

FOOD INSECURITY AND THE IMPACT OF FEDERAL CUTS IN HAWAII



Overview

- **Current context**
 - Food insecurity
 - Distribution History
 - Purchasing Power
 - Federal Cuts
- **Federal Shutdown**
 - Missed Paychecks & Layoffs
 - Loss of SNAP Benefits
- **Resources**





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.



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
MEALS



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.

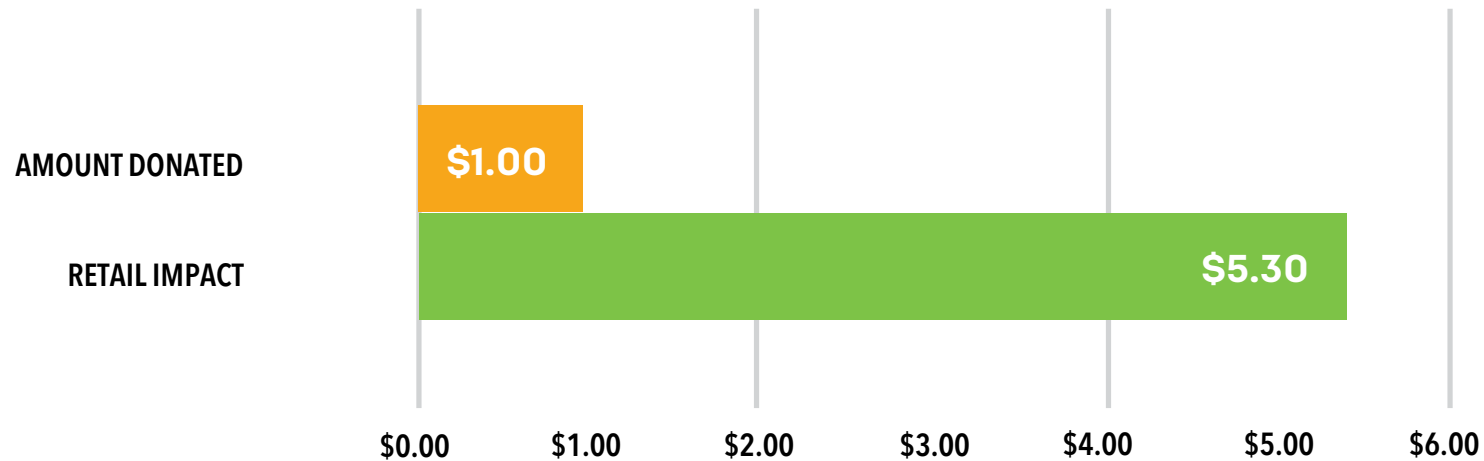
29.1
MILLION
MEALS



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.

