

FOOD INSECURITY AND THE IMPACT OF FEDERAL CUTS IN HAWAII





Food insecurity is the **lack of access to enough food for an active, healthy life.**ⁱ Food insecurity manifests in different ways – ranging from concerns about running out of food before there is money to buy more, to the inability to afford a balanced diet, reducing food intake, missing meals altogether, and, in extreme cases, not eating for whole days because of a lack of food and money.

WHAT IS FOOD INSECURITY?

ⁱ Coleman-Jensen, Alisha, Matthew P. Rabbitt, Christian A. Gregory, Anita Singh. (2022). *Household Food Security in the United States in 2021*. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.

KEY FINDINGS



1 *in* 3

Nearly 1 in 3 Hawai'i households were food insecure in 2023.



37% of all households felt anxious about running out of food.

OVERALL FINDINGS

30% of households in Hawai'i experienced food insecurity in 2023.

- 11% categorized as low food security
- 19% as very low food security
- 10% of Hawai'i households were going a whole day without food some or most months



Another 14% were marginally food secure.

CHILD FOOD INSECURITY

29% of households with children had one or multiple children facing food insecurity in 2023.

- 9% of households had children skipping meals because there was not enough money for food
- 6% of households with children had a child or children go a whole day without food because of a lack of money
- 38% of adults in households with children experienced food insecurity

KEY FINDINGS



In 29% of households with children, one or more children were facing food insecurity.



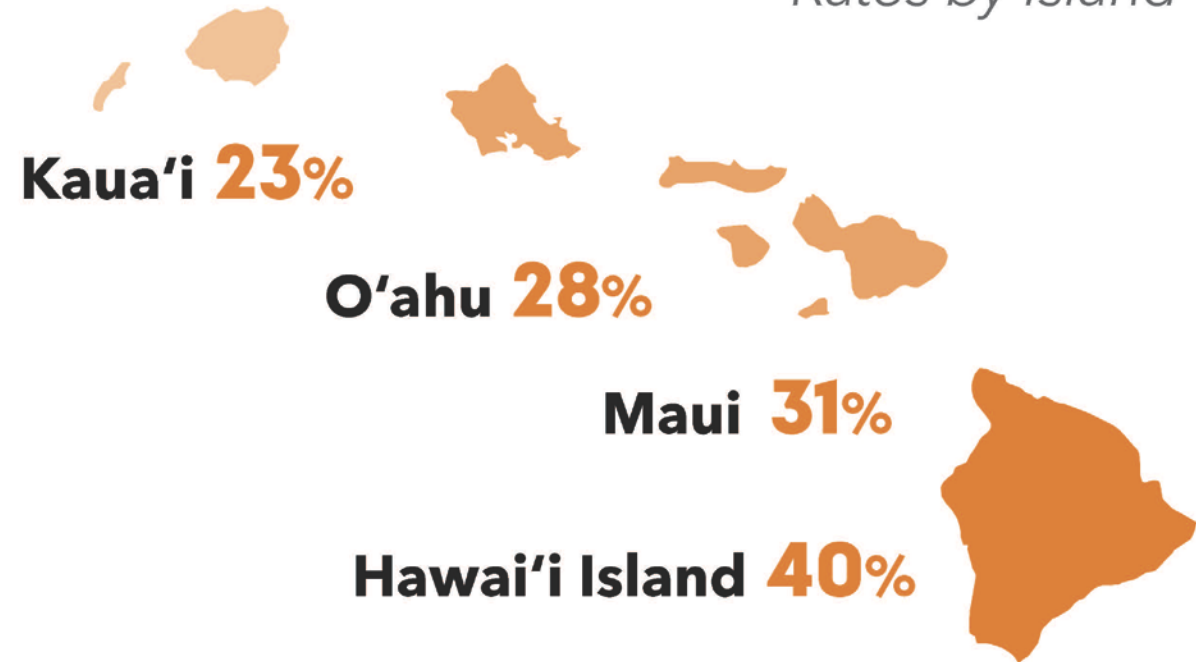
In households with children, food insecurity among adults was especially high at 38% – indicative that **parents and caregivers will sacrifice their own food security** before letting their children go without eating.

GEOGRAPHY

Household food insecurity was highest on Hawai'i Island (40%), followed by Maui (31%), O'ahu (28%) and Kaua'i (23%).

