



Going Beyond Emergency Food

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Parish communities play an important role in dealing with food insecurity and hunger through food pantries and meal programs. Many parishes have long been committed to helping less fortunate members in our communities with emergency food supplies at a time when many are facing new or continuing economic struggles as health care, food and energy costs rise. At the same time, one of the leading concerns is the quantity and quality of food we make available in our food ministries as well as the growing demand for our services. There are also concerns here in Hawaii on the dependency on foods produced thousands of miles away.

Our parishes can play a pivotal role in bringing about the conditions that will enable communities and families to have access to healthy, affordable and sustainable food supplies. Parishes often have resources and infrastructure – land, kitchens, buildings and volunteers – that can be harnessed.

The first step in setting up a food-related initiative may be one of nutrition education for wellness. The **Office for Social Ministry is partnering with the University of Hawaii, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources** to provide food pantries with vicariate-based workshops on practical life skills and nutrition for Hawaii's limited income population that we serve. The workshops will provide households and individuals with limited incomes become aware of their health and well-being by promoting skills building and access to a healthy diet.

The first workshops that will be offered parishes are:

- I. **Life Skills in Food Education** – *Practical life skills in food and nutrition for Hawaii's limited income households*
- II. **Grow Your Own** – *A beginners guide to basic horticultural techniques to ensure access to fresh, inexpensive, healthy food sources through backyard or community gardens for home or parish-based food ministries*

Other planned workshops include:

- I. **Food & Money Basics: Choices and Decisions** – *A beginner's food and money management resource to assist limited income persons manage their money while making healthy food choices.*
- II. **Hawaii Foods** – *In collaboration with the Center on the Family this workshop will focus on health promotion through the use of Hawaii foods and food products.*

More information on the upcoming workshops will be sent to parishes and food pantry coordinators soon! Stay tuned.