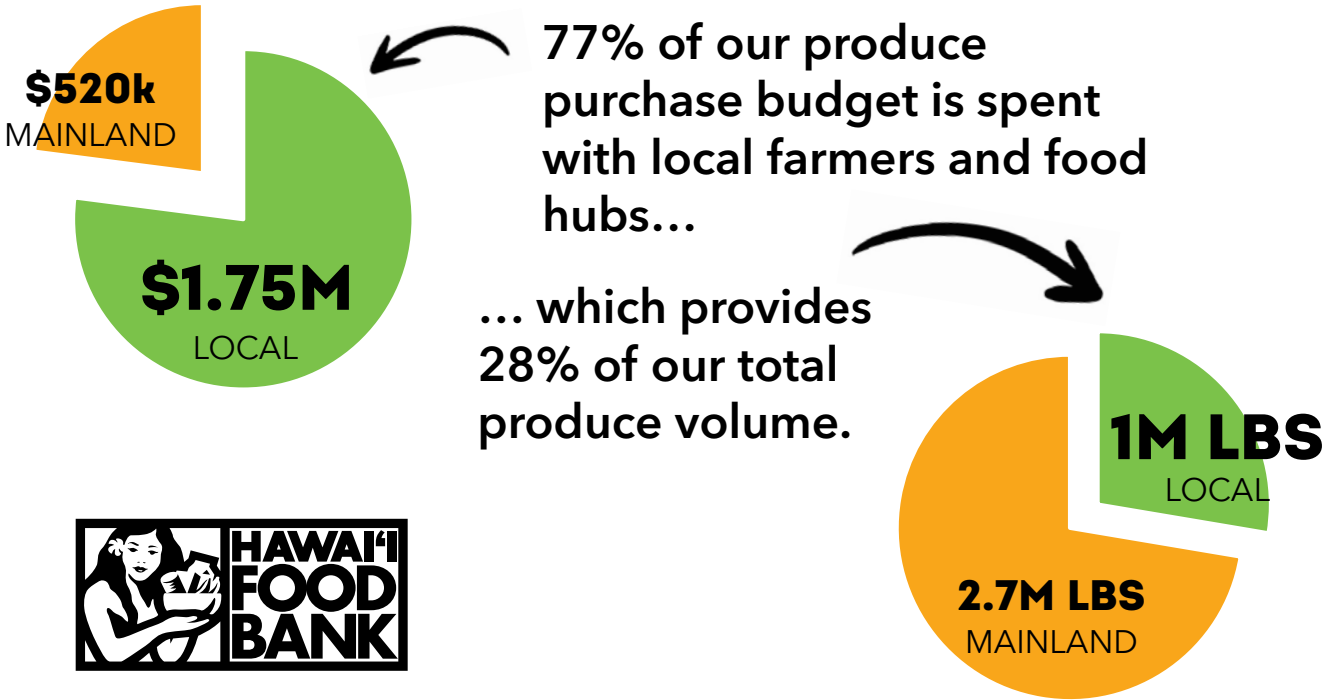
\$105
MILLION



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:





