



Maui Food
INNOVATION CENTER



University of Hawai'i Maui College Unveils Innovative Food Processing Facility and Educational Center

The Maui Food Innovation Center (MFIC) Pilina Facility has officially opened its doors with their long-awaited Grand Opening celebration held on Monday, November 6, 2023. The MFIC's focus is to provide local entrepreneurs with access to a state-of-the-art facility designed to assist with food product development and business start-ups.

With over 200+ in attendance, Maui's community was present to embrace the first ever college-based business incubator in the state, that serves to foster and accelerate the growth and education of agribusinesses and food entrepreneurs.

The MFIC offers a non-traditional format of education and learning.

Courtesy Of UH Maui College



Attendees of the Maui Food Innovation Center's grand opening sampled locally made foods.



Courtesy Of UH Maui College

Officials received a tour of the new certified food processing facility during the grand opening event on Nov. 6.

With a focus on non-credit certification and professional development classes, including Food Business Start-up, Food Product Concept-to-Consumer Guidance, Food Manufacturing, and value-added business strategies, the center is a one-stop-shop for farmers/chefs, restaurateurs and food entrepreneurs seeking to either create a value-added food product concept, or to expand and level-up their product manufacturing capabilities.

"We strive to increase the profitability of Maui's food industry by supporting the entrepreneurs and their development of new value-added food products in our commercial research and development kitchen," said MFIC Instructor Angela Gannon. "We also aim to reduce our islands' dependence on imports, contribute to the sustainability of island-based agriculture and create job opportunities."

For more information about MFIC classes and services, email uhmcmfic@hawaii.edu or call (808)-984-3850.

What you will find inside...

- Grand Opening and Student Showcase Success
- Baldwin HS Sunday Market
- Eat More Breadfruit - Ulu Coop
- From Kitchen Creations to Business Owners - MFIC Student Spotlight
- Cohort #10 Testimonials
- Mark your Calendars... Workshops, Round table and Lunch & Learn
- Welcoming Melissa Kaufman, new Entrepreneur Instructor with the MFIC Team

Newsletter Editor: Angela Gannon - Events/Instructor
Contact: 808-984-3851 | **Email:** uhmcmfic@hawaii.edu

Use this QR code to view a list of MFIC's equipment or go to <https://go.hawaii.edu/CAX>



Impressive Student Showcase during Grand Opening Wows Attendees

All photos courtesy of UH Maui College

From ube chocolates to tropical cocktails featuring locally grown fruit, the grand opening and blessing of the new Maui Food and Innovation Center (MFIC) Pilina Food Manufacturing facility and educational center at the University of Hawai'i Maui College on November 6 was a delicious success.



Student Showcase was well attended with 9 students' products, 5 community partner participants, and supporter displays.



MFIC Advisory Committee member Gabriel Pascual enjoys Leon Allen's BBQ Sauce (Papa's WIPP ASS BBQ Sauce).



Student connections with past cohort success students like Mitzie Torro aka The Maui Cookie Lady; Pamela Tumpap, President for Maui Chamber of Commerce; and Gabriel Pascual, Founder & Managing Director at ADEM (Agency for Development of Export Markets) were invaluable.



Lt. Gov. Sylvia Luke (in red shirt) and UH President David Lassner (in yellow shirt) were among the guests at the center's grand opening and blessing on Nov. 6.



Manu Baisa-Gomes shares her Manu's Munchies product with Lt. Governor Sylvia Luke.

Student Showcase Featured...

