



# WELCOME!



We are excited to announce our first-ever Taste Awards, being held tomorrow evening, June 14, at the Pomaika'i Ballrooms at Dole Cannery. Co-sponsored by the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, these awards recognize individuals, companies and products that have demonstrated exceptional performance, innovation and contribution to the manufacturing industry and to the community.

Founded in 1977, the Hawaii Food Manufacturers Association (HFMA) works to increase the understanding and appreciation of the unique flavors, quality, and care that go into the production of Hawaii's fine foods and beverages. Moreover, our organization serves as a conduit for resources, tools and expertise to benefit both existing and start-up companies as well as the food manufacturing industry as a whole.

I offer my sincerest appreciation to the many stakeholders and organizations that have generously supported this groundbreaking event. Mahalo for your kokua!

Also to the people of Hawai'i, mahalo nui for buying our locally made products because it truly does matter to everyone in our industry.

In closing, congratulations to the award finalists and winners who represent our industry and inspire us to strive for excellence in food manufacturing. We look forward to a fun evening celebrating your success.

**Aloha pumehana,**

Byron Goo  
HFMA President

# BRINGING A LOT TO THE TABLE

BY KYLE GALDEIRA

As the only statewide food manufacturing association in the country, HFMA has been active in promoting Hawaiian grown and manufactured goods for nearly four decades. Now, the group is setting its sights on the first-ever Taste Awards gala and celebrating all the good local companies do for Hawaii's economy.

While food manufacturing represents a booming industry that helps drive Hawaii's economy, the wave of momentum generated by the burgeoning trade is best navigated by those companies prepared to utilize the state's unique array of products and flavors.

"I think the wave is coming, and we're ready for it," says Byron Goo, president of the Hawaii Food Manufacturers Association (HFMA) board of directors. "My analogy is that you can buy a brand new board and new board shorts, but if there aren't any waves, you can't surf."

HFMA serves as a nonprofit organization established in 1977 and remains the only statewide food manufacturing association in the United States. With more than 125 members, HFMA strives to increase the understanding and appreciation of the unique flavor combinations, freshness and quality available when creating a multitude of locally sourced foods and beverages.

"Our products go through a value-added process to become finished items," says Goo, who also serves as chief executive officer of The Tea Chest and handles the company's product development along with sourcing and quality control of the different teas. "One of the knocks on our current food system is that we throw a lot away — (for instance)



not every tomato grown locally is Grade A. What 'value added' means is that we can take those off-grade or byproducts from agricultural production and turn the items that would normally be thrown away into revenue-generating goods. When that whole system works together, we're able to better utilize everything we grow and that's what food manufacturing brings to the table."

According to data compiled by the state's Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism, the food industry represents the largest manufacturing sector that utilizes local products and generates more than \$900 million in revenue annually for Hawaii's economy. HFMA's membership represents 30 percent of food manufacturers in Hawaii, many of which are home-grown businesses that have become household names, including Hawaiian Sun, Aloha Tofu and Aloha Shoyu, each of which is celebrating 60-plus years of business in the Islands. Another model of consistency, FCH Enterprises — commonly known as Zippy's — sells 110 tons of its iconic Original Recipe Chili every month through its restaurants, fundraisers and in grocery stores.

Goo also notes the accomplishments of the following companies responsible for generating tremendous growth across multiple plat-

forms: Pacific Allied, in its state-of-the-art bottling facility in Kapolei, is the only company in the world outside the Coca-Cola bottling network to produce Dasani water; Big Island Abalone, which raises 4 million abalone annually, exports and sells locally to restaurants, stores, at farmers markets and now has a store in Ala Moana; and Mana Ai, a start-up business that makes fresh hand-pounded pa'i'ai and poi that are nutritious, sustainable and hypoallergenic.

The immense success of the food manufacturing industry in Hawaii has also fallen in line with the innovative strategic plans of Kamehameha Schools, the state's largest private landowner responsible for the stewardship of more than 365,000 acres of land that encompass, in part, more than 800 lessees with ranching and farming operations on its agricultural lands. As an avenue for fostering Hawaii's move toward integrating a more sustainable food system, Kamehameha Schools is researching different options to expose farmers on its lands to producers and manufacturers on Hawaiian soil.

"Kamehameha Schools is currently exploring the commercial aspect of Hawaii's food industry as a key component that drives our economy," says Paul Quintiliani, senior director of the Commercial Real Estate Division at Kamehameha