

‘Āina Ho‘ōla o Ma‘ilikukahi

As evident by the global economic and climate crises, and in the socioeconomic conditions of our communities, there is a desperate need to take action in ensuring our island's movement towards self-sufficiency which calls upon 'aina based action and kuleana based purpose. The 'āina, as taught in the story of Hāloa, is that which feeds us, its younger sibling. The reciprocal responsibility then for kanaka is to return the favor. Here on O‘ahu, we have been overwhelmed with the pressures of a globalized food system that disconnects us from the 'āina, maintains social and environmental injustice, and blocks our ability to feed ourselves. It is time for 'āina reinvigoration and kanaka action.

The word ho‘ōla means to restore/give life. In an effort to maintain the harmony between our people and our environment, 'āina must have life in order to feed us. The suggestion has been offered that we work according to the following motto: *E ola ka 'āina, e ola ke kanaka, e ola ke kaiāulu* - May the land have life, may man have life, may the community have life. This concept of 'āina ho‘ōla then would require action from all participants to help reinvigorate our land in order to feed our people and to restore our communities. As seen in traditional models of sustainability, 'āina, kanaka and kaiāulu (land, people and community) worked in concert to provide and maintain sustenance for all living things.

Ma‘ilikukahi is honored as the first great king of O‘ahu. He is most noted for being first to establish the ahupua‘a systems on the island by dividing the 'āina and designating each division to a lesser chief to oversee and care for. Under his direction, O‘ahu enjoyed prosperous land and resources which sustained the entire island. Ma‘ilikukahi was noted for taking in each first born son of the maka‘ainana to raise and train personally. Each child was raised as his own and trained to honor and defend their beloved island O‘ahu. As Ma‘ilikukahi, we will divide our mokupuni and kuleana so that we may all be accountable and responsible agents of our island's prosperity.

'Āina Ho‘ōla o Ma‘ilikukahi will be the conference to grow a movement. These challenging times call for innovative strategies and forms of leadership that draw upon an understanding of the modern context in which we operate and the traditional models of land stewardship that have fed O‘ahu's people for centuries. Let us learn from our past and look forward with optimism towards a most promising future for O‘ahu.

Nā Kumu Hana-Objectives

In order to begin our work in establishing a Food Sovereignty movement on O‘ahu, this conference is aimed towards three objectives.

1. *E alu like mai, Work in unity! Work together!* - This conference will be a gathering of community organizers, farmers, educators, policy makers, consumers, and food producers who all have personal interest and investment in making O‘ahu food sovereign and self-subsistent. We will use this first conference as the opportunity to strengthen old partnerships between organizations and meet new friends and partners in our work. By establishing and reinforcing our collaborative partnerships we will build the network necessary to support each other individually and collectively as a whole.
2. *Toolbox Exchange*- Conference participants will participate and interact in numerous workshops and activities to learn more about how and what they can do in their communities and organizations. We will use this opportunity to exchange ideas
3. *Na Kama a Ma‘ilikukahi, The Children of Ma‘ilikukahi*- In traditional Hawai‘i, children were often adopted out to elders and family to be raised and nurtured. One form of this practice, termed ho‘okama, refers to the adoption of ‘opio or older youth in order to train and teach them to become experts. As Ma‘ilikukahi did, we will ho‘okama our young conference participants to develop their capacity as leaders in this movement. They will

learn how best to support themselves, their families, their communities and the island of O‘ahu. We will make this investment in young leaders in order to ensure the sustainability and perpetuity of this movement for future generations.

Nā Pahu Hopu-Outcomes

In accomplishing our objectives we hope to come away from this conference with several things.

1. Annual Food Sovereignty Conferences- This conference will just be the first annual Food Sovereignty gathering of its kind on O‘ahu. We hope to hold a conference/gathering every year to maintain momentum in the movement.
2. Youth Cadre- Under objective 3, we will develop a cadre of youth participants who will act as the agents of change in their moku. Cadre members will be trained and developed to accept and excel in their roles as leaders for Food Sovereignty on O‘ahu.
3. Define/identify Food Sovereignty for O‘ahu- Conference participants and presenters will work in a joint effort to evaluate and assess the current state of O‘ahu’s food sovereignty. Attendees will also help to plan the concepts, objectives, outcomes and course of actions necessary to start making O‘ahu more self-subsistent.