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Maui

The Sustainability Issue

NŌ KA 'OI

Waihe'e Coastal Refuge

**COULD A PREHISTORIC CRAB
SAVE OUR SHORELINE?**

GOT BREADFRUIT?

1 Ranch + 7 Students = Food Security
+ 4 'Ulu-licious, Chef-Inspired Recipes

SUSTAINABLE LIVING

An Upcountry Community Leads the Way

KEEPING COMPANY

Honoring 4 of Maui's Enduring Businesses

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A photograph of a herd of black and brown cows grazing in a lush green field. The field is filled with tall grass, and several large, leafy trees are scattered throughout, providing shade. The sky is blue with a few white clouds. The cows are of various breeds, including black and brown, and are in various poses, some standing and some lying down.

Project *'Ulu*

The importance of Hawaiian food security cannot be underestimated. Here's how one local ranch teamed up with seven eager students to support the Islands' families in need.

Story by Becky Speere | Photography by Ryan Siphers



Opposite: Cows graze lazily in the Hāna Ranch 'ulu orchard.

This page: Student Jacob Devlin sorts 'ulu according to ripeness at the University of Hawai'i Maui College kitchen.



Students Phrincess Jhuline Constantino, Evan Gikas and Kui Hanks help wash and prep nearly 2,000 pounds of 'ulu harvested from Hāna Ranch.



Above: Gary Johnson (left), consulting chef at Hāna Ranch, and Duane Lammers (center), manager of Hāna Ranch, combined forces with the Maui Food Innovation Center and UH Maui College culinary students to support food security in the Islands. A single 'ulu tree (right) can live 50 to 100 years (or more), and can produce up to 1,000 pounds of fruit in a single year!

It's early morning at the University of Hawai'i Maui College as we stand in the loading dock outside the Pa'ina building. Duane Lammers, manager of Hāna Ranch, addresses our group. "A luxury helicopter tour company was arriving with visitors who would be staying at the Hāna Ranch guest house,"

he recounts. "We went into the house make sure it was ready and found a herd of goats!" We laugh as he explains that a gate was accidentally left open, providing access for the ruminants.

"Every employee came to help remove the goats and clean the place up," adds his wife, Rose. "We were lucky they hadn't started to eat the furniture!"

"So, no more goats for us," concludes Lammers. "Now we're concentrating on growing and processing 'ulu. It's not as exciting, but it's much easier to manage!"

The laughter subsides as my husband, Chris Speere, Maui Food Innovation Center site coordinator, steps forward. "There is a lot of potential to build on this collaboration between the MFIC and Hāna Ranch," he says. "Engaging these culinary students with hands-on experiences can open their minds to creating a specialty market of products [from seed to shelf]. I can also see future partnerships with other leading Maui growers of coffee, olives, *kalo* [taro] and cacao. This is an exciting time."

This has indeed been a win-win for UHMC culinary students and Hāna Ranch, and the 'ulu stars serendipitously aligned with the arrival of Covid-19 in Hawai'i in spring of 2020: The students were learning via virtual classroom, so the campus kitchens were empty and unused, and Lammers had decided to process his harvested 'ulu on-island, so he was in need of resources to make it happen. Speere coordinated a partnership between the students (who needed hours to fulfill their program requirements), Hāna Ranch (which needed warm bodies) and UHMC chancellor Lui Hokoana (who helped secure funding) to make it all happen.

Around 8:30 a.m., brothers Lester and Trinity Kaiwi, part of the vegetation-management team at Hāna Ranch, pull their truck up to the loading dock. Three heavy-duty storage containers rest in the truck bed, and hold approximately one ton of harvested 'ulu. This is the second such shipment the Kaiwis have hauled the 50-plus miles along the narrow north-shore coastline that winds from Hāna to Kahului — a nail-biting trip on a good day.

"What time did you get up this morning?" I ask Lester.

"We were up at 4 a.m. getting the 'ulu shipment ready," he says. "Fortunately, no one [else] was on the road this early."

Though the 3,600-acre Hāna Ranch is largely known for its grass-fed beef, several acres are set aside for orchard cultivation. In 2014, the Kaiwis planted 1,000 cloned seedlings from the Breadfruit Institute in Hāna's National Tropical Botanical Garden, part of a program to revitalize 'ulu in Hawai'i. "[They're] like our *keiki* [children]," the Kaiwis say of the 'ulu trees.

Unfortunately, the Hāna Ranch cattle didn't get the memo that these orchards were not for their benefit: They quickly decided that 'ulu was their new favorite delicacy — and devoured about 75 percent of the newly planted trees. "We were told that cows don't like 'ulu, but they were wrong!" laugh the Kaiwis.

