4 | Farmers' Markets in Hawai'i

A Local/Global Nexus

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From Wal-Mart superstores to farmers' markets, there is a spectrum of food purchasing and distribution options in Hawai'i. This range includes warehouse stores like Costco and Sam's Club; supermarkets like Foodland, Safeway, and Times Supermarket; gourmet stores like Whole Foods; mom and pop stores and health food stores like Down to Earth; food cooperatives like Kokua Market; both large and small "ethnic" markets and convenience stores; community-supported agriculture (CSA) and various types of farmers' markets all over the islands. While national and international supermarket chains dominate the retail markets, the popularity of local food has resulted in the expansion of direct-sale outlets like farmers' markets. The call for localization of food resonates with environmental movements in Hawai'i. Due to Hawai'i's geographic isolation as a chain of islands in the middle of the North Pacific, a large proportion of our food supply comes through shipping and air cargo. While food purchased on the US mainland travels an average of 1,500 miles, Hawai'i's food travels an average of 2,500 miles (Leung and Loke 2008).

This chapter considers farmers' markets as alternative food institutions in Hawai'i. It uses farmers' markets as a lens through which we view the special location (both geographic and metaphorical) of Hawai'i. As a postcolonial state, a generally poor and isolated indigenous population coexists with large numbers of visitors to the islands and divergent settler populations in Hawai'i, each with particular food interests. Finally, it examines the relationship between consumers and producers/vendors within the variety of the Hawai'i farmers' markets in order to provide clarity on

how farmers' markets can potentially serve as a political tool to address agricultural issues in Hawai'i.

In examining the variations of farmers' markets and their accomplishments, this chapter critically assesses their role in the pursuit of food democracy. While farmers' markets are often celebrated as a step towards improving the local food system, their contributions to farm security, food security, and consumer awareness and mobilization also vary considerably. The case from Hawai'i highlights the conflicts in farmers' markets such as the tension between improving farmers' income and serving low-income communities, being a space for local community or catering to well-paying tourists. The chapter ends with a discussion of how to address some of these tensions.

Farmers' Markets as Alternative Food Institutions

Farmers' markets have long been an outlet for local food distribution, but their popularity has increased dramatically in recent years. According to the US Department of Agriculture website, there were 8,284 farmers' markets in the United States in August 2014 (http://www.ers.usda.gov). In 1994, when the Agricultural Marketing Service first started to keep track of farmers' markets in the United States, there were 1,755 farmers' markets. The 2014 figure represents a 472 percent increase since tracking began in the United States. Anthropologist Lisa Markowitz argues that farmers' markets "are the 'flagship' of civic agriculture" (Markowitz 2010, 67) given that they are one of the most visible aspects of social change in terms of attitudes towards food, especially considering their meteoric rise in numbers.

Localization of food systems via local retail channels such as farmers' markets has been advocated for various reasons. In her article "From Farm to Table: Making the Most of Your Farmers' Market," registered dietitian Sharon Palmer asserts that "[f]armers' markets deliver nutrient-rich, flavorful food harvested a few short hours before you purchase it . . . [In addition,] dollars spent locally with vendors who grow and operate in a local community, benefit a local community" (Palmer 2010, 2). As in this statement, increased nutrition and taste, as well as investment in the local food community are often mentioned as some of the benefits of farmers' markets.

Another benefit associated with farmers' markets and localized circulation of food is its environmental impact. One study of mainland food

miles argues that "of all the energy consumed by the food system, only about 20% goes towards production; the remaining 80% is associated with processing, transport, home refrigeration and preparation" (Hill 2008, 2). An additional perception of the benefits of farmers' markets is that the shortening of the food supply chain enables a closer connection between a consumer and a producer of her/his food. As Connel et al. argue:

> The notion of distance is particularly important to local food systems. . . . Distance refers to "processes that are separating people from the sources of their food and replacing diversified and sustainable food system with a global commodified food system" (Kneen 1995, 24). The material problem is that greater distancing means more resources (e.g. energy) are required to produce a calorie of food. The social problem of distance is that people are disconnected; there is an absence of intimate relations between producers and consumers. (Connel, Smithers, and Joseph 2008, 173)

Farmers' markets help to create such "intimate relations between producers and consumers." Yuna Chiffoleau has found that there are five different types of ties among producers, reinforced through weekly farmers' markets: professional, advisory, cooperative, political, and friendship ties (2009, 222). Farmers' markets are a space for people to see each other at least once a week not only to engage in an economic transaction of food selling and purchasing, but also to reinforce, by their actions of coming to the market, the notion that small-scale diversified agriculture has a valuable place in the food system. Indeed, "farmers' markets, with their vibrancy and visibility, not only engender wider public awareness of food and farming but are central to civic efforts to relocalize agrifood systems" (Gillespie et al. 2007, in Markowitz 2010, 77). Farmers' markets can serve as public spaces for the fostering of civic engagement around community food systems.

In contrast to such positive evaluations of local food and farmers' markets, scholars have also noted contradictions and tensions in farmers' markets. First is the issue of class. Farmers' markets, especially in certain areas, can be seen as elitist, since the food found there may be more expensive than those at the regular retail chains. Farmers' market can be described as a "niche market" disguised by "bourgeois ideology," which "gives consumption the appearance of emancipation" (Goodman and Dupuis 2002, 9). Indeed, Allen and Kovach (2000) argue that cheap, industrialized food has actually served to democratize access to food by attenuating class differences.

Second, farmers' markets and food localization tend to privilege farmers rather than the poor who suffer from food insecurity (Guthman et al. 2006, 682). The tension between food security and farm security observed in other chapters in this volume (Suryanata and Lowry, this volume; Kent, this volume) is also manifested in farmers' markets and calls for a more nuanced analysis of their benefits.

Third, while they have the potential to represent a space for the local rebuttal to the globalized world of agribusiness and large-scale food distribution, Holloway et al. argue that it is important to avoid setting up a duality between "local" food institutions such as farmers' markets and "conventional" agriculture when there are so many additional combinations possible of producer–consumer relations (2007, 2). The term "local" becomes shorthand for "alternative" contrasted with global/conventional, while the reality is that they are not mutually exclusive. Local food does not necessarily exist outside of the globalized capitalist system, neither is it necessarily environmentally sustainable, or socially just.

