



## Hawai'i Harvest of the Month: 'Ulu (Breadfruit)

### ***Growing Hawai'i's Food Security***

Breadfruit (*Artocarpus altilis*), or 'Ulu, is one of Hawai'i's life-sustaining "canoe crops" that arrived with Polynesian voyagers over 1,000 years ago, and plays an important role today in Hawai'i's food security and climate resilience. Each 'ulu tree can produce an average of 300-500 pounds of nutritious food per year across a productive lifespan of 50 years or more, while sequestering carbon and lowering ambient temperatures. Local organizations have been leading efforts to revitalize awareness and use of 'ulu, including [The Breadfruit Institute](#) of the National Tropical Botanical Garden (which conserves and studies over 150 varieties of breadfruit and works with partners to distribute thousands of trees), and [Hawai'i 'Ulu Cooperative](#) (a farmer-owned co-op with over 150 members). Thanks to these and other relevant endeavors, 'ulu is increasingly being featured in local school meals and innovative products like 'ulu flour, demonstrating how collaborative initiatives are revitalizing traditional crops, supporting local farmers, nourishing students, and building a more resilient food system for Hawai'i's future.

### ***Nutritional Information***

Breadfruit is a highly nutritious, gluten-free, and low-fat source of complex carbohydrates for sustained energy. It provides fiber and low levels of complete protein (providing all of the essential amino acids). Half a cup of 'ulu contains three times the beta carotene\* as one cup of carrots! (\*Beta carotene is an antioxidant and provitamin required by the body to produce Vitamin A, an important vitamin for eye health as well as skin, heart, lungs, kidney, and immune health.) Sources: The Breadfruit Institute & Hawai'i 'Ulu Cooperative



*The "Nutritional Benefits of 'Ulu" video (3:05) is part of a series of "Keiki Education Videos" available from the Hawai'i 'Ulu Cooperative.*



### ***Growing & Harvesting***

Harvesting and handling 'ulu requires careful attention to fruit maturity and gentle techniques to ensure high quality and minimize waste. Breadfruit should be harvested when fully mature but still firm, using tools like poles with baskets or nets to catch the fruit and prevent bruising and damage; fruit that falls or is cut improperly is more likely to spoil quickly. 'Ulu trees should be pruned annually right after fruiting ends and before new growth starts, in order to be maintained at a manageable height for harvesting access. In school gardens, young 'ulu trees thrive with regular watering and weed suppression/mulching, making them an excellent crop for hands-on learning about agroforestry, sustainability, Oceanic cultures, and Hawai'i's traditional food systems.



## 'Ulu and Banana Pancakes

This and other 'ono 'ulu recipes were compiled by [Kōkua Hawai'i Foundation](http://www.kokuahawaii.org) as part of the 'ĀINA In Schools Hawaiian Garden Unit. Click on the image at left to access this 'ulu recipe resource.

### Directions:

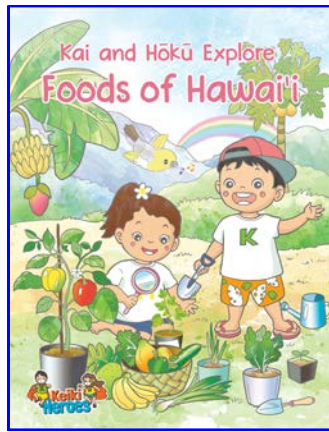
1. Mix equal parts peeled ripe 'ulu and the equivalent volume of peeled ripe bananas and mash until mixed.
2. Add water or flour to change the batter consistency as necessary.
3. Pour onto griddle and fry until firm.
4. Serve with honey or fresh fruit.

### Ingredients:

- 1 very ripe 'ulu (soft to the touch)
- Equivalent volume of bananas
- Flour (as needed)
- Water (as needed)

## "Kai and Hōkū Explore Foods of Hawai'i"

'Ulu is one of several local fruits and vegetables featured in this fun activity book for keiki. Visit the [Keiki Heroes](http://www.keikiheroes.com) website to download this and other free activity books.



## 'Ulu Education Toolkit

The 'Ulu Education Toolkit is an online database of 'ulu-related resources (including lesson plans, recipes, videos, and more), where educators and families can search for and access materials by grade level, content area, and resource type. Use this toolkit to incorporate lessons about 'ulu into the classroom, cafeteria, school garden, and other formal and informal learning environments.



### SAVE THE DATE!

**2026 We Grow Hawai'i: A Youth Food Summit**

"We Grow Youth for Farm to School"

Saturday, March 7 @ Punahou School (8:30am-2pm)

Registration will be open in January!



### CALL FOR PRESENTERS!

[Applications are being accepted now through January 31, 2026](#) for Hawai'i students in grades K-12 to share about their food-related project or host a workshop at the 2026 We Grow Hawai'i event!

We Grow Hawai'i is presented by the [Hawai'i Youth Food Council](http://www.hawaii-youth-food-council.org) and partners.

## 10th National Farm to Cafeteria Conference

HCNP and other Hawai'i participants were in attendance at the 10th National Farm to Cafeteria Conference that took place in Albuquerque, New Mexico on December 1-4, 2025. The event was organized by the [National Farm to School Network](http://www.nationalfarmtoschool.org) and co-hosted by [New Mexico Grown](http://www.newmexicogrown.org), bringing together nearly 1,000 leaders in local food procurement, school gardening, and farm to school education, organizing, and advocacy from across the nation. Congratulations to Kamehameha Schools Maui (represented by Hōkūao Pellegrino) for being awarded a 2025 Farm to School Innovation Award during the conference for their "Revitalizing Ancestral Palates" project aimed at reconnecting students with culturally-relevant, sustainable foods rooted in Native Hawaiian tradition!

Sign up for this newsletter by emailing: [hcnp@k12.hi.us](mailto:hcnp@k12.hi.us)

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