

# Ka Momona O Ka 'Āina

*The Bounty of the Land*



PUBLISHED BY



**Hawaii  
Child  
Nutrition  
Programs**

21st Edition  
JANUARY 2026

Access digital versions  
of this and past  
newsletters here:



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## Hawai'i Harvest of the Month: Kalo (Taro)

### Honoring Kalo: Hawai'i's State Plant

Kalo (*Colocasia esculenta*), or taro, holds a sacred and foundational place in Hawaiian culture and identity. In recognition and honor of this significance, the Hawai'i State Legislature passed [Act 36](#) in 2007, which established Kalo as the official State plant. This law is codified as [HRS §5-15.5](#) and took effect on January 1, 2025. As recognized within the Act, "kalo intrinsically ties the interdependency of our past, the present, and the future, the essence of procreation and regeneration, as the foundation of any sustainable practice. Kalo expresses the spiritual and physical well-being of not only the kanaka maoli and their heritage, but also symbolizes the environmental, social, and cultural values important to the State" (Session Laws of Hawai'i 2007, Act 36).



Kalo (taro), 'uala (sweet potato), and 'ulu (breadfruit) thriving together in a Hawai'i school garden.



### Life-Sustaining Systems

The agricultural systems developed by ancestral Hawaiians for the cultivation of kalo and other life-giving crops were some of the most sophisticated, sustainable, and productive in the world; the expert, 'āina-based application of science, technology, engineering, and math ("STEM"). Through "an extraordinarily intimate and thorough knowledge" of kalo, Hawaiians refined techniques for cultivating this plant in both wetland lo'i (irrigated terraces) and upland gardens (māla), developing approximately 300 varieties tailored to Hawai'i's diverse environments. For centuries, kalo provided the primary sustenance for Native Hawaiians, forming the basis of the diet as poi, and serving as a source of nourishment, medicine, and ceremonial connection. Today, the cultivation and consumption of kalo remain vital expressions of Hawaiian culture, resilience, and continued stewardship of the 'āina. (Sources: Native Planters in Old Hawai'i [1972]; Act 36 [2007]; [Hawai'i 'Ulu Cooperative](#))

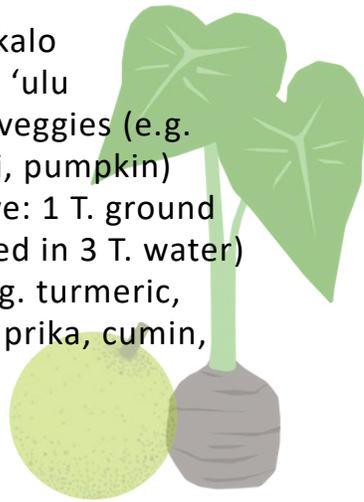
### "Kalo as Kumu" ("Taro as Teacher") Workshops

These free, one-day workshops are coming soon to ALL islands for school teachers/staff that are NEW to Hawai'i. Beginning March 6 on O'ahu (register by February 27). Contact [mingwei@c4gts.org](mailto:mingwei@c4gts.org) for info and to register!

## [Kalo and 'Ulu Patty Recipe](#) by [HIP Agriculture](#)

### Ingredients:

- 3 cups cooked, grated kalo
- 1 cup steamed, ground 'ulu
- 1 cup chopped/grated veggies (e.g. carrots, beets, zucchini, pumpkin)
- 1 egg (Vegan alternative: 1 T. ground chia or flax seeds soaked in 3 T. water)
- 2 tsp. spice powder (e.g. turmeric, black pepper, garlic, paprika, cumin, coriander, onion)
- 1+ tsp. salt



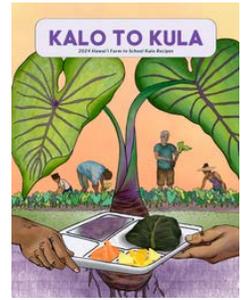
### Directions:

1. Add all ingredients into a large bowl.
2. Combine thoroughly using your hands or food processor, making sure it sticks together well.
3. Form the mixture into uniformly shaped balls, then press into a patty shape.
4. Pre-heat & Cook:
  - a. Stovetop: Heat cast iron pan or grill and cooking oil of choice. Fry on each side for 3-5 minutes or until golden brown.
  - b. Oven: Heat to 350°F and place patties on a well-oiled baking sheet. Bake for 10 minutes on each side, flipping once.

### Tips:

- Make a large batch ahead of time, then freeze for easy meal prep (frozen patties can be reheated directly on a skillet or in the oven).
- Patties can also be shaped into “nuggets” and served with dip, topped with an egg, or served on a salad.

Check out the [Kalo to Kula Recipe Guidebook](#) by [Mālama Kaua'i](#), with 19 kalo-based, kid-approved breakfast, lunch, and side dish recipes designed for K-12 school meals!



### Nutritional Benefits of Kalo

All parts of the kalo plant are edible and must be fully cooked prior to eating!

- **Rich in Dietary Fiber:** Cooked kalo contains significantly more fiber than white rice, white potatoes, or wheat flour. This fiber aids digestion, lowers cholesterol, improves blood sugar regulation, and enhances satiety.
- **Vitamins and Minerals:** Kalo is an excellent source of B-complex vitamins, vitamin C, vitamin A (in the leaves), phosphorus, potassium, magnesium, and calcium.
- **Low in Fat:** Kalo is naturally low in fat and serves as a heart-healthy staple.
- **Complex Carbohydrates:** The corm provides slow-digesting carbohydrates, promoting sustained energy and stable blood sugar.
- **Digestive Benefits:** Poi is easily digestible and hypoallergenic, making it suitable for infants and people with sensitive diets.

(Source: [Hawai'i 'Ulu Cooperative](#))



**COMING SOON!**  
**2026 We Grow Hawai'i: A Youth Food Summit**  
“We Grow Youth for Farm to School”  
Saturday, March 7 @ Punahou School (9am-2pm)

### **CALL FOR PRESENTERS!**

[Applications are still being accepted](#) for Hawai'i students in grades PreK-20 (preschool through post-secondary levels) to share about their food-related project or host a workshop at the 2026 We Grow Hawai'i event! Please submit applications by February 13.

Event registration will be available soon on the [Hawai'i Youth Food Council](#) website.



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

Buy Local, Eat Local, Stay Local