Fortunately, the remaining 100 or so trees proved to be very prolific, which is evident when the Kaiwis open the containers to reveal mounds of round, ripe breadfruit.

The students unload the truck by hand, placing the fruit onto carts in a single layer and roll them into the building. Several students man each workstation, where they wash and clean the bowling-ball-size breadfruit, then weigh it and sort it onto different carts. "We sort the 'ulu by ripeness for savory and sweet applications, like for hummus or for pies," explains Gary Johnson, consulting chef at Hāna Ranch.

One of 24 canoe plants brought to the Islands by early settlers, 'ulu is a staple of the Hawaiian diet. It is naturally low in fat, low glycemic, non-GMO and gluten-free — a great alternative for those with allergies and sensitivities.



Under the guidance of consulting chef Gary Johnson, students weigh and cook the 'ulu in commercial appliances.

Once they transfer all the 'ulu into the kitchen, students then carry out several bulging bags of cooked, refrigerated 'ulu skins — trimmed from last week's crop — and load them onto the truck. "Oh, the pigs [in Hāna] going to get fat now!" calls Lester Kaiwi from behind the wheel as they depart.

The washing and weigh-in process takes hours, and when they finally remove their prune-like hands from the water we learn that the weight of the day's haul totals 1,919 pounds. This is the second harvest of the year so far; the week prior yielded 1,621 pounds.

"Since 2016, Hāna Ranch has shipped all of its 'ulu to the Big Island 'Ulu Cooperative, but with the [38 percent] increase in shipping costs and about 20 percent spoilage in route, we decided to process [some of it] here on Maui," says Johnson. "We are still shipping half of our 'ulu to the Big Island, though. There just isn't enough grown [there] for their needs." Hāna Ranch plans to sell the remaining 'ulu to local hotels and restaurants.

Back in the kitchen, the students cook the fruit in a variety of commercial appliances — one combi-oven, a steamer-kettle cooker, two tilt-skillets and a deck oven with steam. Once it reaches an internal temperature of 135 F, the 'ulu is removed, cooled a little, then cut in half. The students then pare off the bumpy skins, remove the cores and save the trimmings to be upcycled into feed for the happy Hāna pigs to enjoy the following week.

"[The 'ulu] is next cut into wedges and cooled to 70 degrees within two hours, according to the Hawai'i State Department of Health guidelines," explains Johnson. "The wedges are frozen and shrink-wrapped

and finally packaged into 50-pound boxes for wholesale delivery."

The students seal and package the last of the fruit, then they stretch and smile. It has been an eight-hour workday, beginning early that morning with a total kitchen sanitization and ending with the rolling of the final cart of 'ulu into the freezer.

"These helping hands have been great!" says Johnson about the UH students. "We have a process in place and we'll only get faster."

'Ulu is extremely versatile and can be made into all manner of dishes, including hummus, chips, ice cream, pie, soup, salads, stew, casseroles, lasagna, burgers, pickles, gnocchi, bread and even chocolate mousse!

Two months later, seven loads of 'ulu have been processed for a grand total of 11,113 pounds (about 5 ½ tons). On this final day, I survey the room and see happy, glowing faces, a testament to the success of the 'ulu project. But still, I sense a modicum of sadness with the end of this fulfilling experience.

"We appreciate your time and professional work ethic and look forward to a continued relationship with the college," says Lammers to the group, adding that the ranch plans to install pig- and cow-resistant fencing to protect future plantings. "It looks like we will have another flush of breadfruit starting in February, so I hope we can count on you to help again." Smiles

abound and students depart, vocalizing their future commitment to the project with enthusiasm.

The value of collaborating for a sustainable food future can't be measured, but one thing is for sure: If we care for the land and grow food for everyone, we will enrich the lives of all and will give truth to the phrase, "Lucky we live in Hawai'i." 🌿

For more information about Hāna Ranch, visit hanaranch.com IG/FB [hanaranch](https://www.instagram.com/hanaranch).

FUN 'ULU FACTS

When burned, male 'ulu flowers provide a natural mosquito repellent.

'Ulu wood is lightweight, making it ideal for building boats.

The sap of both the tree and the fruit can be made into an adhesive and used for wound care, caulking and waterproofing.

'Ulu bark can be used to make paper and cloth such as *kapa*.



Above and left: Before cooking, students pare off the 'ulu skins and remove the spongy cores, which are not palatable for humans. For goats, however, these castoffs make a heavenly, upcycled dinner.