Nonetheless, many remain optimistic with the opportunities presented by farmers' markets. First, the prices at farmers' markets need to be considered in the context of hidden subsidies to produce foods that are cheaper than those found at farmers' markets. The full environmental cost of imported food might not be reflected in the prices that consumers pay at the cash register of supermarkets or warehouse stores. Furthermore, small, diversified farms are more expensive to operate per acre, but protect overall biodiversity, a benefit that is overlooked by large conventional farms (Kremen, Iles, and Bacon 2012). Since small farmers do not have access to large-scale farm subsidies, they are forced to charge consumers the true price of food, rather than the artificially low price supported by tax dollars.

Additionally, more so than conventional retail outlets such as supermarkets, farmers' markets provide a public and potentially political space. Goodman and DuPuis (2002, 13) point out that while "consumer activism may never overturn the capitalist system . . . as a political action, it does wield power to shape the food system." Farmers' markets have the potential to be a "public arena where a . . . mixture of people can encounter one another as neighbors on common ground" (Kramer 2009, 9). Oftentimes consumer agency is unintentional. Consumers do not necessarily set out to "challenge structures of power in food supply but nevertheless contribute to a practical critique of those structures through their actions and discourse" (Holloway et al. 2007, 15). People shopping at farmers' markets

are, at least partially, making conscious political decisions to support a certain kind of local agriculture. I will now turn to the data on farmers' markets around O'ahu and discuss their structures.

Methods

This chapter focuses on the O'ahu farmers' markets that provide a variety of market styles, encompassing different values behind market rules. Participant observation, informal interviews, and conversations with farmers, farmers' market organizers/managers, and market attendees were all methods used for this chapter. I attended three different types of markets on O'ahu, one at Koloa, on Kaua'i, and one in Hilo on Hawai'i Island. In total, I attended various farmers' markets more than fifty times, over a period of almost two years. I attended a total of fourteen markets, though some multiple times: I went to the Kapi'olani Community College farmers' market ten times, the Hale'iwa market sixteen times, the Kailua market four times, the Honolulu (Blaisdell) market twice, the Kaka'ako market three times, and the Sunset Beach and Waialua farmers' markets ten and six times respectively at different times of the day in order to observe potential changes in market attendance and participation. I attended the Mililani, Hawai'i Kai, Wai'anae, Pearlridge, Waipahu, Kalihi, and Wahiawa markets once, typically in the morning. I spoke informally with farmers, vendors (not always one and the same), as well as consumers at the various markets. I spent additional time speaking with three market managers: two of them run the Hawai'i Farm Bureau farmers' markets, and one runs the Hale'iwa, Hawai'i Kai, Pearlridge, and Kaka'ako farmers' markets, along with another Kailua market on Sundays, which is not be confused with the Hawai'i Farm Bureau Thursday night Kailua market. I asked them about the structure of various markets, the patterns of attendance of both vendors/farmers and consumers, as well as the goals for their respective markets. I also spoke with several farmers at the Kapi'olani Community College, Kaka'ako, Kailua, and Hale'iwa farmers' markets. The interpreted narrative analysis was provided to the respondents for their feedback in order to ensure accuracy of their comments' meaning. Their responses are woven through the rest of the chapter, as are my observations of the various markets where they can provide examples for specific areas of interest.

Types of Farmers' Markets in Hawai'i

There are four types of farmers' markets in Hawai'i, each with their respective missions, demographics of producers and consumers, and rules relating to what can be bought and sold at these markets. Hawai'i Farm Bureau Federation (HFBF)–sponsored markets, People's Open Markets (POMs), private markets, and what I call "Anything Goes" markets will all be considered here. Table 4.1 highlights some of the general characteristics of each market type, but does not necessarily constitute an exhaustive list of all farmers' markets on O'ahu since new ones crop up and older ones dissipate on a regular basis.

Hawai'i Farm Bureau Federation–Sponsored Markets

There are no "growers only" farmers' markets in Hawai'i. The HFBF markets come close to approximating that ideal by ensuring that the vendors all sell Hawai'i-grown or Hawai'i-made products, but the latter seems to be under some dispute by various actors. The HFBF operates at least five markets on O'ahu (Kapi'olani Community College on Tuesdays and Saturdays, Kailua on Thursdays, Mililani and Hale'iwa on Sundays, Honolulu/Blaisdell on Wednesdays) and two markets on Hawai'i Island (Keauhou and Kino'ole both on Saturdays). Each market serves a different demographic. According to the market organizers, vendors, and consumers at this particular market, the Kapi'olani Community College farmers' market is very crowded and is frequented by locals, mostly white and Asian, as well as large numbers of tourists (see figure 4.1). An internal HFBF survey found that the Kapi'olani Community College farmers' market was attended by about 50 percent locals and 50 percent tourists (Asagi 2011, personal interview). Anecdotal observation of the market on one day at 9 a.m. puts that figure closer to 70 percent tourists and 30 percent local consumers due to a large number of people streaming out of tour buses on the road adjacent to the market. However, looking at the market over an entire day, from the market starting bell at 7 a.m. all the way until the end of the day, reveals that local consumers tend to come earlier and that the demographics of the market are different depending on the time of the day.

The Kailua market is busy as well, and its demographic includes a mix of white, Asian, and Native Hawaiian customers, but not many visitors.

TABLE 4.1 General characteristics of O'ahu farmers' markets

Market type	*Hawai'i Farm Bureau Federation*	*People's Open Markets (POMs)*	*Private*	*"Anything Goes"*
Locations	Kapi'olani Community College, Kailua, Mililani, Blaisdell	All over the island. POMs move daily and every two hours.	Hale'iwa, Hawai'i Kai, Ala Moana, Kaka'ako, Pearlridge, Kailua	Sunset Beach Elementary School, Windward Mall, Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Center, Waialua Sugar Mill
Demographics	Kapi'olani Community College and Kailua—a mix of tourists and locals. Mostly white and mixed Asian ethnicities, upper income. Mililani and Blaisdell—mostly locals, mixed Asian ethnicities, middle and lower income.	Mostly locals, immigrants, older, lower income.	Hale'iwa—mostly white, upper income. Hawai'i Kai—mostly Asian, upper income. Kaka'ako (formerly Ala Moana)—mostly Asian, upper income. Kailua—mostly white, upper income. Pearlridge—mostly Asian, middle income.	Sunset Beach Elementary School—mostly tourists, mostly white, upper income. Windward Mall—mostly mixed Asian ethnicities, middle income. Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Center—mostly mixed Asian ethnicities and Native Hawaiians, lower middle income. Waialua Sugar Mill—mixed Asian ethnicities and some white, middle and lower income.