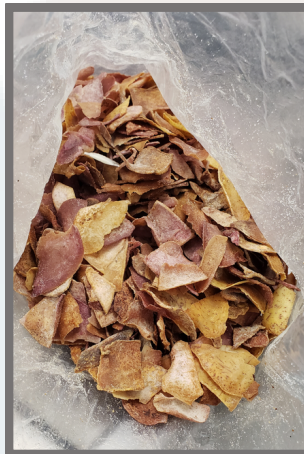
- Aloha Raw – Den Koro (Facility R&D client)
- Farm to Fudge – Janice Leilani, NTP, RWP (Cohort #10)
- Galleon Chocolate – Len Gonzales (Cohort #10)
- Grandpa Joe's Candy Company – Chad Miller (Cohort #5)
- Papa's WIPP ASS BBQ Sauce – Leon Allen (Cohort #10)
- Manu's Munchies – Manu Baisa-Gomes (Cohort #10)
- Maui Cocktail Kits – Katy Tsark (Cohort #10)
- Maui Cookie Lady – Mitzie Toro (Cohort #1)
- Maui Dried Fruit – Uri Goldstein (Facility R&D client)

MFIC takes Baldwin HS Culinary to Sunday Market

The Baldwin High School (BHS) Culinary I and II students had a successful participation at Maui Sunday Market at the Kahului Shopping Center on December 10, 2023! The students featured their many Taro (Kalo) products, including Kalo Savory (adobo) and Sweet (cinnamon) chips, Laulau and Kalo Haupia pie and more utilizing the 200 lbs of fresh Kalo grown and harvested by the BHS Agriculture class.

The raw Kalo was first used to teach "product development and manufacturing" to both the BHS Culinary and Agriculture students who signed up for shifts during their Fall Break. Students were taught production workflow and food safety & facility orientation. They cleaned, processed and prepared the Kalo in the newly opened Pilina Facility. The Kalo was next used for the recipes that were all student created, prepared, packaged and sold at the Sunday Market.

All photos courtesy of UH Maui College



Baldwin HS students learning value-added food entrepreneur skills at UH Maui College's Food Innovation Center Pilina Facility and at the Maui Sunday Market.



There were five culinary classes of students that worked within their kitchen groups. Each class picked a product/recipe to work on, conducted taste testing, cost projections, marketing and packaging/labeling their products. Students were able to demonstrate an understanding of food safety practices in a food manufacturing facility.

As part of the MFIC class, a record 86 BHS students received their "Food Handler Safety Certification" which is good for 3 years from issue date. Students learned how to turn their menu/food product into a viable recipe for scaling and brought their concept to the consumers at the Maui Sunday Market.

Do you have an idea for a food product?

We have a dedicated team that can help you, providing guidance and support every step of the way, from the initial concept to the final product launch.

Our state-of-the-art food processing facility is ready to bring your culinary creations to life! Take the first step by contacting us at 808.984.3850, or visiting our website at <https://maui.hawaii.edu/foodinnovation/>.

Join the "Pau Hana" Planning Committee and be a part of something great!

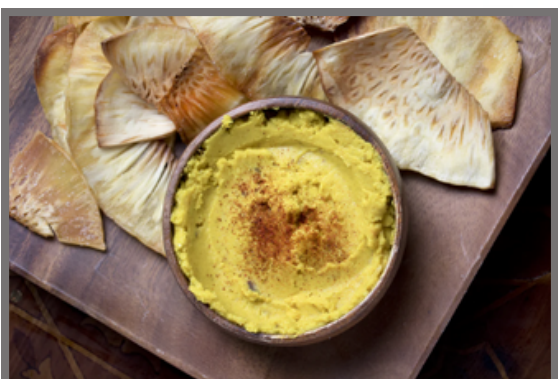


We are searching for 10 passionate food entrepreneurs (from both our past and current cohorts) to aid in launching our regular "Pau Hana" MFIC Food Networking Events.

These gatherings are designed to connect and unite the value-added food community.

If you are interested in joining the planning process, please contact Angela Gannon at uhmcmfic@hawaii.edu or call 808-984-3851.

All photos courtesy Of UH Maui College



“Eat More Breadfruit” - Hawai'i 'Ulu Co-op Commences Maui Production at MFIC

By Ian Stewart, Business Development - MBDA Pa'oihana Program

Following equipment testing earlier in the year, the Hawai'i 'Ulu Cooperative (HUC) has launched a new Maui production base in December 2023 at the Maui Food Innovation Center (MFIC) for its 'Ulu Hummus and 'Ulu Chocolate Mousse product range. Looking ahead, regular monthly production is planned which should see locally harvested 'ulu converted into delicious, nutritious, and sustainable value-added products which will be available at local retailers including Rodeo General Store, Seascape, Mana Foods, the Maui Food Hub, and Down To Earth.

