

Common Ground Kaua`i Selects Inaugural Cohort for Incubator Program from 40 Early Stage Food, Beverage, Farm Businesses

Reimagining agricultural-based commerce in Hawaii, **Common Ground Kaua`i** announced the inaugural cohort for its Incubator @ Common Ground, a business development program designed to collaboratively revitalize a diversified and resilient agricultural economy in Hawaii.

These 10 Kaua'i businesses were chosen from over 40 diverse applicants:

- Crossroads Pastures
- Rancher's Daughters Reserve
- My Kauai Honey Co.
- Moloa'a Organica'a
- Outpost Coffee
- `Ekahi Market
- Aloha Ginger Beer
- Hawaii Peeps
- Secret Harvest
- GrowBot

Led by Dirk Soma, BBA, MPS is Assistant Professor in Business Education at Kaua`i Community College and small business consultant at Naupaka Consulting, LLP, Incubator@Common Ground will be providing business training, funding, and connections to scale these promising small businesses and in doing so, cultivate the next generation of Hawaii-based food, beverage, and farm-based entrepreneurs to establish Hawaii as a food innovation hotspot.

Incubator @ Common Ground is initially supported in part through funding provided by a CARES Act grant from the County of Kaua`i Kupaa Kaua`i program and in partnership with Kaua`i Government Employees Federal Credit Union.

Program details are as follows:

Who: The inaugural cohort for the Incubator program comprises 10 food, beverage, farm-based small businesses and entrepreneurs based on Kaua`i. Priority was given to candidates that represent and celebrate the traditions of agriculture and robust food systems on Kaua`i with appeal across major markets, including:

- Early-stage food and beverage companies with niche products that have reached the market and have a unique connection to Hawaii-grown ingredients, Hawaiian culture and global demand potential.
- Companies with revenues of \$150,000/year or less.

- Consumer packaged goods (CPG) companies that serve the local market and/or need resources to access national and global markets.
- Companies that make food and beverage packaging, provide supply chain services and otherwise support the Hawaii-based food system.
- Pre-launch companies with uniquely compelling ideas.

What: Incubator @ Common Ground is a business development program providing business training, funding and connections to scale small businesses. Incubator cohorts will have the opportunity to develop strategic growth goals and business plans through formal courses and consulting sessions. Cohort companies will be allotted \$10,000 per company for approved expenditures to assist with achieving strategic growth plan goals.

Where: The Incubator program will require a commitment of 6-7 hours per week for courses and one-on-one sessions via Zoom.

When: The inaugural Incubator program runs September 18, 2020 to December 31, 2020.

About Common Ground Kaua`i

[Common Ground Kaua`i](#) is a hub for the global idea exchange of important issues facing Hawai`i. Through public and private partnerships, Common Ground unites change-makers — thinkers, creators, designers, innovators and doers — to produce economic development programs and services to grow a diversified economy on Kaua`i and beyond.

Its Food Innovation Center is designed to transform the supply chain that feeds into the future of a thriving and resilient 21st century food economy. Through farming, accelerator, incubator and distribution initiatives, Common Ground is a test bed for developing the next generation of Hawai`i-based food producers while building a model that can scale to meet a global demand for goods.

Privately held, Common Ground Kaua`i is located on an 83-acre agricultural campus on the former Guava Kai plantation in Kīlauea, Kaua`i, Hawai`i. For more information on Common Ground Kaua`i, please sign up to receive our updates at www.commongroundkauai.com and follow us on Instagram [@kauaicommonground](https://www.instagram.com/kauaicommonground).

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Tags: Common Ground Kaua`i, Hawaii, Kauai, food economy, sustainable agriculture, organic agriculture, food security, biological farming, biodiversity, food producers, business development

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