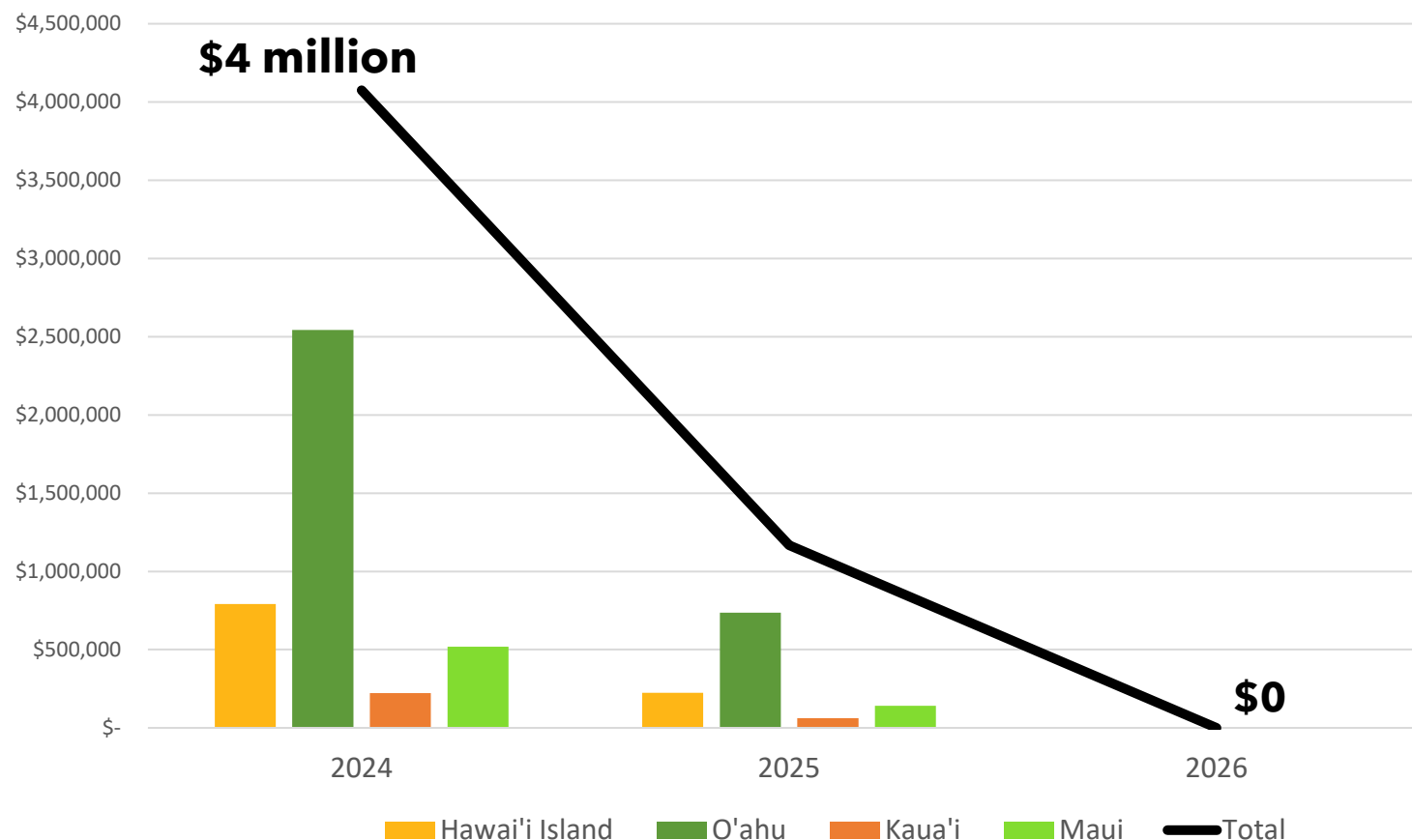
IMPACT OF FEDERAL CUTS

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

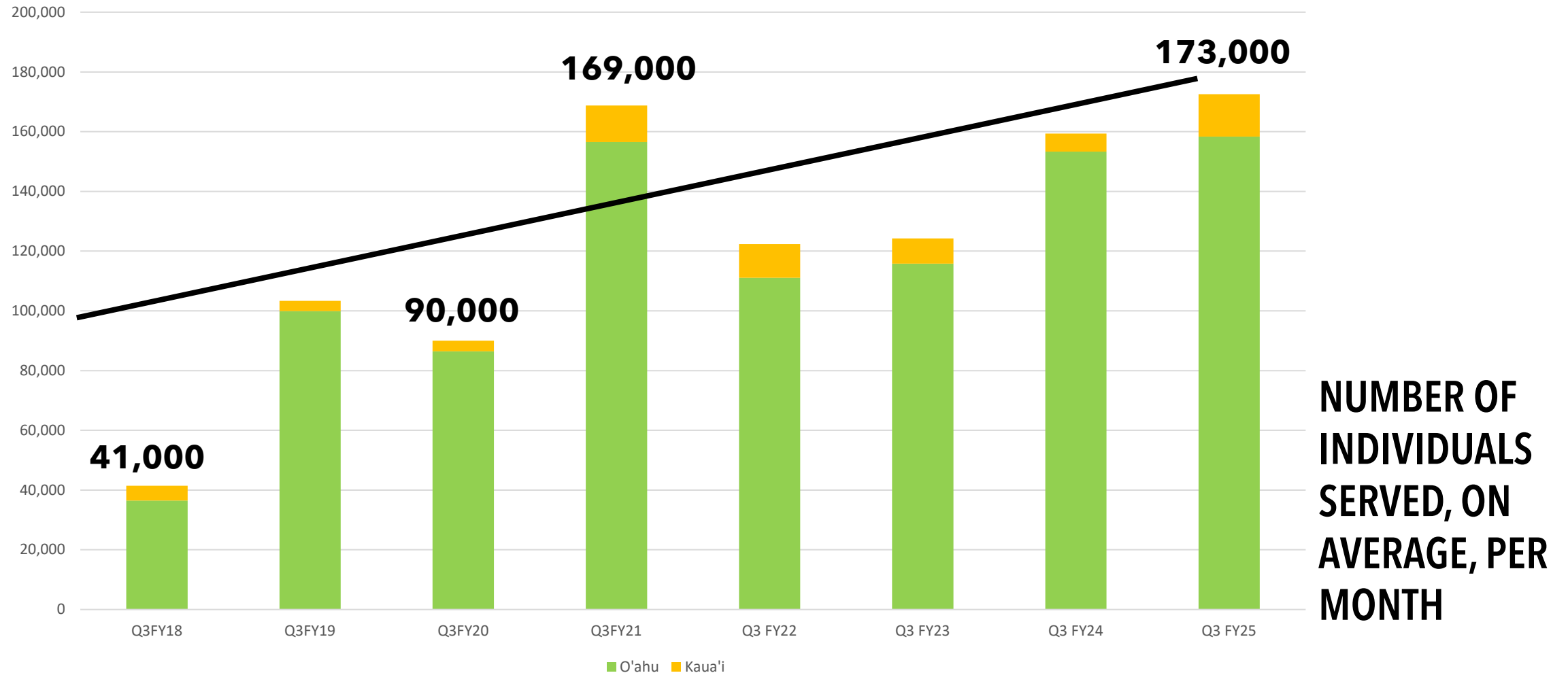
In 2024, the last full year of the TEFAP CCC program, CCC-funded foods made up 7% of all food distributed by Hawai'i's food banks, \$4 million worth of food.

The program was ended this spring.