Dana Shapiro, co-founder and General Manager of the Hawai'i 'Ulu Cooperative commented, "We're excited to finally initiate production on Maui and delighted to be partnering with MFIC and their new state-of-the-art production facility. We already have a wonderful relationship with UH Maui College (UHMC) and the Culinary Department. This new activity further cements our relationship with UHMC through the MFIC, our local producer communities and will advance our objective of strengthening food security in Hawai'i".

"This is exactly why MFIC was launched!" added Karen Hanada, MFIC Director.

"We were able to assist Dana and her team in quickly converting from R&D to full commercial production by training on and testing our equipment. MFIC is playing a vital role in farm-to shelf value-added food development, supporting sustainable, local food systems and our farmers and also helping to upskill our student community and create local employment opportunities and future food entrepreneurs".

Formed in 2016 with nine small, diversified growers on Hawai'i Island, Hawai'i 'Ulu Co-op has grown to over 140 member-farms on Hawai'i Island, Maui, O'ahu, and Kaua'i. By working together, the co-op's farmers can offer consistent, high-quality products that are delicious, versatile, local, healthy, accessible, and sustainable. In addition to 'ulu, HIC has also Hawai'i-grown staple crops such as kalo (taro), 'uala (sweet potato) and pala'ai (pumpkin).

"The UHMC team was amazingly supportive throughout, and we are grateful that this new partnership with the innovation center will really help us make the most out of what was processed on island." added Dana Sharpio.

See product locator on their website: <https://eatbreadfruit.com/pages/findbreadfruit>

Hawaii 'Ulu Cooperative doing their monthly production of their 'Ulu Hummus and 'Ulu Chocolate Mousse products at the MFIC.





Two Entrepreneurs' Quest for Success: Janice LaFontaine and Katy Tsark

Angela Gannon, a MFIC instructor, shares the inspiring stories of two entrepreneurial minds who shared a similar dream. Janice LaFontaine, founder of Farm to Fudge, and Katy Tsark, creator of Maui Cocktail Kits, began their journey at MFIC with the goal of bringing their cottage-industry concept to the masses. They were drawn to MFIC's business start-up education, culinary support, and access to state-of-the-art equipment. Janice's passion for healthy eating and nutrient-dense foods led her to create a healthy treat for her family, which eventually became Farm to Fudge. She stated, "I was inspired to join the MFIC because I had never launched a food product before."

Janice's experience with the MFIC opened her eyes to the many things requirements when launching a food product. She was able to work at a pace that supported her busy lifestyle and family schedule, "while receiving full support every step of the way." Research and Development is necessary when creating a food product.

Janice stated, "Sometimes it can feel overwhelming, but really, it's a necessary part of the process, allowing me to produce an even better product." Janice's approach to simplifying fudge with gluten and dairy-free, all natural ingredients, make her product very unique. Janice stated, "The skills and knowledge I've gained has led me to the confidence I need to meet the challenges and rewards in creating and launching Farm to Fudge." Her product is now available at the Maui Cookie Lady in Makawao.



Janice LaFontaine (Farm to Fudge)



Katy Tsark with daughter Waimea at the MFIC (Maui Cocktail Kits)

Katy started experimenting at home with her cocktail infusions. "... using fresh Maui fruit blends and infusing different liquors to create a composed cocktail base, I shared them with friends and family, they loved them and encouraged me to package and sell my "cocktail kits". " This is when she knew she needed assistance to grow her kitchen creations. "I was looking for guidance with food packaging, state regulations and scalability." When Katy received the UHMC catalog, the MFIC advertisement caught her eye. "With a tour of the facility, the scale of the equipment and the team of instructors impressed me. The MFIC was the exact program I needed and I am so grateful they are available to the Maui Community."