- Food insecurity was consistently high across the islands, ranging from 23 - 40%

Household Food Insecurity Rates by Island





IMPOSSIBLE CHOICES

With **increasing pressures from inflation**, many find themselves making impossible choices between food and other necessities. This means opting for **cheaper, unhealthier food options** and skipping meals. To get by, many even **forego essential needs** like housing, medicine, utilities, education and transportation.



HAWAI'I FOODBANK

Network and Impact FY2025



KAUA'I

 **64** agency partners & pantries

 **2.1** million pounds of food

 **110** mobile food distributions



 **211** agency partners & pantries

 **20.1** million pounds of food

 **752** mobile food distributions

Last year, Hawai'i Foodbank's network of **275 agency partners and pantries** distributed **22.2 million pounds of food**, including via **862 mobile food distributions**.

19.7
MILLION



HAWAI'I'S FOOD BANK HUI

Statewide Network and Impact FY2025



KAUA'I

 **64** agency partners & pantries

 **2.1** million pounds of food

 **110** mobile pantry distributions



 **211** agency partners & pantries

 **20.1** million pounds of food

 **752** mobile pantry distributions



Maui Food Bank
Nourishing Lives, Feeding Futures

 **129** agency partners & pantries

 **7.6** million pounds of food

 **93** mobile pantry distributions



THE FOOD BASKET
HAWAI'I ISLAND'S FOOD BANK

 **100** agency partners & pantries

 **2.8** million pounds of food

 **364** mobile pantry distributions

Hawai'i's statewide hunger-relief network consists of over **500 agency partners and pantries** and held **1,319 mobile distributions** across the state. Altogether, the Food Bank Hui collectively distributed food for 29.1 million meals last year.

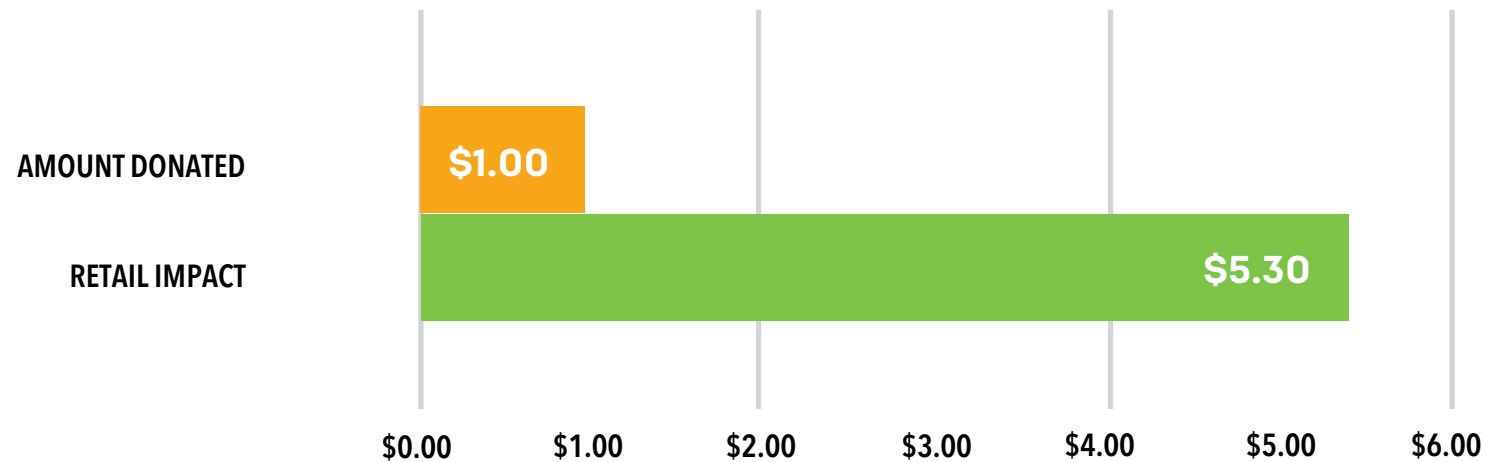
29.1
MILLION



PURCHASING POWER



Hawai'i Foodbank is able to stretch a dollar, on average, 5.3x over local retail food prices.



5.3x

THE PURCHASING
POWER

Last year, Hawai'i Foodbank distributed **\$94 million** worth of food on O'ahu and **\$10.4 million** on Kaua'i, totaling **\$105 million** worth of food at retail cost.