Below right: Students (from left to right) Evan Gikas, Jacob Devlin, Kui Hanks, Milmar Villanueva, Gary Johnson, Kailipuhanoha Palakiko and Alexie Jan Calma package frozen 'ulu into bags which they then shrink-wrap and box for commercial use.



The Great ‘Ulu

Breadfruit is having a moment. Here are some recipes to entice your palate and please even the pickiest eaters. *Story by Becky Speere*

When John Cadman took over the chef management of the kitchen at the Upcountry campus of Kamehameha School in 2011, one of his biggest goals was to bring ‘ulu back into the ‘opu (bellies) of Hawaiian children — many of whom had never tasted this important “canoe crop,” introduced by their ancestors who arrived here in great sailing canoes. With Western contact, breadfruit fell out of favor as a dietary staple, replaced in large part by imported potatoes and rice, and very few chefs regularly incorporated ‘ulu into their daily menus. It still existed deep in the memories of the kūpuna (elders) and old-time plantation workers, and my mother, the

daughter of sugarcane field laborers, would pan-fry slices of ‘ulu in oil and serve it with a drizzle of shoyu for dinner. Not fancy, but tasty and nutritious all the same.

So when I heard Cadman was substituting ‘ulu for potatoes in mass quantities of “potato salad” for Kamehameha School, I was intrigued. I paid him a visit and watched as he prepared the dish with diced ‘ulu, hard-boiled eggs, mayonnaise, minced onions, grated carrots and parsley. It was delicious!

‘Ulu is a happy partner in all dishes because, like a chameleon, it takes on whatever character you assign it. Do you want it to be spicy like rissoles or make it into a

lovely, sweet pie? ‘Ulu will comply.

I predict ‘ulu will start to trend this year due to accessibility and ease of use. Duane Lammers and Gary Johnson of Hana Ranch have brought a ready-to-cook-and-eat product to the market. Look for it in the freezer section of your favorite store, and if you don’t find it, ask the store manager to carry it. If you have access to fresh breadfruit, use some and share some with your neighbors, and with ‘ulu in hand, make some of these delicious recipes. As you enjoy them with friends and family, be thankful for this ancient crop and the enterprising people who brought it to the Islands so many years ago.

Basic ‘Ulu Preparation

The ripeness of your ‘ulu will determine its best use. If it is soft, ripe and spoonable, use it for sweet recipes such as pie — no cooking necessary. If it is hard and firm, use it in a delicious savory dish. Here are two easy ways to cook your ‘ulu. Make a batch ahead of time and store it in the fridge for a whole week’s worth of meals.

1. Wash and dry ‘ulu. Cut into quarters. Remove and discard spongy core. Dice remaining flesh into 1-inch pieces. Place in a large stock pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil and cook until easily pierced with a fork, but still firm. Drain and allow to cool.

2. Wash and dry ‘ulu. Place it whole in a steamer and cook 45 to 60 minutes, or until a skewer inserted into the center slides in easily (similar to a cooked potato). Cool until manageable, then remove outer skin. Cut in half and remove core and spongy center. Dice remaining flesh.

‘Ulu Chowder With Kona Lobster and Sweet Kula Corn

Courtesy of chef Tylun Pang from the Fairmont Kea Lani, Wailea

Makes 4 to 6 Servings | Prep Time: 1 Hour

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons butter
4 slices bacon, cut into ¼-inch pieces
1 cup onion, diced
1 cup celery, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
4 tablespoons flour
4 cups chicken stock
1 bay leaf
4 cups ‘ulu, cooked and cut into 1-inch pieces
1 cup Kula corn kernels (2 ears)
1 cup cooked Kona lobster meat
1½ cups heavy cream
1 teaspoon Tabasco
kosher salt, to taste
ground white pepper, to taste
pinch fresh parsley, finely chopped

DIRECTIONS In a large soup pot, melt butter over moderate heat. Add bacon and cook until lightly browned. Add onions, celery and garlic and saute until soft. Add flour and stir to coat; don’t burn! Slowly pour in chicken stock while stirring and bring to a boil. Add bay leaf, reduce heat to a simmer and cook 10 minutes, or until vegetables are tender. Add ‘ulu and return to a simmer. Cook another 10 minutes, then add corn, lobster and cream. Stir as you heat to a simmer. Season with Tabasco and salt and pepper (to taste). Top with parsley and serve with crusty bread.

