



Bok Choy Open House Cultivates Community Learning and Local Food Self-Sufficiency

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On October 22, 2025, the Bok Choy Open House, coordinated by the O'ahu County Cooperative Extension, was held at the Urban Garden Center. Over 50 members of the community attended and participated in the event. The Bok Choy Open House demonstrated strong educational impact by increasing participants' knowledge, confidence, and intent to adopt sustainable food-growing and healthy eating practices while directly supporting local food security and self-sufficiency goals.



Educational learning gains

Participants reported gaining new knowledge in hydroponics, pest management, fertilizer use, and bok choy variety selection, indicating achievement of core Extension learning objectives. Over 90% satisfaction and a 98% reported learning gain show that the event was both high quality and effective as an educational program.

Behavior change and adoption intent

Attendees planned concrete behavior changes, including eating more leafy greens, improving home gardens, experimenting with hydroponic systems, and sharing information with family and community. These actions signal movement along the Extension impact pathway from knowledge gain to practice change and broader community diffusion of skills.

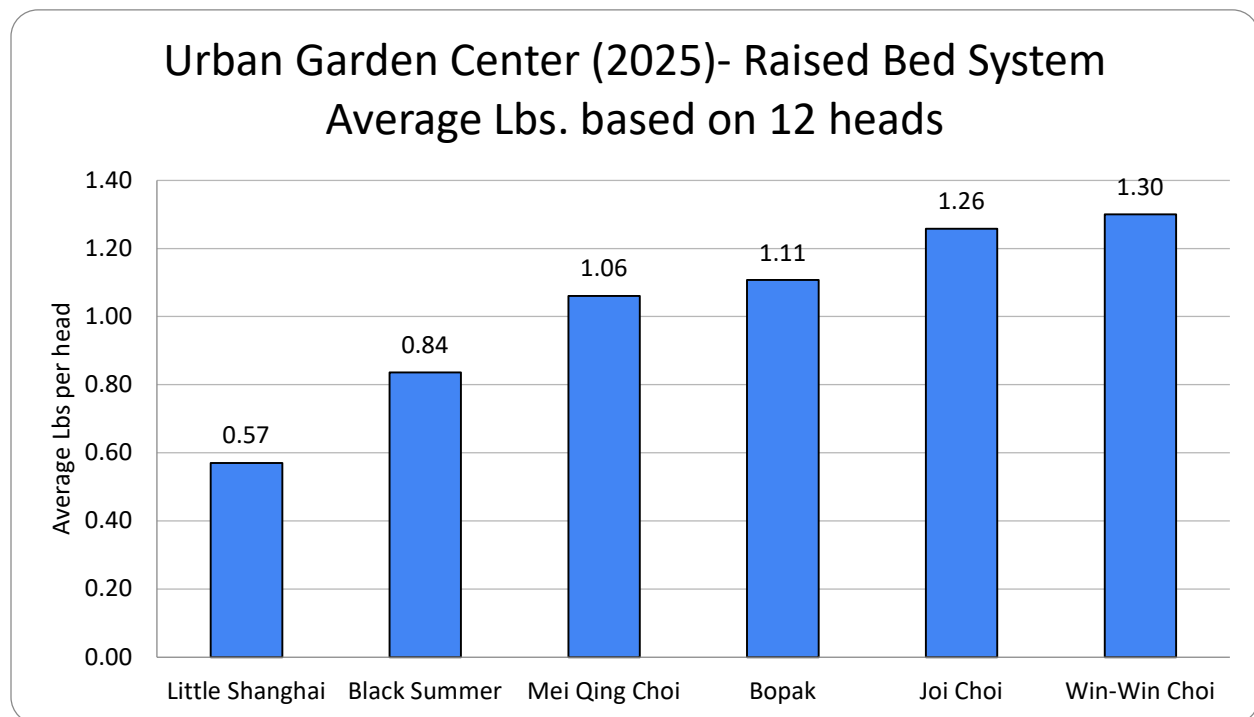
Food security and self-sufficiency

Distributed approximately 600 starter plants and 70 seed packets of CTAHR field-tested, high-yielding bok choy varieties created immediate opportunities for households to begin or expand food production at home. Emphasizing high-yielding

varieties in the context of Hawai'i's high cost of living positioned the event as a direct intervention to support local food security and household self-reliance.

Research-based learning and application skills

The six showcased varieties—Win Win Choi, Joi Choi, Mei Qing Choi, Black Summer, Little Shanghai, and Bopak (Johnny's Selected Seeds)—were used to demonstrate how participants can apply variety performance data from previous replicated field trials to achieve high-yield results. The session reaffirmed [CTAHR SOAP](#) 2013 findings and highlighted varieties that produced more than one pound per head under Hawai'i conditions, illustrating how research-based insights can inform both on-farm and home-garden decisions.



Practical models for home and urban growing

Raised beds (4' x 4' x 6" with 25 heads) and hydroponic systems (from single-plant containers up to 4' x 4' x 6" beds holding 36 plants) gave participants scalable, visually clear templates they can copy at home or in community gardens. These demonstrations emphasized efficient, space-saving production of leafy greens and were paired with food samples that showcased the nutritional benefits of bok choy, making sustainable, health-focused gardening feel attainable even in limited urban spaces.

Broader community and institutional impact

The event achieved high participant satisfaction, notable increases in learning, and strong commitment from attendees to adopt new practices, which together

bolstered community trust in CTAHR and the O'ahu County Cooperative Extension as reliable sources of practical, research-driven gardening and nutrition education. The Open House also improved participants' gardening skills, supported healthier eating habits, and contributed to strengthening local food self-sufficiency efforts on O'ahu. These impacts reinforce CTAHR's ongoing leadership in advancing food security, nutrition education, community-focused agriculture learning, and sustainable practices across the island.



REFERENCE:

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