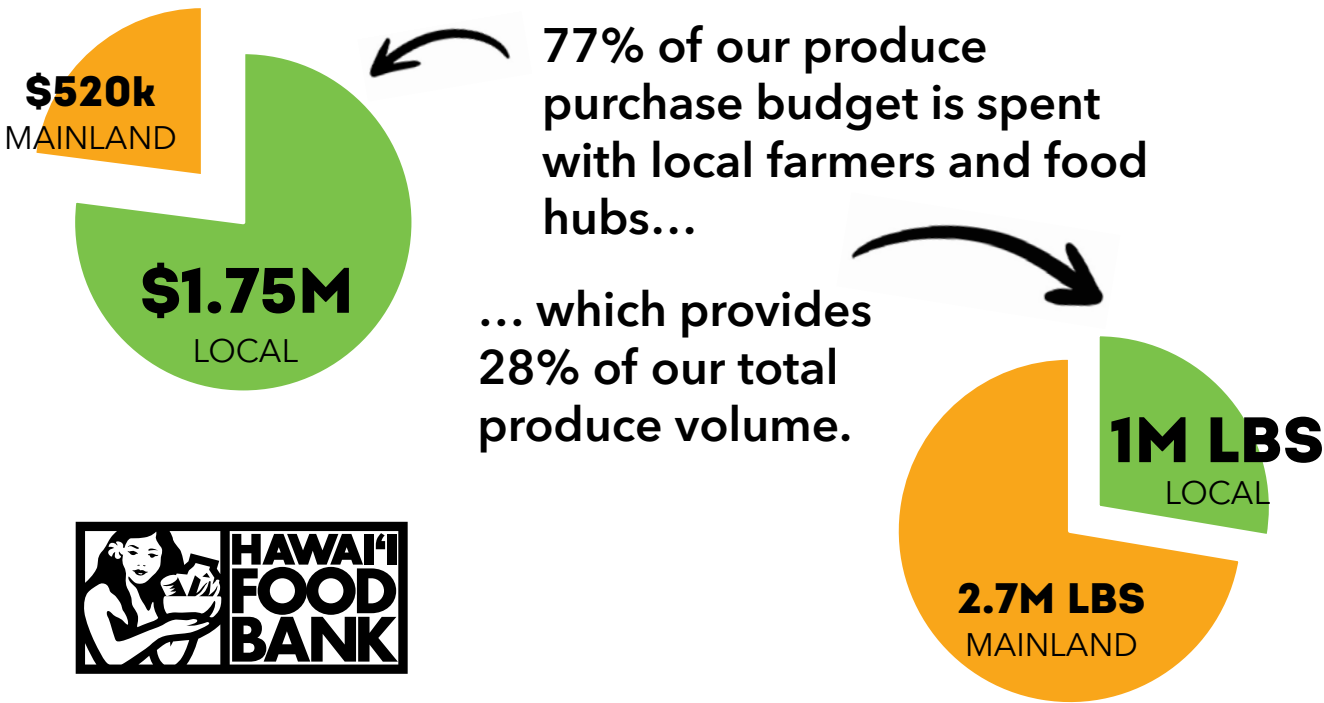
\$105
MILLION



FARM TO FAMILIES

Last year, Hawai'i's food banks collectively purchased more than **\$4 million of locally produced food** from Hawai'i farmers and producers.

Spotlight on O'ahu:





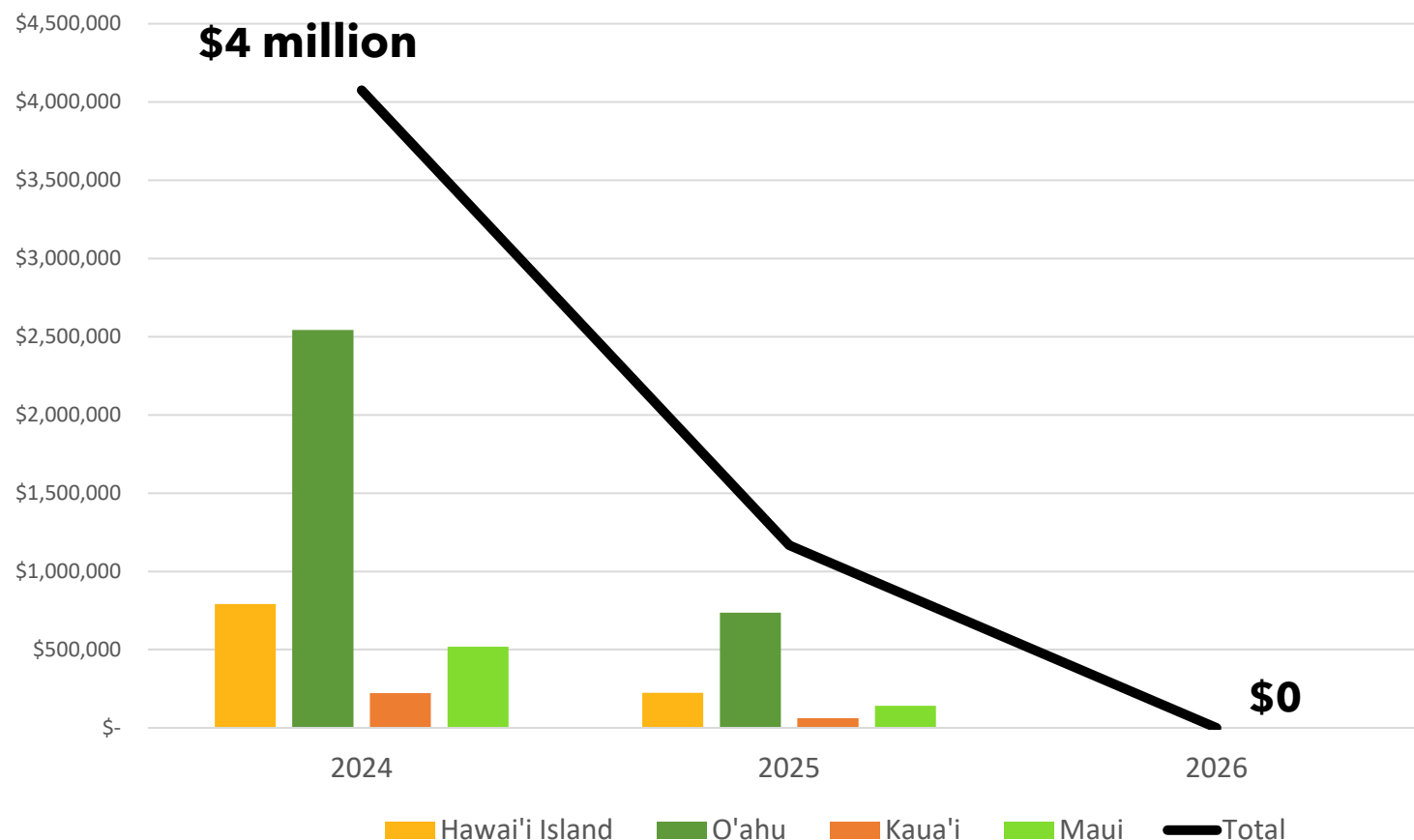
IMPACT OF FEDERAL CUTS

Approximately 20% of the food distributed by the food banks are USDA commodity foods