Challenge

A top-down view of a rustic, dark metal bowl filled with a thick, creamy white chowder. The chowder is topped with chunks of sweet corn, pieces of bright red lobster, and finely chopped green herbs. The bowl sits on a light blue ceramic plate, which is placed on a dark wooden table. Two pieces of golden-brown bread are visible: one is partially submerged in the chowder on the left, and another is propped up behind the bowl at the top.

Too good to save for special occasions, chef Tylun Pang's 'Ulu Chowder With Kona Lobster and Sweet Kula Corn does double duty as either a starter or a main course. No lobster? Sub a nice piece of locally caught fish instead.



Serve 'ulu tamales alongside meat, seafood or even grilled tempheh. (Pebble design porcelain plate by Kihei ceramicist Curt Stevens. @curtstevensporcelain)

'Ulu Tamale With Charred Pineapple and Tomatoes

Executive chef Adam Rzeczkowski of Merriman's Kapalua presented this original tamale recipe at the 2019 Maui Ag Fest. Although he didn't fill it with the typical pork, chicken or green chiles, his is a great foundational recipe to build upon using your own creative fillings.

Makes 15 to 20 Tamales | Prep Time: 2 Hours

INGREDIENTS

- 1 small pineapple, peeled, cored and sliced
- 15 to 20 banana leaves*
- 1 cup coconut oil
- 2 teaspoons achiote paste
- 1 large 'ulu (6 pounds), steamed and diced salt, to taste
- 1-2 tablespoons water, more if needed
- 2 tomatoes, seeded and diced into ½-inch pieces

OPTIONAL SIDES

- barbecued pork
- green chiles
- pipi kaula* (Hawaiian-style marinated dried beef)

DIRECTIONS Char pineapple slices over a hot fire, dice and set aside. Remove ribs from banana leaves and cut into 5-inch-by-8-inch pieces. Add achiote paste and coconut oil to a saucepan and heat on low, stirring, until paste is completely broken down and has colored the oil. Cool, then strain through a fine sieve into a bowl. Bring a large pot of water to a boil and carefully banana leaves in to soften. Working in batches, put 'ulu and salt (to taste) in a food processor and pulse until 'ulu looks like grains of rice. With machine running, slowly drizzle in achiote oil one tablespoon at a time until mixture looks dry, like flour cut into butter. Add water a tablespoon at a time until dough forms a slightly sticky mass. Scoop into a large bowl. Repeat with remaining 'ulu. Spread banana leaves on a flat surface. Spoon six tablespoons of 'ulu mixture into the center of each leaf, fold over the sides and ends and tie with kitchen string. Steam tamales 10 to 15 minutes. Serve garnished with diced pineapple, tomatoes and sides of choice.

*Can't find banana leaves to use in this recipe? Use *ti* leaves or tinfoil squares instead.

Tropical 'Ulu Salsa and Crispy 'Ulu Ribbons

Courtesy of Chris Speere, former site coordinator for the Maui Food Innovation Center at UH Maui College

This recipe uses locally sourced 'ulu and tropical fruit as a fresh accompaniment for seafood or poultry. It's also amazing served with Crispy 'Ulu Ribbons (see recipe)!

TROPICAL 'ULU SALSA

Makes 9 Cups | Prep Time: 30 Minutes

INGREDIENTS

SALSA

- 2 cups 'ulu, cooked and diced
- 1 cup ripe papaya, diced
- 1 cup pineapple, diced
- 1 cup mango, diced
- 1 cup fresh lychee, diced, optional
- ½ cup red bell pepper, diced
- ½ cup Maui onion, diced
- ½ cup green bell pepper, diced
- ½ cup jicama, diced
- ½ cup fresh cilantro, minced
- ⅓ cup fresh mint, minced

DRESSING

- 4 tablespoons Maui Sunflower Oil
- 4 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons sweet Thai chili sauce
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar, optional
- salt, to taste

DIRECTIONS Add all salsa ingredients to a bowl and stir gently to combine. Place dressing ingredients in a separate bowl and whisk to combine. Pour over salsa and mix gently. Adjust seasonings to taste.

CRISPY 'ULU RIBBONS

Makes 8 to 10 Servings

Prep Time: 1 Hour

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large whole 'ulu
- 2 cups Maui Sunflower Oil
- pink Himalayan sea salt, to taste

DIRECTIONS Wash and dry 'ulu. Trim top and bottom and pare off skin. Cut into quarters lengthwise and remove dense core. Discard. Use a potato peeler or mandolin to slice 'ulu into

thin ribbons. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Working in batches, lay 'ulu strips in a single layer in the pan and cook until stiff and light brown on both sides. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towels. Repeat with remaining 'ulu. Add sea salt, to taste. 🌿