TABLE 4.1 *(continued)*

Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) / Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)	Writing grant to implement EBT system—does not accept FMNP	Accepts EBT and FMNP regularly	Writing grant to implement EBT system—has accepted FMNP in the past	Do not accept any form of EBT or FMNP—no plans to do so, except for Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Center
Year of inception	2003	1973	2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013	2005, 2006, 2008, 2009
No. of visitors	~4,000, 900, 200, 300	~100–200	~1,000, 700, 1,500, 1,000, 700	~100, 250, 100, 100
Average no. of vendors	20–70 depending on location	10–12 depending on location	55–20 depending on location	15

Source: O'ahu farmers' market managers and author's observations of major farmers' markets on O'ahu.

FIGURE 4.1. Visitors standing in a long line at the Kapi'olani Community College (KCC) Farmers' Market. Photo by Monique Mironesco.

Both the Kapi'olani Community College and Kailua markets have a high proportion of prepared foods vendors in relation to farm booths, though the numbers vary weekly and some booths feature *both* whole farm products and prepared foods. The Mililani and Honolulu markets are much smaller and attract a mostly local, mixed Asian and most importantly older demographic. At each of these two markets, shoppers come, buy their products, and leave right away. There is no lingering, no sense of community, even though the regulars clearly know each other and "their" farmers. The Sunday Hawai'i Farm Bureau Hale'iwa market is brand-new and relatively small, with offerings from six farms, and five prepared foods/value-added vendors.

The stated purpose of the HFBF is to unite farming families "for the purpose of analyzing problems and formulating action to ensure the future of agriculture thereby promoting the well-being of farming and the State's economy" (http://hfbf.org/our-purpose/). The HFBF tracks land use, tax and water issues, legislative initiatives, as well as helping members with

marketing. Farmers' markets are a direct result of this last purpose. Interestingly, the HFBF also helps its members with "commodity groups," or the aggregation of agricultural-like products, which is likely a holdover from its origins in the era of plantation agriculture. Indeed, much of the criticism leveled at the HFBF relating to its mission is its lack of voice for small family farms. For example, the HFBF has used its farmers' markets to set up educational booths that support a controversial political agenda, most notably a pro-genetically modified organism (GMO) agenda, in addition to food safety certification through a centralized distribution center, and the development of larger farms.

The market managers who run the farmers' markets for the HFBF assert that their purpose is to help small, diversified agriculture farms. To that end, they have set up a two-tiered scale for vendor fees: a lower fee for farm booths, and a higher fee for prepared foods vendors. These markets are among the most well-attended of all of the markets, ranging from five hundred to three thousand people depending on the market and the day, especially on O'ahu, by both producers and consumers. The market managers are social media savvy. They use social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to attract customers with enticing pictures of what is available at each market before the markets even begin, along with "tip sheets" on the scheduled vendors for each market on their website.

People's Open Markets

POMs were started on O'ahu in 1973 as a government response to the lack of fresh produce in certain areas and the high cost of living in Hawai'i (see figure 4.2). Their website details their mission statement as follows:

1. Provide the opportunity to purchase fresh agricultural, fishery and other food items at low cost.
2. Support the economic viability of diversified agriculture and fishery in Hawaii by providing market sites for local farmers, fishermen, or their representatives to sell their surplus and off-grade produce.
3. Provide focal point areas for residents to socialize. (http://www1.honolulu.gov/parks/programs/pom/index1.htm, February 2011)

FIGURE 4.2. People's Open Market at 'Ewa Beach. Photo by Monique Mironesco.

These markets are sponsored by the city and county of Honolulu, which provides venues (mostly city parking lots) for vendors to come sell their products for a limited amount of time—about an hour and a half to two hours—and then move on to a new location. There are no requirements that the produce sold be locally grown, though some vendors do sell locally grown produce, especially what the POM website deems "ethnic produce," depending on the particular market location. A supervisor of the POM conducts weekly price surveys at various stores to determine price points for the vendors to follow. Thanks to the original mission of POMs of providing fresh food at low cost, many items can be purchased for lower prices than at regular grocery stores. However, a large number of vendors sell repackaged products bought wholesale or at warehouse stores, breaking them down into smaller amounts or selling them individually. One can find apples, russet potatoes, garlic, and perfect peaches/nectarines at all times of the year. These are all products that cannot be grown in Hawai'i and therefore cannot possibly be local. Many unaware consumers

have no idea that these products come from faraway places, and they assume that they are supporting local agriculture by shopping at farmers' markets, not knowing that the product provenance rules for each type of market are different.

The POM vendors are likely to be older immigrants, as are the consumers. Their farm names are displayed on their vans, along with pricing information, a mandatory notice that receipts will be given upon request, and a sign indicating whether that particular farmer accepts Electronic Benefits Transfer cards, commonly referred to as food stamps. On average, at the three POMs I visited in Waipahu, Kalihi, and Wahiawa, of the fourteen vendors, two consistently accepted Electronic Benefits Transfer cards. There were many seniors, both as vendors and as consumers. They seemed to know each other, but business tended to be brisk and to the point. Of all the consumers at the POMs, not a single one I observed brought a reusable shopping bag. One woman even asked for double bags. This indicates that the demographic shopping at this market is completely different than that of the HFBF or other markets on O'ahu. The consumers here are looking for cheap, familiar, and culturally appropriate whole foods. The market is not a new experience for them. They have been attending for many years. These consumers *do* have the time and space discipline to attend and shop at these markets even though they might be held at inconvenient times for working people. Since many of the consumers are seniors, time may not be a particularly onerous problem (moving markets; middle of the day), leading to POMs' continued success as institutions serving certain communities since 1973.

The markets are set up and broken down very fast; there seems to be a well-established routine to each market. The vendors pull up in their vans, display their products on folding tables, put up a price sheet, and wait for customers. There are no tents here, no booths, and no friendly banter. There is no lingering on either the customer or vendor side. The vendors are located relatively far away from each other, so that the entire experience feels a bit disjointed. Because these markets are mostly located in parking lots, the vendors face each other in a long alley-like pattern, which does not encourage a prolonged market experience. People go to their vendor of choice, and then walk back to their cars or a nearby bus stop. When the market has about twenty minutes left, the

vendors quietly start packing up in order to move on to the next location in a timely manner.

