



Federal Grant Expands Virtual “‘Ohana Garden & Grindz” Extension Program

A team of CTAHR nine extension agents and one specialist received a 2-year, \$350,000 grant through USDA/NIFA Rural Health and Safety Education Grant to expand a virtual cooking and gardening program for intergenerational families in Hawai'i. Led by extension agents Heather Greenwood-Junkermeier and Jennifer Hawkins, 'Ohana Garden & Grindz offers youth a chance to work with their parents, grandparents, aunts, or uncles to develop their skills in the kitchen, garden, and household food security. The project was initially developed in 2018 to support DHHL homestead families on Moloka'i to work as a team to increase agriculture production on their properties.

Participating families receive gardening and cooking kits, participate in weekly online education sessions to learn how to grow plants and cook healthy meals at home, and complete at home assignments in their garden and kitchen. Keiki and their 'ohana plant beans, lettuce, tomatoes, and other vegetables and use their harvest to prepare local recipes such as Aunt Jennifer's Famous Somen Salad that have been modified to include more garden-fresh vegetables and decreased sodium and fat content. Families on Moloka'i, Kaua'i, and Hawai'i Island with keiki between the ages of 9 and 12 are eligible for the free program which kicks off the first cohort on each island in March 2022!

Donna and Puakea Gamiao, a Ho'olehua Homestead Farmer Mama and Daughter team participated in the project in 2019 and recently shared that "the 'Ohana Garden and Grindz class has inspired our daughter in our garden and our kitchen. Puakea is out there getting dirty and enjoys the cooking of her crops. And of course during these COVID19 days, we are fortunate to have abundant veggies for our 'ohana, friends and neighbors."

The team looks forward to launching the expanded implementation with plans to conduct 18 cohorts between Spring 2022 and Summer 2023. To learn more, contact Heather Greenwood-Junkermeier at heather8@hawaii.edu.

Project team:

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