



AgIncubator, North Shore Cohort 7

‘ŌKUPU FARMS

JONATHAN ULIBAS

OUR MISSION

"My mission as a farm is to provide locals an opportunity to buy quality food, and help grow the local agriculture industry as a formidable food source."



WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO START FARMING?

"There were many things that inspired me to farm; the fact that Hawaii's cost of living is high, our dependence on food being shipped in, and that there was a 300% decline in the Ag labor force. There was even a grant put out looking for taro farmers at one time. Collectively these things were intriguing enough for me to explore farming further."

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT GOFARM HAWAI'I?

"I first heard about GoFarm when the newspaper (Star Bulletin or Honolulu Advertiser) did an article about them back when the program was being held at LCC. I chose GoFarm because I was looking for something else. I wanted to explore my interest in growing plants since I enjoyed growing plants on my lanai."

WHAT WAS A SURPRISING CHALLENGE FOR YOU?

"The most surprising challenge was finding out what kind of a person I am and how I handle different situations. Farming is not easy. It's hot, it's dirty, it's a lot of work. Things break and a lot of times it's out of your control. Sometimes projects can be done in 30 minutes, sometimes it takes all day, and sometimes you can only complete parts of it but over a span of a week. The bottom line is you just have to be flexible, be able to pivot, be creative and move on, come back to finish it later."

WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING PART OF FARMING?

"The most rewarding thing is seeing your family and friends eat the food you've grown and when they tell me their experience comparing it to what they used to eat or what they see in stores. To find the produce I grow is better in quality and taste assures me that all the hours I put in is worth it, not just in a monetary sense but as a sense of accomplishment. I have done good, righteous work."

ANY LIFE LESSONS FARMING HAS TAUGHT YOU?

"Farming has taught me that nothing is permanent. There is always room to grow and have chances to start again. It has taught me resilience, it has also taught me to not take things so hard/seriously that when things don't work out it takes a toll on your confidence/spirit."

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOUR BUSINESS IN 5 - 10 YEARS?

"I see myself working full time, with an assistant or two, on maybe an acre, with 5 or more steady accounts, 3-5 major crops."

WHAT ARE YOU GROWING AND WHERE CAN WE FIND YOU?

"Diversified vegetables and fruits. I am currently selling produce at the Pearlridge farmer's market, Saturdays 8am -noon."

ONLINE & SOCIAL MEDIA:

 @okupufarms

 okupufarms.wixsite.com/website