Katy's daughter, Waimea, is a huge part of her business's success. She stated, "My daughter, Waimea, has been able to work with me and it has inspired her to think big! Labeling and filling packages, as well as slicing and dehydrating fruit, are perfect jobs for her and I to do together, and there are so many jobs she can grow into in the future if that's where her path leads."

Katy stated, "The MFIC team of advisors cover all bases of expertise! Since enrolling, I have learned and used equipment that I didn't know existed and can plan for faster growth and future products. I have also benefited by meeting other like-minded food entrepreneurs."

The successful work our students put in at the MFIC has a positive impact on the the local community, economy and families on Maui. Both Janice and Katy utilize Maui-grown ingredients, allowing farms and local businesses to keep going here on Maui, while also supporting the local economy.

Katy stated, "I see our work benefiting the Maui community as we tell our story and let other food entrepreneurs know that no matter how far along they are, the MFIC is available and easily accessible to anyone who is willing to put in the effort and wishes to see their dreams come true too." Katy's products are currently at several locations, including Nā Mea Hawaii, Oahu; SoHa Living, all islands; Kumu Farms, Waikapu; Tutu's Pantry, Kihei; Sunkissed Wahine, Kihei and others. More information for Maui Cocktail Kits can be found on Katy's website: www.KaheleMaui.com.

For more information about the UH Maui College's Maui Food Innovation program, contact us at 808-984-3850, or through their email at uhmcmfic@hawaii.edu. Our website is: <https://maui.hawaii.edu/foodinnovation/>



"Haleakala Sunset - Maui Cocktail Kit

Mark your calendars...

January 25 – 26, 2024 Food Dehydration Workshop

Presented by: Hawaii Master Food Preservers, 9 am - 5 pm, In-person - Cost \$99, Lualaba Building, Room 106, Register here:

https://go.hawaii.edu/_qr/hQy.png

January 30, 2024 Enterprising Women of Color (EWOC) partnership program - Lunch & Learn

Presented by: Marla Momi Musick, Director of MBDA Capital Readiness Program, 12 - 1:30 pm, In-person at MFIC. For more information and to attend, email: mbdanhsi@hawaii.edu

Date & time - TBD Show & Tell with Melissa Kaufman

Students are encouraged to sign up today for an in-person round table opportunity to meet and collaborate to help each other on things like packaging feedback, taste testing, networking, etc. For more information and to attend, email: melissa.kaufman@hawaii.edu

Testimonials from MFIC Program Cohort #10

Lennard Gonzales - Galleon Chocolate

MFIC has brought numerous benefits into my life. I've had the opportunity to network with key suppliers for our base ingredients, and the camaraderie among fellow students has been priceless. We support each other through referrals, consultations and promotions. The instructors are always there to lend a helping hand, offering guidance and resources to ensure our success.



Manu Baisa-Gomes - Manu's Munchies LLC

MFIC has taught me a lot about the food industry so far, and I'm sure there's a lot more that I'll learn as we move forward. MFIC has helped me gain the confidence to keep pursuing this dream of owning my own business and being able to pass it down to generations to come.

Allen Leon - Papa's Wipp Ass BBQ

MFIC helped open my eyes to the possibilities of securing a bright retirement in something I love to do. If you love doing something and absolutely have a passion for it, it's not work.



Janice LaFontaine - Farm-to-Fudge

My time at MFIC has been so valuable to have the culinary and food entrepreneurial support for my new fudge business. MFIC is helping me to achieve my goal of launching Farm-to-Fudge by realizing it's totally doable with their guidance through the food entrepreneurship program!



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Staff...

