

Food Security in Hawaii

Have you ever wondered what would be the best place to go to during a world crisis? Many people would say that they would go to Hawaii because it's an island in the middle of nowhere, safe from everything. But have you really thought about this? The Hawaiian Islands are very small, they depend greatly on the rest of the world for food. Only 10 percent of Hawaii's food is grown locally. With the rest of the world cut off from us, Hawaii would not be able to produce enough food to support everyone on the islands. Hawaii imports nearly 90 percent of its food. Once again, we only produce 10 percent of our own food. Even with a world crisis it won't be enough to feed Hawaii. So either we take the risk of being unprepared and run out of food during a world crisis, or we find a solution.

In 50 years, we have no idea what conflicts the world would be engaged in. If one of those conflicts were to get too big and something like a nuclear bombing hits the U.S. or other countries Hawaii depends on for food, we will run out of food. So if in 50 years Hawaii has boosted the percent of locally grown food, we could be self sustaining until problems are solved. Imagine what would happen if we ran out of food.

Have you ever heard of the farming technique called vertical farming? According to Wikipedia, vertical farming is “the practice of producing food in vertically stacked layers, vertically inclined surfaces and/or integrated in other structures.” Since Hawai'i is a mountainous/hilly place, it has lots of mountains and hills worthy of vertical farming. If it doesn't work on mountains they could set up some vertical farming stations on the sides of buildings. Also, the Big Island has a lot of rocky plains being used for nothing. We could use

those plains and space to make greenhouses or vertical farming towers. Let's put these unused places to good use.

Another way to use the Big Island's space available is to store food. There could be an organization that raises money to purchase a large surplus from other parts of the world. All that surplus can be stored on the Big Island or other available space. Hawaii just needs to work together to get that organization running, which could make a big difference.

If for some reason the vertical farming does not produce enough crops then here's another idea. There could be a program where if people use their backyards as gardens they can get a tax reduction on their property tax. That would encourage many people to get gardens. We can have local experts who would come and help people develop the ideal crops for their yard. There could be maps that say what crops are best for certain areas. People could share their outcomes or strategies throughout Hawaii. They could even share their crops. Overall, that could boost the food security by a lot, adding to the benefits of vertical farming.

Think about it. Vertical farming, food supply storage program and backyard garden that could save millions of lives in the future. Clarence T.C. Ching always thought about the future. He was always giving to nonprofit organizations or giving money to others. These ideas are the basis of his vision. In the spirit of Clarence T.C. Ching, let's make Hawaii a safer place to live.