Private Markets

The economic realities of small and/or diversified family farms—with their lack of government subsidies—have given rise to many small farms growing dependent on grants and nonprofit status to stay afloat. These small and diversified farms have also adopted farmers' markets as a strategy to sell directly to consumers. Private markets, specifically those run by a for-profit organization called FarmLovers Farmers' Markets, exist on O'ahu in Hale'iwa, Hawai'i Kai, Kaka'ako (formerly at Ala Moana), Pearlridge in Pearl City, and Kailua. The organization is independent from farmers, and is run from fees paid by farmers and/or vendors for advertising and creation of a fair-style atmosphere such as the Cacao Festival, or the Mango Madness recipe contest during their respective seasons. This new type of market provides a framework for higher volume direct farm sales, thereby enabling farmers to avoid selling farm products for wholesale prices to distributors.

The market managers at these markets also use social media to get their message across in order to increase attendance, using Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to advertise certain vendors or products, or to invite followers to attend certain specialty events at the markets. At these markets, there is an even mix of farmers and prepared foods vendors, but the managers also allow locally made nonfood products to be sold at the markets. Jewelry, handmade soap, artworks, and clothing booths are all present. These markets are "zero-waste," so there is space allocated to recycling programs sponsored by the market, as well as food donation spaces encouraging sustainability and promoting environmental and social consciousness. Finally, the market managers provide booth space for environmental and political nonprofit organizations such as Defend O'ahu Coalition or North Shore Community Land Trust to disseminate information and raise understanding about their respective causes, thereby encouraging consumers' political engagement.

The market managers' goals, similar to those of the HFBF markets, are to promote local agriculture as much as possible. These market managers put up tents and picnic tables each week in order to promote a public space for community to develop, as people sit down together to share food or

just relax in the shade and get to know their neighbors. The demographics of the market in Hale'iwa are about 50 percent people from the surrounding community, 20 percent visitors from outside Hawai'i, and about 30 percent O'ahu residents from other parts of the island (Suitte 2011, personal interview). Each week the market is jam-packed with people. Market attendees can get their shopping done for the week, as well as socialize with friends and neighbors. Lingering is encouraged in the shade of the tents and trees, as well as occasional family movie nights.

Annie Suitte, one of the two market managers, explained that creating a community of like-minded people who support local products was one of their most important goals. However, she also asserted that in terms of precedence, the farmers' economic well-being was a top priority (see figure 4.3). She explained that they had a long waiting list for vendors, but she would rather give a spot to a person with "ten coconuts for sale from their backyard, than another jewelry maker" (Suitte 2011, personal interview). She also explained that the market was a natural space for making connections among farmers. She shared a story about a vendor working for a farmer who was a noni (*Morinda citrifolia*, a type of fruit) expert, but had no place to share his knowledge. The managers knew of another man who

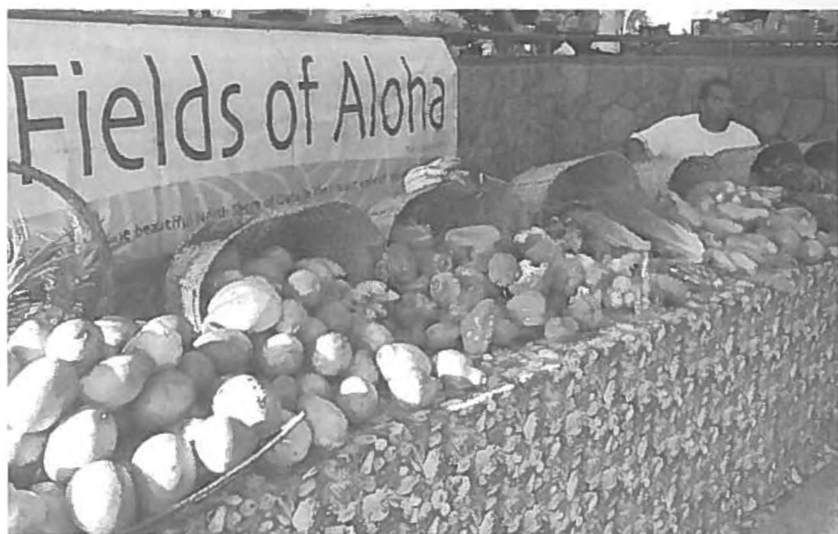

FIGURE 4.3. Farmer's booth at the Hale'iwa Farmers' Market located at Waimea Valley. Photo by Monique Mironesco.

was in need of a farm manager for a small noni plantation in the area and put the two in contact with each other. The noni plantation started to thrive and the man had a place to live and work doing what he loved (Suitte 2011, personal interview). These types of stories are common among market managers, no matter what type of market they run.

The Hawai'i Kai Farmers' Market struggled with attendance due to its location in a bedroom/"soccer" community. The market was on Saturday, when people are taking their children to soccer, and failed to grow as the Hale'iwa market has. After operating for four years, the market closed down in 2014. Suitte attributes this to people's habits in that particular community that do not include shopping in small amounts, or taking the time to get to know their neighbors. Hawai'i Kai is on the upper end of the socioeconomic ladder on O'ahu, so its market attendees are not necessarily in need of Electronic Benefits Transfer card stations. However, Suitte explained that it was an important goal of their roles as managers to figure out a way to accept Electronic Benefits Transfer cards in the near future. No matter what type of system they decide to adopt, she wanted to be sure that it caused the least amount of burden on the farmers. She asserted that it was more important that they spend time talking to and getting to know their customers than fiddling with an Electronic Benefits Transfer machine and the generators and wires required to run them at each booth. They were looking into some kind of centralized system, whereby they would have a central Electronic Benefits Transfer station, and give out farmers' market script in exchange, to be used at any of their markets. This is a similar option to the one mentioned by the HFBF market managers.

The Kaka'ako market is thriving and is proving to be a solid alternative for local people to the Kapi'olani Community College farmers' market in Honolulu on Saturday mornings. This particular market was relocated from the Ala Moana shopping center parking lot due to construction. While there are definitely fewer market attendees at the Kaka'ako market than at the Kapi'olani Community College market, they are mostly local people shopping for their weekly locally grown groceries. The market has a tent in the middle and places to sit in the shade, but its location in the corner of a mall parking lot does not seem to make it appealing for people to linger. That said, the vendors are knowledgeable about the products they are selling and willing to educate consumers about anything from food safety certification rules pending at the legislature to genetically modified

organism (GMO) issues in Hawai'i. Along with the Sunday morning Kailua market operated by the organization FarmLovers Farmers' Markets, the Kaka'ako market is one of the newest markets, but it has already garnered a strong core following among consumers and the market managers are looking forward to its continued growth.

