

## Featured Farmer: Alex Sou Aloun Farms, Kunia, Oahu



**Area under production:** Aloun Farms has expanded production to 3,000 acres (Ewa Plains, Kunia, Waipio and Helemano)

**Years farming in Hawai'i:** 40 years

**Crops grown, animals raised, other products/services:** Cabbage, Won Bok, Onions, Sweet Corn, Sunflowers, Green Beans, Pumpkins

**Number of employees and/or family members involved:** 180 people are employed

### Production System

**Fertility management:** We use an integrated nutrient management approach where we regularly test for fertility status of the soil. We use both synthetic and organic methods to provide plants with the essential plant nutrients. On site, we recently started a large composting operation to recycle the green waste from our farm. Once harvested, the finished compost is put back into the fields.

**Pest Management:** We grow in open fields where pests can be an issue. Our fields are regularly scouted for pests and we spray when pests reach above our threshold level in compliance with label requirements.

**Food Safety:** We have a large warehouse that serves as our processing area with a cement floor and washing tubs. Our delivery trucks can pull right up to our facility. The company's goal is to provide Hawaii consumers with the highest quality of fresh island grown produce.

**ALOUN FARMS 17TH ANNUAL PUMPKIN FESTIVAL**  
**OCT 14-15, 21-22 & 28-29TH 2017 (8:30AM-5:00PM)**

**FREE PARKING**  
**\$3 Entry**  
 -2 & Under FREE-  
**Military Appreciation Day**  
 Oct. 28th Military I.D.  
 Admits Card Holder Free

UnitedHealthcare Community Plan  
 D-B-HORTON America's Builder HAWAII  
 HAWAIIAN TOMATO

**LOCAL FOOD VENDORS**  
**FREE HAYRIDES**  
**ENTERTAINMENT**  
**FARMERS MARKET**  
**PICK CORN, BEANS, SUNFLOWERS, PUMPKINS & MORE!**

**DONATE 2** trash bags of gently used clothes & get **FREE** entry w/ a chance to **WIN** daily Family 4 packs to Wet N Wild Hawaii. **DONATE** to Hawaii Food Bank and receive a **FREE** mini mix pumpkin!

KROC CENTER, THE QUEEN'S MEDICAL CENTER, Urology Center of Hawaii, FAMILY FIRST SOLAR, Hawaiian Electric, Maui Electric, Hawaii Electric Light, HAWAIIAN TOMATO, Jambon Justice, DTRIC, PAPA JOHN'S BETTER CORPORA'TA BETTER PIZZA, NEWS KITV, PAMUK ULL, INC., PIONEER, First Hawaiian Bank, GENIE, MONSANTO, GOODFELLOW BROS. INC., CLUB ZI, TED'S

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### **Aloun Farms mission:**

To provide the people of Hawaii with the highest quality of fresh locally grown produce at a price that is not only competitive but comparable to mainland farmers. Our aim is to reduce Hawaii's dependency on imported produce through increased production enabling us to distribute to wholesalers throughout the state. Although we are a commercial operation, Aloun Farms is striving to adopt techniques that are sustainable. Aloun Farms believes that techniques such as diversification, crop rotation, Integrated Pest Management, farm labor housing development, and community education are vital to the success of our company.

### **Community Outreach**

**Pumpkin Festival:** Each year we open up our farm the last three weekends of October for our annual Pumpkin Festival.



**Education:** We offer educational tours and programs for educators during pumpkin season. Children participate in learning activities, learn about diversified agriculture, experience harvesting of field crops, and the history of the farm. This year's theme will surround the importance of Honey Bee. Email your reservation to [alounpumpkinpatch@gmail.com](mailto:alounpumpkinpatch@gmail.com).

**Fundraising:** We offer a fresh and healthy solution for fundraising activities for schools, clubs, groups & community organizations. We will deliver the freshest Ewa Sweet Corn or Ewa Sweet Onion, ready for your group to pack and distribute. We also offer a variety of island fresh produce to help you plan your very own farmers market to raise money for your event.



### **Sales and Marketing**

**Places you sell your products:** We sell large quantities to wholesale and food service. You can buy direct from our retail outlets including Big Save Supermarkets (on Kauai), Commissary Outlets, Don Quijote, Foodland, Isle Grocery Depot, Longs Drugs, Safeway, Tamura Supermarket, Times, and Whole Foods Market.

**Explain how the next generation successfully integrated into the farm, how it happened or didn't happen?**

Here is the story of our family and farming in Hawaii. Aloun Sou and his family of six immigrated to Hawaii from Laos via a refugee camp on the Thailand-Laos border. The family settled in Waianae in 1977 and began to farm on 5 acres of leased land in the Lualualei Valley. For several years, farm productivity increased as the Sou family introduced and cultivated various varieties of Asian vegetables, green onion and herbs. Since Aloun and wife, Somphone, had limited English speaking skills, their four children were encouraged to learn English and apply their skills to the farm's production, marketing and sales. In 1983, the family began its own distribution and started to sell directly to Hawaii's major supermarkets. Aloun Farms was incorporated by late 1995 which finalized its first land lease of 880 acres of former sugar-cane fields of Ewa and Kunia. The farm quickly grew from an 18-acre-family farm to a commercial operation.

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

We aim to keep our new and exciting products growing at our farm such as our asian vegetables and watermelon varieties. This year we have 10 different varieties of pumpkin in our patch.

**HOT TIPS from Aloun Farms:**

- Diversify your offering of agricultural products.
- Involve the youth and invite families to your farm.
- Pick and learn about pumpkins at our Pumpkin Festival!