TOTAL VALUE OF TEFAP CCC FOODS

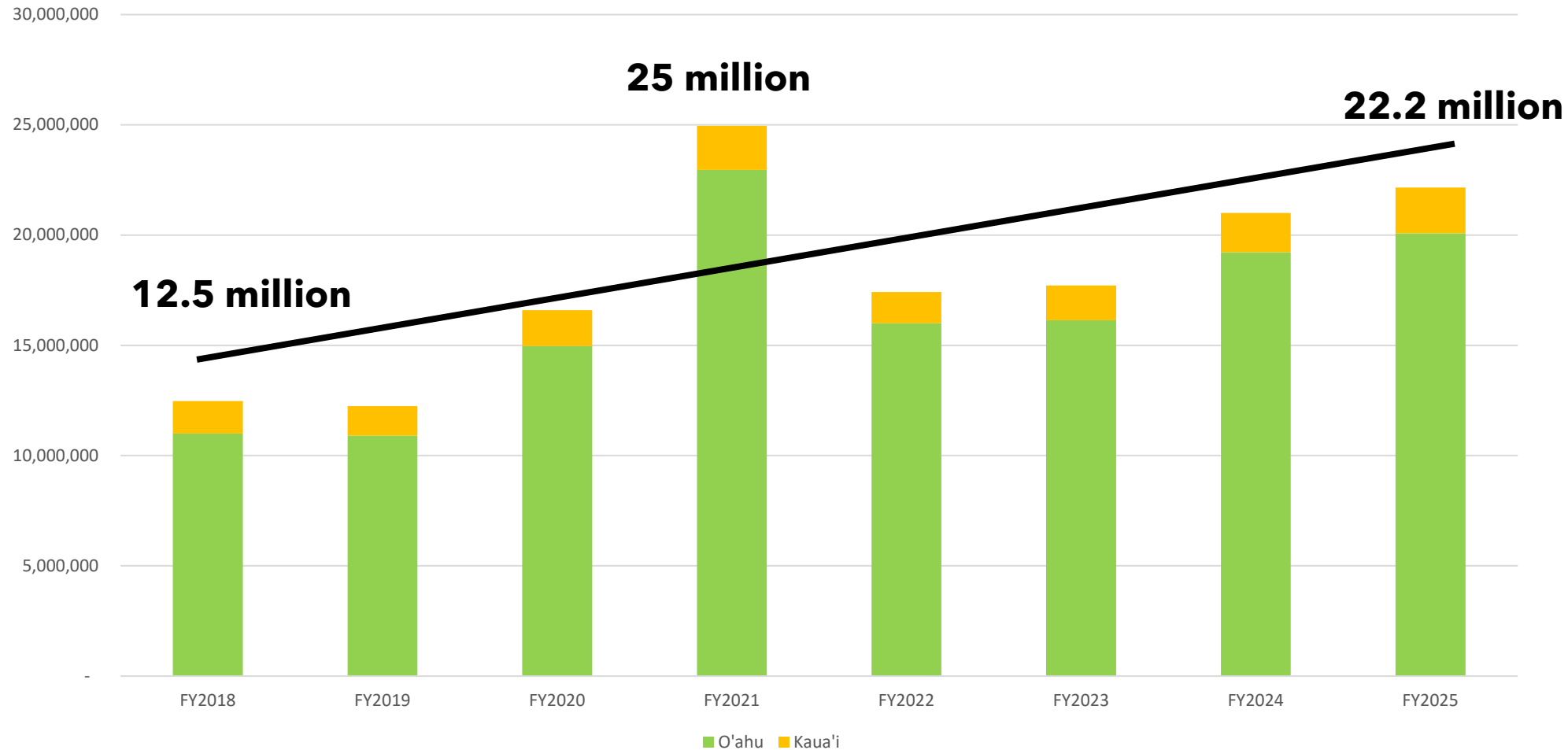


DEMAND HISTORY



DISTRIBUTION HISTORY

O'ahu and Kaua'i



**LBS
DISTRIBUTED
PER YEAR**

In FY26 we
are **on track**
to **exceed 25
million
pounds** at our
current pace

FEDERAL SHUTDOWN



Impacts to food security in Hawai'i:

Increased demand for food assistance from two groups of people who may not be facing hunger today due to layoffs or missed paychecks: **federal contractors and military and civilian federal employees.**

Disruptions to SNAP, TEFAP, WIC and/or 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.

