves and what we represent. In order to insure the quality of our products we test our soils for heavy metals. Holding ourselves to these ideals helps generate one of the most important forms of promotion, word of mouth!



**Places you sell your products:** Health food stores, AlohaTurmeric.com, Farmlink Hawaii, and local juice companies.

**Approaches to keeping up with market trends:** Cultivating new and exciting varieties of turmeric and working towards creating value added products that can help target a larger market.

**What does sustainability mean to you and how do you plan to ensure Sustainability for your operation**

Our mission is to increase food system resilience and sustainability by regenerating healthy living soils and producing nourishing and healing foods.

Finding consistent markets and working towards breeding new varieties will support the sustainable growth and development of our business in the future.

**Give us an idea of the future of your farm:**

We would like to use our farm to help develop and test new production methods and tools for large scale turmeric production. With the growing international interest in the health benefits of turmeric, it is also a goal of ours to help establish Hawaii's market of this high quality health product. Some of our on farm goals include incorporating more of an intercropping system during the turmeric growing cycle. This type of planting system will help us broaden production and offer more diverse products. Additionally, we would like to one day expand to organic ginger production as well.



**New products or services you are planning:**

SeaSons would like to one day offer products that help deliver the health benefits of turmeric in multiple forms such as capsules, baked goods, and hopefully one day create a turmeric infused CBD product.

**HOT TIPS from SeaSons:**

- Regenerate healthy, living soils!
- Don't be afraid to experiment, explore, and create new ways to help your farm function more efficiently.
- Always welcome new ways in which your farm can grow and develop.