"Anything Goes" Markets

The Waialua Farmers' Cooperative Market provides a perfect example of the "Anything Goes" type of market. The vendors are mostly older immigrants, former plantation workers who now lease small plots of land and grow ethnic crops that they are likely to sell in their own community. The consumers indeed generally come from the same demographic as the farmers. However, at this particular market there are also additional products for sale that are clearly not locally grown. Perfectly round and brightly colored oranges and lemons with a Florida sticker and garlic in purple net bags are all displayed without the least bit of irony next to choi sum, baby bok choy (varieties of *Brassica spp.* common in Asian cooking) and kabocha squash, the latter all grown on the North Shore in the Waialua/Hale'iwa area. The market does not usually include vendors of prepared foods, since the original intent of the market was to provide a sales outlet for laid-off plantation workers in the mid- to late 1990s after the closure of the Waialua Sugar Mill. The farmers' cooperative makes the conscious decision to continue this policy at their market at the same time as there is no policy regarding product provenance. There are Fuji apples from Washington State for sale at this market clearly bought in bulk and repackaged into smaller quantities for sale at a relative discount. Brisk sales are done here, but the market layout does not encourage lingering and people tend to go to "their" booth, do their shopping, and then go back to their cars. The immigrant demographic of both the vendors and consumers at this particular market reinforces the postcolonial and globalized nature of the market, both in its attendees and in the products sold. There is less political intent at this particular market to influence consumer decisions to buy local produce than there is a goal to protect former plantation employees and/or immigrant farmers now living in the area by providing them an outlet for direct sales to consumer, therefore bypassing wholesale distributors.

There are a few other "Anything Goes" markets such as the Windward Mall, Fort Street Mall, and Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center

markets, along with another located at the Sunset Beach Elementary School. Originally, this last market was started to provide the community with fresh produce grown on the North Shore of O'ahu. However, in recent times, the market manager has veered away from providing a venue for local farmers and has placed more emphasis on crafts and prepared foods. His argument is that the farmers' market is not only a place to sell food, but also a small business incubator. He hopes to foster the entrepreneurial spirit in new vendors by making the vendor fees extremely low ($10 per vendor per market) in order to encourage vendor attendance. The demographic of the market consumers tends to be very transient. The market manager argues that market attendees are less likely to purchase produce, therefore he encourages prepared food and other types of vendors to attend. There are more jewelry and craft booths at this particular market than there are produce and prepared food booths combined. The local farmers who used to attend this small "farmers'" market now prefer to attend the Hale'iwa Farmers' Market where they are more likely to do brisk business and make lasting connections with loyal consumers.

Challenges: Prepared Foods vs. Whole Foods, Locals vs. Tourists

Among the four types of farmers' markets discussed here, several challenges can be discerned. One challenge is the enforcement of product provenance regulations, if any, in place. Other challenges are keeping a balance between whole foods and prepared foods, and between local customers and tourists.

First, some farmers' markets sell nonlocal vegetables and fruits. The sales of nonlocal food at farmers' markets have been critiqued by many people, as evident in the comments by a local farmer, Gary Maunakea-Forth of MA'O Farms.

> Hawai'i farmers' markets are really at a crossroads, maybe reflective of the entire food-farmer situation in Hawai'i which is also in flux and at a crossroads. A few years ago [there were] a small handful of truly locally-focused markets. As farmers we made really good money, and consistently sold our inventory out. Now there has been a proliferation of markets, some good, some really weak and a complete farce that they should not even be called a

> "farmers' market" because they sell more prepared foods including imported products than local fruit and vegetables.
>
> In this proliferation of markets I hope that local consumers push hard and ask tough questions so that the markets purvey local products and that food vendors are audited to ensure that they are also using local products. The market organizers need to be held accountable; it should be their *kuleana* [responsibility] to make markets a model for zero waste and fairness. . . . Being a small familial community we have the opportunity to provide a much more unique and authentic market product for both locals and tourists. (Maunakea-Forth 2011, e-mail communication)

The problem of authenticity of food sold at farmers' markets is also complicated by the increase in the sales of processed items. A count of vendor booths at the Kapiʻolani Community College, Kailua, and Haleʻiwa farmers' markets reveals that there are many more prepared foods vendors than produce and whole foods vendors, and that the prepared foods are expensive. The product provenance rules are only loosely enforced for prepared foods, thereby creating an unfair system whereby the whole foods vendors are held to a higher standard of locally grown food than the prepared/value-added foods vendors. One example might include some prepared foods vendors at certain farmers' markets using mostly mainland grown items, in conjunction with a few local ingredients, and claiming to consumers to be locally sourced.

The market organizers I interviewed were aware of the controversy over the prevalence of processed foods but added two caveats to this controversy. The first is that the prepared foods booths create an atmosphere that encourages market attendees to linger, to chat, and to create a community interested in a sustainable food system in Hawaiʻi. It is in the interest of the market managers to increase attendance at various markets, and if prepared and value-added foods are big sellers, then they are more likely to be granted booths at the markets since the managers are the ones who decide which vendors get in and where they are allowed to set up. The second caveat is that thus far, farm security is an important mission to the market managers, the consumers, and of course, the farmers themselves. One of the HFBF market managers argued that increased attendance at the market, no matter what type of foods people are buying, is good for farmers because they get exposure to a wider audience (Robello 2011, personal interview). If farmers are able to produce and sell value-added products, which in turn enables them to invest profits into their respective farms,

keeping small family farms afloat, then it may be an important benefit to some farmers that cannot be overlooked.

Various farms have been creative in coming up with processed foods utilizing their farm produce. For instance, Otsuji Farms in Hawai'i Kai has devised an ingenious way to sell off-grade kale by dipping it in tempura batter, deep frying it, adding a delicious sauce, and selling it to a long line of consumers at several farmers' markets around O'ahu. Mark Delventhal of Pupukea Greens sells his papaya seed salad dressing alongside his organic lettuce at every farmers' market he attends. North Shore Cattle Company sells more hamburgers each day at the Kapi'olani Community College farmers' market than they sell raw meat. Jeannie Vanna of Big Wave Tomatoes in Waialua sells pizza slices and fried green tomatoes for $6 per slice and $5 per basket, respectively, to long lines of waiting customers each week at the Kapi'olani Community College, Kailua, Kaka'ako, and Hale'iwa farmers' markets. Processed and value-added foods are an important strategy for farmers to increase their revenue. The products tend to have a longer shelf life (dressings or jams, for example). They may cost more for the consumer, but they enable farmers to sell "off-grade" produce that would otherwise be unacceptable to the consumer as a whole food.