Estimates of potential need - missed paychecks and layoffs



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

Estimated impacted households:

24,000 civilian employees

44,000 active-duty service members

? 7,000 federal contractors ?

75,000 potential households at risk

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



@ 1/3 estimated food insecure → 25,000 households or 60,000 individuals

@ 45% ALICE or below → 34,000 households or 80,000 individuals

Estimates of potential need - loss of SNAP benefits (on top of additional cuts)



SNAP currently provides an estimated 13 million meals per month in Hawai'i



660k meals



7.7m meals



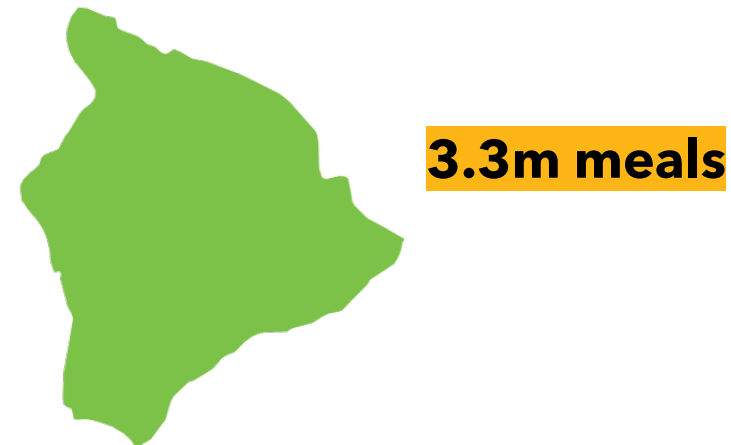
1.4m meals

SNAP provides more than five times the current amount of food provided by all of Hawai'i's food banks each month

5.4x
THE CURRENT
RATE

Each month, Hawai'i's food banks collectively connect families with food for over 2.4 million meals

2.4m
meals/
month



3.3m meals

Response



- On average, nearly **500,000 pounds of food**, the equivalent of more than **400,000 meals**, are distributed weekly on O'ahu and Kaua'i alone.
- To prepare for increased need, Hawai'i Foodbank **has sourced and placed orders for more than 673,000 pounds of additional food (17 containers)**, representing an investment of \$500,000, and is working to source additional food as needed.
- Hawai'i Foodbank urges individuals, foundations, civic groups and companies to **join in this effort**, through donations, volunteerism and partnership. Volunteers are especially needed to support upcoming distributions, including packing food boxes and staffing pop-up events.

<https://www.volgistics.com/appform/51697193>

email volunteer@hawaiiifoodbank.org or call 808-954-7866.



Resources



New, emergency food distributions designed to reach communities most affected by the shutdown, furloughs and anticipated SNAP disruptions. Current confirmed distributions include:

The Pantry, Kalihi

Mondays

9:30 a.m. – 12 noon

Armed Services YMCA – 'Ohana Open Market

Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam

Wednesday, Nov. 6, 2025

1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Additional pop-up sites are being planned across O'ahu, including key sites near federal work locations such as the Honolulu Airport, Tripler Hospital, Ford Island, and the Prince Kuhio Federal Building

For those in immediate need, food distributions are happening daily across O'ahu and Kaua'i. A few of the larger community distributions this week include:

- Wednesday – Central Union Church (1660 S. Beretania), 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Thursday – Kalihi Union (2214 N. King Street), 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
- Thursday – Surfing the Nations (64 Ohai Street), 12:30 p.m. to supplies last

<https://hawaiifoodbank.org/shutdown/>





Program Expansion to support those impacted by Government Shutdown

The Pantry currently serves **1,200 families per week** during Wednesday and Friday distributions.

To support households affected by the government shutdown, **opened Monday distributions for federally impacted families.**

Announcement: October 14th via social media

Distribution Snapshot:

October 20th (first Monday)

- 82 orders placed
- 65 new families registered

October 27th:

- 308 orders were placed
- 89 new families registered before noon

Tiana's Story

Tiana works as a 911 dispatch operator — one of the many essential employees continuing to serve during the government shutdown. While she and her husband are both still working, neither of them are currently being paid. To meet the demand for emergency calls, Tiana has been working multiple 12-hour shifts back-to-back. Despite her commitment to helping others, she's struggling to keep her own family afloat. With two young children and a bank account now in the negative, Tiana shared that this is one of the hardest times her family has ever faced.

"This is my first time ever needing help like this.
I just found out about The Pantry, and I'm so thankful.
It means so much to know we have a little support
right now."



MAHALO!