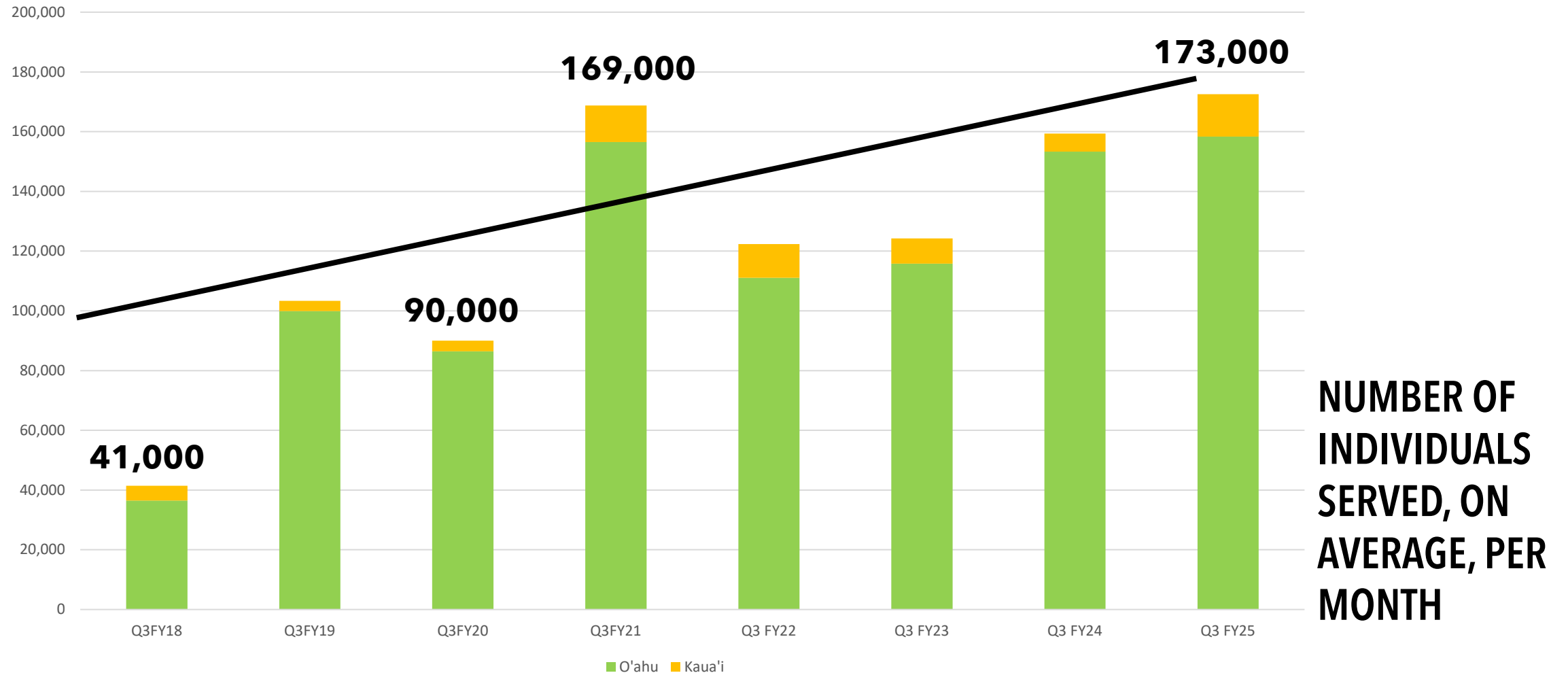
In 2024, the last full year of the TEFAP CCC program, CCC-funded foods made up 7% of all food distributed by Hawai'i's food banks, \$4 million worth of food.

The program was ended this spring.