Instructors:

- Vincent Domingo, PhD - Entrepreneurship
- Angela Gannon, MEd - Marketing/High School Pathways
- Melissa Kaufman, BS - Entrepreneurship
- Douglas Paul, AAS, PCQI - Food Manufacturing

Operations and Facilities:

- Douglas Paul, AAS, PCQI
- Steve Yamamura, Electronic Tech
- Mike Rollins, BS Electrical Engineering

Food Safety/Curriculum:

- Chris Morakis, BS Chemistry
- Ian Stewart, Business Development - MBDA Pa'oihana Program

Program Manager:

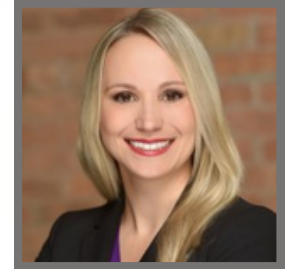
- Currently Under Recruitment

Director:

- T. Karen Hanada, MBA, CPP, PCQI

Welcoming Melissa Kaufman: A Visionary Leader Joins MFIC as a New Entrepreneurship Instructor

The Maui Food Innovation Center is thrilled to announce the newest addition to its team, Melissa Kaufman, a seasoned executive director and startup veteran. With an impressive track record at Northwestern's renowned startup hub, The Garage, Melissa Kaufman brings a wealth of experience and innovation to her new role.



Melissa Kaufman served as the founding executive director of The Garage at Northwestern University, where she played a pivotal role in establishing a dynamic and inclusive space for student entrepreneurs. After more than six years at the helm, she leaves a lasting legacy as she embarks on a new chapter with the Maui Food Innovation Center.

As Melissa Kaufman takes on a new role at the Maui Food Innovation Center, her vision and expertise are set to further elevate the center's profile. The team looks forward to benefiting from her leadership and fostering a culture of innovation and growth on Maui.

The Maui Food Innovation Center welcomes Melissa Kaufman with excitement and anticipation, recognizing her as a transformative leader who has left an indelible mark on Northwestern's entrepreneurial landscape. As she embarks on this new journey, her passion for fostering innovation and empowering students is sure to make a lasting impact on Maui's vibrant food innovation community.

Want more information?

University of Hawai'i Maui College
 Maui Food Innovation Center
 310 W. Ka'ahumanu Avenue
 Pilina Building, Room 225
 Kahului, HI 96732-1617



Email: uhmcmfic@hawaii.edu

Phone Number: 808-984-3850

Website: <https://maui.hawaii.edu/foodinnovation/>

If you would like to learn more about our entrepreneurship classes, food processing facility use for scaling up your existing business, support for a new food product or to have a tour of our facility, please go to the link provided below and complete our "interest form".

Maui Food Innovation Center Interest Form

<https://go.hawaii.edu/qr/n2K.png>



Advisory Committee...

- **Mike Abrams**, President Flavors Waves LLC
- **Wailani Artates**, Owner Artristry 8
- **MFIC Co-Chair Rodrigo Balala**, General Manager Hali'imaile Pineapple Company Limited
- **MFIC Co-Chair Paula Hegele**, President Maui Wine
- **Arnie Koss**, Consultant & Entrepreneur Specialty Foods Association Hall of Fame
- **Luana Mahi**, Director County of Maui Office of Economic Development
- **Chad Miller**, Owner & Entrepreneur Grandpa Joe's Candy Company
- **Joyce Miyamoto**, Culinary & Food Innovation Instructor Baldwin High School
- **Lynn Nakamura-Tengan**, Retired Food Safety Specialist
- **Colleen O'Shea-Brady**, Entrepreneur & Philanthropist
- **Gabriel E. Pascual**, Founder & Managing Director Agency for Development of Export Markets (ADEM)
- **Teena Rasmussen**, Partner Skog Rasmussen LLC
- **Jason Smith**, Owner & Entrepreneur Raw Maui Honey
- **Chris Speere**, Retired UHMC Faculty
- **Darren Strand**, President Hali'imaile Pineapple Company Limited
- **Mitzi Toro**, Owner & Entrepreneur The Maui Cookie Lady
- **Wayne Wong**, Director Maui Small Business Development Center
- **Martin Zorn**, President & Chief Operating Officer Kamakura Corporation