

# Storm Recovery Q&A



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Image Thomas Heaton/Civil Beat/2026



# Acknowledgment

We want to acknowledge the priorities of the community first -- caring for kūpuna, making sure there is access to food, water, shelter, and that everyone is safe.

We also understand that in moments like this, there can be an overwhelming amount of information, updates, and calls to action. Disaster messaging can be exhausting, and it's okay if you're not ready to make decisions or reach out for support just yet. For farms, many of you are still assessing damage, checking on your land, and taking stock of what this storm has changed.

This session is not meant to rush that process.

Instead, our intention is to offer guidance for when you are ready—sharing resources, answering questions, and helping you understand what steps you can begin to think about in the meantime. Whether that's documenting impacts, understanding available support, or simply knowing what options exist, we hope this space can serve as a steady, practical starting point.

Please take what feels useful today, and leave what doesn't. We're here to support you at whatever stage you're in.



# How the Session Will Work

**Open Discussion** - ask questions!

## Information Share:

- Assessing damage + recovery plan
- Food safety
  - Soil + water testing
  - Replanting
  - Livestock
- Financial support + options
- Mental wellness support
- Working with your lender
- Programs + Resources

\***Jamie** is available to speak to you 1:1 in a breakout room if there is something you 'd like to discuss in private - [message her in the chat](#)



# Assess Damages + Recovery Plan

## Q: What should I focus on first for my farm?

### 1. Document damage

- Take clear photos of crops, fields, and infrastructure
- Record what was impacted:
  - Crop type and growth stage
  - Estimated yield loss
  - Damage to irrigation, fencing, roads, and buildings
- Note flood conditions (standing water vs. flowing/contaminated water)
- Infrastructure damage:
  - Fencing
  - Irrigation
  - Roads
  - Buildings

### Q: Why is this important?

This is critical for insurance, grants, and USDA programs

### 2. Stabilize land (erosion, debris)

### 3. Plan replanting

### 4. Identify funding options



### Flood Loss Assessment Tool

<https://gofarmhawaii.org/gofarm-hawaii-flood-loss-assessment-tool/>





# Food Safety

## Q: Are my crops still safe to sell?

- If crops contacted floodwater → **generally NOT safe for sale**
- Floodwater may contain:
  - Bacteria (E. coli, Salmonella)
  - Chemicals, pesticides, heavy metals

## Q: When can I replant?

- General guidance: **30-60 days after flooding**
- Depends on:
  - Soil conditions
  - Weather
  - Contamination risk
- Soil testing can help shorten timelines
- When in doubt: **do not harvest for consumption**

## Q: Why is this important?

Flooding directly affects whether crops and products are safe, legal, and marketable—and being careful protects both public health and the farmer's livelihood.



[Food Safety After Flooding PDF](#)

GoFarm offers 1:1 on-farm food safety evaluations

- email us: [info@gofarmhawaii.org](mailto:info@gofarmhawaii.org)

# Soil & Water Testing

**Q : What did flooding do to my soil?**

**And should I test my soil or water?**

- Yes, especially if:
  - Floodwater was contaminated
  - Your well was submerged
- Test for:
  - Bacteria
  - Heavy metals
  - Chemical residues

**Q : What are some potential impacts to my soil from flooding?**

- Loss of nutrients (especially nitrogen)
- Soil compaction and crusting
- Loss of beneficial microbes
- Increased contamination risk
- Expected reduced yields in the short term



## SOIL TEST RESOURCES

- Crop Nutrient Solutions
- Simplot (Kahului)

## WATER TESTING RESOURCES

- GoFarm has funds to support
  - Limited amounts available
- Local water labs available on each island

# Livestock

## Q: Is it safe to graze animals after flooding?

- Wait ~60 days before grazing flooded areas
- Watch for illness
- Contact a vet if issues arise

## Potential Gov. Programs Available to Support:

- Livestock Forage Disaster Program (**LFP**)
- Livestock Indemnity Program (**LIP**)
- Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish (**ELAP**)

## Direct Contacts:

- **Yunuen Bustamante**
  - *O'ahu CTAHR Livestock Extension Agent*
- **Melelani Oshiro**
  - *Hawai'i Island CTAHR Livestock Extension Agent*



CTAHR Livestock Health After the Flood  
[Webinar Recording](#) + [Slides](#)

Livestock Impact & Veterinary Care Survey  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VTRNCRW>