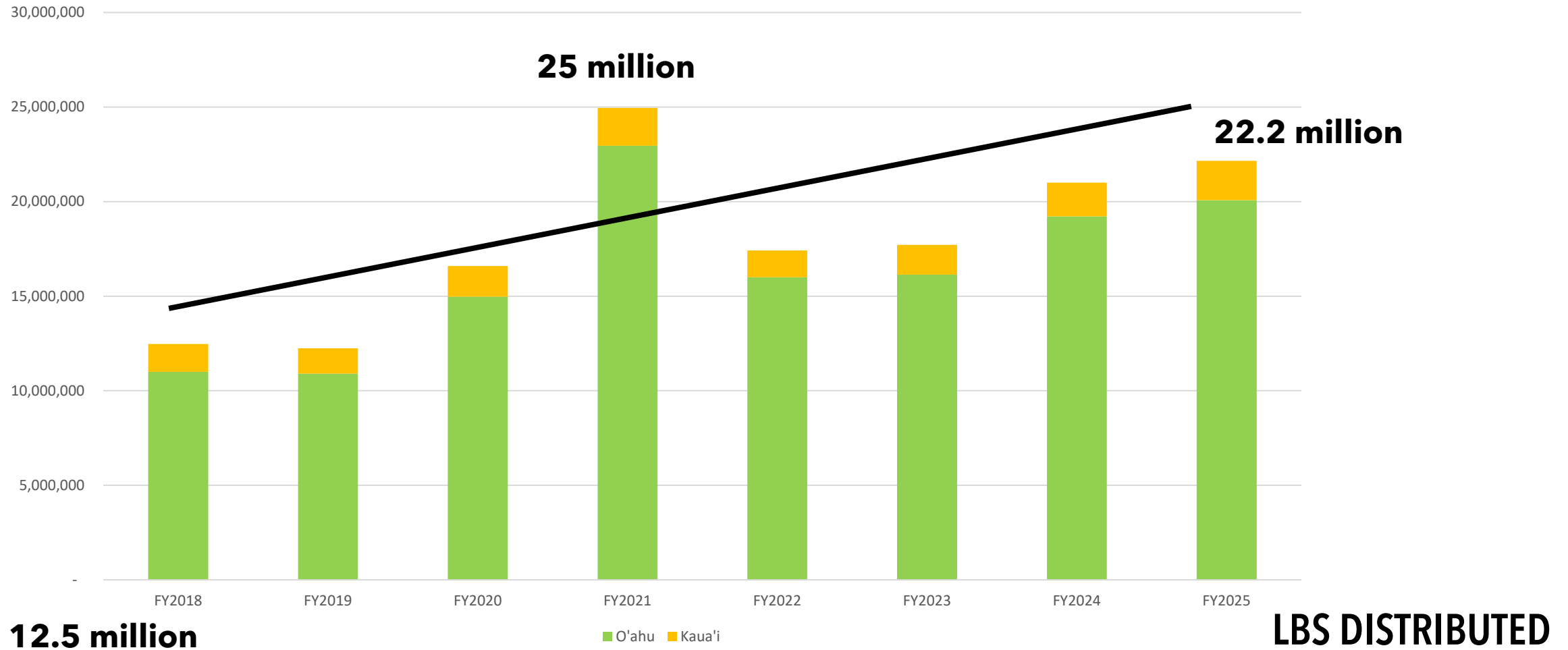
TOTAL VALUE OF TEFAP CCC FOODS



DEMAND HISTORY



DISTRIBUTION HISTORY



SNAP CUTS

165k people (85k households) currently receive SNAP benefits (\$50M/month)

As of October 1, **benefits dropped by 2%, or \$36/month for a family of 4 → \$1M monthly impact**

As of Nov. 1, **OBBBA changes** to work requirements will potentially impact:

- 16,000 individuals aged 55-64
 - 10,000 households with a dependent child aged 14 or older
 - Individuals who are homeless, veterans, or youth aged 18-24 transitioning out of foster care
- **Estimate 16,000 lose benefits → \$5M/month**



FEDERAL SHUTDOWN



Impacts to food security in Hawai'i:

Most immediately, there could be **increased demand for food assistance** from two groups of people who may not be facing hunger today: people who work for a federal contractor and military and civilian federal employees, due to layoffs or missed paychecks.

In the longer term, **there could be disruptions to SNAP, TEFAP, WIC and other federal nutrition programs**, due to a lack of funding, a delay in processing benefits or both.

Note: Hawai'i has the [second highest number of federal civilian employees](#) per capita, after Maryland.

Hawai'i also has, by far, the [highest concentration of military service members](#) of all states.

NUTRITION PROGRAMS



Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

SNAP benefits will be delivered in full and on their normal monthly issuance schedule at least through October.

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

WIC benefits and services should be available in full and on time through October, but benefits may cease in November.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) & Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

TEFAP entitlement and CSFP food orders are made in advance, and orders placed and confirmed prior to the shutdown are anticipated to be delivered as expected. Administrative funds may be disrupted during a shutdown, depending on the timeline and process each state has established, though these funds are expected to be provided retroactively.

Child Nutrition Programs

School and after-school meal programs, as well as other child nutrition programs, will not be disrupted through at least October. These programs have more flexibility during a shutdown as they operate on a reimbursement model after meals have already been provided. For example, schools are reimbursed 30 days after the end of the service month.

Estimates of potential need



Estimated impacted households:

24,000 civilian employees

44,000 ~~active-duty service members~~

? 7,000 federal contractors ?

~~75,000~~ **31,000 potential households at risk**

Note: these calculations were made for planning purposes only, and are estimates based on available information.

Estimated total individuals impacted:

~~43,000 military dependents~~

@ average HH size of 3, another 48,000 civilian EE dependents

and another 14,000 federal contractor dependents

~~another 105,000~~ 62,000 estimated individuals



75,000 households is 15% of the total population of Hawai'i

→ estimated total of ~~180,000~~ **93,000 impacted individuals** or ~~75,000~~ 31,000 households

@ 1/3 estimated food insecure → ~~25,000~~ **10,000 households or 60,000** **31,000 individuals**

@ 45% ALICE or below → ~~34,000~~ **14,000 households or 80,000** **42,000 individuals**



MAHALO!