The increase in processed foods at farmers' markets has not occurred without controversy, both in Hawai'i and elsewhere. James Kirwan found that value-added foods are deemed acceptable by farmers themselves, but farmers' markets "purists" see them as devaluing the authenticity of the farmers' market experience because they seem to break the connection between the producer and the consumer (Kirwan 2004, 410). Some market goers decry that there are more prepared foods vendors than farmers at various markets in Hawai'i as well.

Processed foods are also related to another salient tension in farmers' markets in Hawai'i where there are a large number of tourists. Some of the market vendors interviewed, along with six regular attendees, two of whom are chefs interested in promoting locally sourced products, grumbled that some farmers' markets have been co-opted by tourism and have morphed into a food institution to serve the tourist market, selling prepared foods, since visitors are unable to store, and unwilling to cook food in their hotels during their Hawai'i vacations. Apparently, this trend is replicated at other large farmers' markets elsewhere as well. One well-known farmer from San Francisco pulled out of the famous Ferry Plaza Farmers' Market in protest because of the pressure to provide value-added products to tourists (Duane

2009, 83). Some farmers and consumers in Hawai'i assert that their farmers' markets are headed in a similar direction.

Tourism's globalizing influence is controversial to dedicated local farmers' market consumers given that it reifies the notion that the markets are becoming tourist attractions rather than alternative food institutions and/or community spaces for local people. One chef told me that the market he used to attend regularly had got so crowded with tourists that he had to get up early and check the tweets from one of the market managers, who took pictures of the products on offer, each Saturday before the market started. He then rushed down to the market, knowing in advance which vendors he would patronize, got his shopping done early, and went home without having had to brave the rush of tourists. This is in great contrast to earlier experiences when he could enjoy the market before the demographics of the attendees had changed so drastically. He used to like coming to the market and spending his Saturday mornings there. Now he wished that all of the produce and meat vendors would be lined up on one aisle of the market so that he could get in and out of there as quickly as possible, without having to dodge the crowds standing in line at the prepared foods vendor booths catering to tourists (Kenney 2011, personal interview). This shift in the attitude of regular/longtime market attendees towards the market is particularly evident at the Kapi'olani Community College farmers' market, where the number of tourists has greatly increased in recent years. The market managers said that there was no concerted effort on their part, the HFBF, or even the Hawai'i Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) to advertise the market as a tourist destination, but it had become a "must-see" destination in many tourist publications and was widely advertised in both airline magazines and online travel guides for Hawai'i.

This kind of tension has also been observed elsewhere. In Seattle, for instance, Thomas Tiemann noted that "something has been lost. The market has become a tourist destination and the experience is staged for the tourists. Though there are still tables for farmers . . . the market is less a place for the old, regular Seattle shoppers looking for regional, seasonal food and easy interaction with growers and other shoppers" (Tiemann 2008, 467). Hawai'i's farmers' markets illustrate various trade-offs between processed foods and whole foods, and between local community and tourists. While value-added processed foods attract more tourists because of the ease of transport, certain value-added products also enable farmers to

gain additional name recognition by including permanent labels on jars or packaging, which helps farms brand themselves to their customers and encourage repeat business. Yet the higher prices of prepared foods tend to discourage low-income consumers from attending the markets. Moreover, the high price points of prepared foods encourage vendors to develop even more value-added products, perhaps increasing farm security to a certain extent, but decreasing overall food security in Hawai'i by driving up the prices of foods at farmers' markets.

Processed foods and tourists pose critical challenges to the assumptions of farmers' markets as local institutions and a strategy for improving people's access to healthy food. They are often seen as diminishing the value of farmers' markets as a local space for examining assumptions about product provenance and fostering intimate relationships between producers and consumers.

Farm Security vs. Food Security

The observations on farmers' markets discussed above signal a significant trade-off that comes with the increase in tourists and processed foods. The tension between farm security and food security is discernible through market attendees. While the farmers' markets on all islands tend to be well attended, the demographics of the consumers, especially on O'ahu, tell an interesting tale. At the Kapi'olani Community College, Hale'iwa, and Hawai'i Kai markets, there were virtually no Native Hawaiian consumers indicating a disturbing general trend; a large proportion of Native Hawaiians in Hawai'i do not frequent farmers' markets and are unlikely to purchase fresh, locally grown produce. At some other markets, the patrons are relatively wealthy, white or Asian people, and include tourists from the mainland and other countries, especially Japan. There are few Native Hawaiian consumers, though they are minimally represented as producers/vendors.

Many Native Hawaiians are concentrated in the areas of the islands associated with food deserts. Lisa Markowitz defines food deserts as places with "limited access to shops, high prices, poor quality, and narrow variety of food items, especially fresh produce" (Markowitz 2010, 72). In Wai'anae, on the Leeward side of O'ahu, for example, there are only two grocery stores, spanning a sixteen-mile distance. Neither has particularly

enticing offerings of produce. There are also a variety of convenience stores and fast food establishments serving the area with unhealthy, cheaply produced food. There is a farmers' market in Wai'anae, no longer operated by the HFBF due to low attendance, but it is the only "Anything Goes" market to accept both Electronic Benefits Transfer cards and Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) coupons on a regular basis. If the point of managing a market is to steadily increase attendance, it is no wonder that the lack of crowds at the Wai'anae farmers' market resulted in its being abandoned as a viable market by the HFBF. The Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center runs the market as a service to the community in order to promote healthy eating and good nutrition in what is considered to be one of O'ahu's primary food deserts, rather than for profit.

The Native Hawaiians' lack of access to the bounty of farmers' markets in Hawai'i is certainly related to the cost of the products found at most farmers' markets, the types of products sold, as well as the location of the most successful markets. Native Hawaiians tend to be poorer and more isolated geographically, especially on O'ahu. Therefore, their lack of access is related both to the cost and to the location of the most abundant markets in relation to where the largest populations of Native Hawaiians live. The lack of access to fresh food for low-income consumers is highly problematic and has serious health implications for Hawai'i due to the high rates of obesity, heart disease, and diabetes, especially in low-income areas.

