



## Household food security

There are many ways families can increase household food security during this time of crisis. Growing even a few plants at home, conserving resources, and sharing with neighbors can go a long way to reducing a family food budget.

### Grow your own garden

There is a resurgence of interest in home gardening happening right now around the country. This is a great way to provide fresh, nutritious food for your family without making extra trips to the grocery store, and it is economical in the long run.

- Grow the things you like to eat
- Start small and build on success
- [Container gardening](#) and [micro-hydroponics](#) are options even with very limited space
- [Aquaponic systems](#) can provide vegetables as well as fish for protein without taking up much additional space
- Try locally adapted seeds when possible, and consider [saving your own seed](#) to replant
- Involve the whole family: There are lots of great resources to involve keiki of all ages in the garden. CTAHR's [Nutrition Education for Wellness](#) program has family-friendly lessons that will walk through step-by-step from planning your garden to harvest. [Farm to Keiki](#) is another program for families and teachers including Hawaii-specific gardening, cooking, and nutrition information.



Photo: Rebekah Magers

- There are many other resources available to learn more. Here is a great [guide to get started](#).

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### Ways to conserve food resources

#### Reduce waste

Much of the food we buy at the store goes to waste for one reason or another. Utilizing left-overs, meal planning, and taking inventory of food on-hand before shopping can all help to reduce waste and conserve resources. There are many resources online to help with meal planning and shopping, even if [shopping for a two-week supply](#).

#### Share with neighbors

Sharing food is common practice already in Hawaii, as in many rural areas. Sharing produce from a home garden or surplus from hunting and fishing are examples that support food security for the whole community.

#### Food preservation

Pickling, fermenting, smoking, drying, freezing, and canning are great ways to preserve excess during seasons of abundance.

### Looking for eggs?

Consider starting your own backyard flock of laying hens! While managing chickens is an added responsibility, a [small coop](#) or [chicken tractor](#) can be built with relatively low inputs, and commercial feed is readily available. If purchased as chicks, remember they will not start laying until they are about 6 months old.

### Food safety questions?

- There is no evidence of the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 being spread by food or fresh produce ([FDA](#))
- More detailed information can be found in [CTAHR Farm Food Safety Reminders](#)

### Resources

- [Getting Started: Creating a Garden in Hawaii](#)
- [Hawaii Seed Growers Network](#)
- [CTAHR Seed Program](#)
- [CTAHR Guide to Saving Seed](#)
- [National Center for Home Food Preservation](#)

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