# Financial & Recovery Support

## Q: What financial help is available?

- USDA (FSA programs: loans, crop loss, infrastructure recovery)
- State programs (*limited funding available*)
  - HDAB Emergency Farmer Relief - High demand
    - Funding and reporting:
      - ~650 applications received as of 3/25 am
      - ~330 awards planned
      - Applications by Friday 27<sup>th</sup> will be prioritized - applying after still helpful to let HDAB understand need
    - Prioritization will focus on crop and livestock losses, with distribution aligned to farm density by county

\*Initial reporting indicates at least 6,000–11,000 acres impacted and \$12–\$20M in losses. Ongoing data collection includes a heat map of damage by crop, livestock, and infrastructure.



## GoFundMe - Community Sourcing

### Resources from Help Maui Rise:

- How to start a GoFundMe
  - <https://www.helpmauirise.org/english>
- Kona Low Storm Financial Support Request:
  - [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScfH7Hjq5G\\_vBYkITv51K0ccWhite5eBTrfSQ06gmmlaTuhUGg/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScfH7Hjq5G_vBYkITv51K0ccWhite5eBTrfSQ06gmmlaTuhUGg/viewform)



**Recovery Funding Fact Sheet**  
AgStewHI, HFB, HFU, HCC, SHAC



# Mental Health & Well-Being

**Q : How do I deal with the stress of everything that needs to get done?**

- Feeling overwhelmed or stuck is a common first response
- Financial uncertainty can make everything feel more urgent
- Recovery work is demanding and can quickly lead to burnout
- It's normal if your thinking feels foggy or decisions feel harder
- You're not alone if this experience makes you question whether you can or want to continue farming

*These are normal responses after a disaster*

**Q : Why is this important?**

- Disasters can cause stress, anxiety, and exhaustion
- Financial loss and uncertainty can impact decision-making
- Physical cleanup and recovery can lead to burnout

*Taking care of yourself is an important part of farm recovery*

**Hawai'i CARES Crisis Hotline:**

Call or text 988 (24/7, free, confidential)

**Maui Strong: Mental Health Resources**

**Hawai'i Community Foundation**

**Seeds of Well-Being (SOW)**

# Working With Your Lender

## *After a Disaster*

### Q: What if I have loans and can't make payments right now?

#### You have options—don't wait to reach out

- Many lenders are willing to work with borrowers after disasters
- Support may include:
  - Payment deferments
  - Interest-only periods
  - Restructured repayment plans

### Q: What should I do first?

- Contact your lender as early as possible
- Be honest about impacts to your farm
- Share documentation of losses that is available - consider tools that are out there
- Start gathering receipts and records of any emergency purchases

### Q: What should I have prepared before reaching out?

- Summary of damages and losses
- Current financial situation
- Estimated recovery timeline



**Feed the Hunger Fund (FTHF)**  
**Agricultural Loan Division, HDAB**

**Jason Okuhama, CBL**

**American AgCredit**

**Farm Service Agency (FSA)**

\*We can help connect you to your local lender

# Who can help me right now?

## GoFarm Hawai'i - 1:1 support + planning:

- Valuation of damage and loss
- Navigate food safety questions
- Build your recovery plan
- Connect you to options for capital resources

## USDA/FSA Service Centers - Call your local office

<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Hawaii/service-centers>

- Crop & revenue loss support (SDRP)
- Emergency Relief Program (ERP)
- Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)
- Tree Assistance Program (TAP) (orchards/perennials)
- Livestock programs (ELAP, LIP)

## Hawai'i Dept. of Agriculture and Biosecurity (HDAB)

- Farm resources + information
- Grant + Lending opportunities





- **Community Organizations - Boots on the ground**
    - Hawai'i Farmers Union (HFU)
    - Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i (AgStew)
    - Help Maui Rise
    - Lāhui Foundation
    - Hawai'i Agricultural Foundation (HAF)
  - **Basic Needs + Essentials**
    - Aloha United Way
    - KEY Project
    - Chef Hui
- 

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**



### **Hawai'i Agricultural Disaster Response Resource Guide**

Hawai'i Farm Bureau, Hawai'i Cattlemans Council, Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i, Hawai'i Farmers Union, Synergetic Hawai'i Agriculture council



### **Hawai'i Ag Disaster Response Survey + Resources**

Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i



# Keep Connected



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www.gofarmhawaii.org

# Mahalo To Our Sponsors & Supporters



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