Food scholars have observed that farm security tends to trump food security concerns (Guthman et al. 2006, 682). Preventing development and rezoning of agricultural lands is a constant battle in Hawai'i (Suryanata and Lowry, this volume), which might explain why farm security is often prioritized over food security. There are concerns that Hawai'i may end up without any viable agricultural lands, should a global event occur to disrupt the current quantity of food imports. One market manager argues that farm security enables agricultural lands to stay in production, so that farmers are able to meet the demand for local food should it continue to increase (Robello 2011, personal interview). Another market manager told me that "cheap food is how we got into this mess in the first place" and that high prices at farmers' markets mean more dollars directly into the pockets of Hawai'i's embattled farmers (Asagi 2011, personal interview). While their concerns with agricultural preservation and farmer welfare

are important, pricing large segments of the community out of the farmers' markets because the fresh food is unaffordable is socially and politically problematic.

Currently, Hawai'i is one of only five states that do not accept FMNP coupons, though some of the markets had accepted them in the past. This program, a part of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), allows participants to purchase uncooked, nutritious, locally grown fruits and vegetables. FMNP participants are granted between $10 and $30 per year (not a large amount, to be sure) to promote awareness and use of farmers' markets (http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/FMNP/FMNPfaqs.htm). Without Electronic Benefits Transfer cards or FMNP coupons accepted at most of Hawai'i's farmers' markets on a regular basis, Hawai'i is lagging behind the rest of the nation in finding innovative ways to provide access to locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables for low-income consumers. This is a concern for some of the market managers associated with the HFBF and private markets. While they do not currently accept Electronic Benefits Transfer cards, they are applying for grants to enable the HFBF markets to accept them in the near future. In addition, the market managers encourage consumers to donate extra produce that they will not eat to the Hawai'i Food Bank. However, to better balance farm security and food security, farmers' market managers need to make greater and more insistent efforts to find ways to incorporate access to healthy, whole foods for low-income consumers, as well as consistently enforce product provenance rules for both whole foods growers and prepared foods vendors.

No farmers' markets in Hawai'i exist unproblematically as there are complicated issues embedded within the farmers' market spaces. There are various demographic groups that could be served in the different types of markets: visitors, farmers, consumers of various ethnic backgrounds and with divergent economic means. These layers of relations complicate the farmers' market space at the same time as the diversity can be the source of its richness. But the class and racial segregation of farmers' markets needs a particular attention. Even though some argue that "food can be a powerful and equalizing social force" (Kramer 2009, 9), the issues of access to healthy food for low-income consumers remain fundamental to the possible contribution of farmers' markets vis-à-vis food democracy in Hawai'i.

Farmers' Market as a Public Space

Supporting small farmers by providing a means for direct farm sales to consumers for farmers who may not have other sales outlets is certainly an important success of the various markets, no matter the type. The creation of a public/political space for the community to address and discuss its concerns regarding various food issues in Hawai'i is another success of the farmers' markets. Are farmers' markets only outlets for direct farm sales, or does their existence encompass political issues as well? Do community members voting with their food dollars gain a voice in the political process regarding food issues in Hawai'i through their attendance at farmers' markets?

The degree to which farmers' markets function as a public space differs significantly between different markets. For instance, market experience for consumers varies from market to market. Rachel Slocum found that in Minneapolis "[f]ew shoppers . . . charge through the Market intent on getting through it in minimum time; the experience tends to be more exploratory" (Slocum 2008, 859). This is a similar observation to the markets in Hale'iwa, Kaka'ako, and Kailua, and for many at the Kapi'olani Community College farmers' market.

In addition, some people attend markets for the opportunity to have conversations with growers. This familiarity is often mentioned by regular farmers' markets consumers as the part of the experience they appreciate the most (Slocum 2008, 864). In Hawai'i as well, some farmers' markets have successfully become a place for a community beyond simply being a place for economic transaction. At the Kapi'olani Community College, Kaka'ako, Kailua, and Hale'iwa farmers' markets, farmers and consumers are often engaged in prolonged conversations. Sometimes, the consumers ask where the produce is grown. Other times, they ask if the farmer has a certain product. If the product is part of the regular offering but is missing from that day's display, the farmer might explain the reason behind its absence, whether it is simply sold out, or its absence is due to inclement weather or some other farm mishap.

Such interaction forms an important facet of consumer education taking place at farmers' markets. Talking to farmers about the reasons behind the crops they have for sale at farmers' markets helps consumers make the connections between larger environmental issues beyond the control of individual farmers such as local farming patterns, the impact of climate

change, and agricultural policies. Farmers' markets are a source of good-tasting, fresh, whole foods, as well as a public space for people to understand the sociopolitical implications of purchasing locally grown food. They are not only an outlet for farmers and vendors to sell their produce, but also a place to make lasting relationships and connections with each other and to get involved in community- and market-related issues.

Shopping at farmers' markets takes a special kind of time and space discipline that many people do not have. Farmers' markets only operate on certain days and at certain times. As Sharon Zukin asks, "Why wait for eggs until Wednesday or Saturday when you can buy eggs at Whole Foods any day of the week until 10 p.m.?" (Zukin 2008, 737). While she is discussing the competition between the new Whole Foods market and the long-running Union Square farmers' market in New York City, her point can be applied to any farmers' market in competition with any grocery store. The same type of competition started when Whole Foods opened next door to the Kailua Farmers' Market. When asked about her reaction to this development, one market manager said "bring it on." She asserted that she knew Whole Foods prices could not compete with farmers' market prices, but continues to believe that the loyal following the market has garnered over the years will continue to patronize farmers' booths at the market instead of opting for the convenient Whole Foods experience (Asagi 2011, personal interview). The active role of consumers shopping at farmers' markets necessarily translates into a limited form of political agency because merely making the choice to patronize farmers' markets requires that definite time and place commitment. The motivation is not necessarily only economic, but entails a larger political loyalty to the farmers' market as a site of civic engagement.

The development of farmers' markets as a public space was perhaps most telling from the community mobilization to save the Hale'iwa Farmers' Market in 2012. In April 2012, the Department of Transportation issued a "cease and desist" order to the market managers for safety concerns due to the Hale'iwa market's location at the corner of two highways. This event galvanized the community to act to prevent the market's closure. People who consider themselves completely "apolitical" started going to meetings at the legislature, with the governor, with the head of the Department of Transportation, and with other interested parties. They got involved with the political process solely because of their association with the market. While this group included the farmers' market managers, it

also included some farmers, as well as consumers who conceptualized the market as an important community resource that they were unwilling to see dismantled by the state. For a time, the market's fate was uncertain, with other locations proposed and then found to be unsuitable by various parties due to size, parking restrictions, or other barriers. One farmer told me that at one meeting, the head of the Department of Transportation admitted that he had never actually been to the market venue and that his decision to close the market was solely based on maps that illustrated the market's location on a highway, even though it was actually adjacent to the highway and protected from passing cars by metal barriers and other landscape features. This unwillingness by state officials to see the market in person, as well as to see the market as an important community resource, illustrates the disconnection between the view of the market from the state's perspective and the grass-roots element of the farmers' markets. The market has since successfully relocated to Waimea Valley on Thursday evenings and while it has fewer numbers of vendors, especially fresh food (rather than prepared foods) vendors, it seems to be thriving.

In many, though certainly not all, cases in Hawai'i, market attendees (including both producers and consumers) are making conscious decisions to support local agriculture in Hawai'i and the markets provide the political and public space to enact those decisions. As the case of the Hale'iwa Farmers' Market location woes indicates, these decisions can take an overtly political turn, enabling people to become politically active in one's community.

While farmers' markets can be described as one of many retail channels where consumers simply come to shop, they seem to be able to foster relationships that are not simply reducible to economic factors. Farmers' markets can be a place for fostering a community, for educating consumers, and for politicizing their consciousness.

Farmers' Markets and Food Democracy

As Goodman and Dupuis suggest, "it is clear that any attempt to integrate how we 'know food' with how we 'grow food' will require rethinking both production and consumption centered notions of politics" (2002, 15). The ability to touch, feel, smell, and take home Hawai'i farm products from farmers' markets tends to embody the struggles of Hawai'i farms and serve as a prospective call to political actions. Is it possible that the large num-

bers of visitors at certain markets return home and ask questions about their own food systems after attending one of the farmers' markets in Hawai'i? Does smelling a freshly picked vine ripened tomato at a farm booth lead us to question why the tomatoes available at grocery stores look and taste like cardboard? Does the farmers' market experience lead us to question why our broken food system based on imports from thousands of miles away does not support local, sustainable agriculture? Why we should fix it so that it does? Farmers' markets can be an important institutional avenue for food democracy where consumer awareness and connections between food producers and consumers can be fostered.

This chapter has delineated varying challenges of farmers' markets. There are many possibilities ahead for the various farmers' market institutions in Hawai'i, most notably finding the balance between farm security and food security and trying to find a mechanism where farmers' markets can serve the interests of both local farmers and low-income consumers. Another challenge is to quell the concerns about large numbers of prepared foods vendors and tourists at various markets. As discussed above, this issue is more complex than a passing glance would imply. The third challenge is for famers' markets to move beyond a purely economic space and play a political and educational role, serving as the public space with a sense of community and awareness about the problematic status of the food system in Hawai'i. How might farmers' markets serve as a space to start a conversation about these issues? The various farmers' markets in Hawai'i presented in this chapter have divergent track records in meeting these challenges and turning them into opportunities.

Farmers' markets present opportunities for civic engagement. It is necessary not to focus only on producers and consumers, but to discuss more systemic and policy issues in the debate on local food systems. While farmers' markets are often understood as a strategy for localization, the concept of food democracy cautions such advocacy's emphasis on consumer awareness, because it tends to exonerate the government from any political responsibility regarding the politics of food. Individuals "voting with their food dollars" will fall short of engendering a large-scale difference in the food system in Hawai'i. While the change in shopping patterns may shift the structure of local food system to some degree, such emphasis on consumer behavior places the onus on individual consumers and producers to continue the relationship, relieving the government of any active role in supporting small, diversified agriculture.

The state government has made some efforts to support small-scale agriculture in a number of ways, though without necessarily using farmers' markets as a framework for changing the local food system. Farmers' markets are not regulated by the government since the market managers devise and then enforce the various market rules, yet government policies have a direct effect on the economic viability of the small farms that sell at the markets in the face of continually increasing pressures to rezone agricultural areas for development purposes. For example, the state senate commissioned a feasibility study about procurement of local foods for Hawai'i's school lunches (SB 1179–2009) ostensibly to provide a guaranteed market for Hawai'i's farmers. Additionally, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) sent a memo to the institutions participating in the National School Lunch Program that they were mandated to apply geographic preferences in procurements for child nutrition programs (USDA Memo Code SP 30–2008). However, neither of these actions has changed anything in the large-scale food system, since the study found that in actuality, asking the Hawai'i Department of Education (HI DOE) to procure locally grown foods for school lunches was *not* currently feasible due to the substantially higher costs of locally grown foods than that of imported foods from the mainland. Additionally, there was no enforcement capacity built into the USDA mandate, so that memo has thus far gone unheeded. Both local and national governments have remained relatively absent from the discussion about local food systems. There is lip service being paid to the support of small-scale farming in Hawai'i, but the politics and policies have not followed suit due to the ever present budgetary constraints faced by the state legislature. It is not enough to raise awareness and educate customers about the importance of buying local food and sustainable agriculture issues. We must continue to reexamine farmers' markets' position in a broader policy and political framework in order to understand whether they are accomplishing the large-scale goal of changing the food system in Hawai'i from one of continued dependence on food imports and the related costs of increased food miles, enabling producer/consumer relationships to develop and thrive, and understanding that not all markets place emphasis on locally grown farm products.

As Guthman et al. have observed, a "pervasive notion in the alternative agricultural movement . . . 'if people only knew' more about food, they would certainly seek organic, healthy, local food" (Guthman et al. 2006,

678). This is certainly a valid critique of the simplistic notion that education and awareness of consumers will change the food system overnight. However, consumers are not passive. They are interrogating their food sources, getting to know farmers, demanding more locally sourced food at their markets. The farmers' markets are weekly reminders that these are important political actions. However, as political agency develops through the farmers' market venue, it also glosses over the fact that the true food costs found at farmers' markets tend to reinforce the reality that healthy, locally grown food products are out of reach for low-income consumers and fundamental policy change, in addition to changes by individual consumers, is necessary. Farmers' markets are a viable *start* to an alternative food purchasing and distribution system towards more democratic community food systems in Hawai'i.

We may not have tipped the balance towards sustainable farming in Hawai'i yet, but with the proliferation of more and larger farmers' markets, there is a potential for greater consumer consciousness and development of political agency to alter the current course of the agro-food system as it is currently manifested in Hawai'i.

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