

FACT SHEET: MA'O Organic Farm Acquisition



The Waianae Community Re-Development Corporation (WCRC) purchased 11 acres in Lualualei Valley, Wai'anae, Island of O'ahu, for the protection of agricultural lands and expansion of WCRC's MA'O Organic Farm.

Funding and partners:

The State of Hawai'i Legacy Land Conservation Program provided \$737,300; WCRC provided \$250,000 from private foundation grants; and the Trust for Public Land provided technical assistance.

Public benefits:

Under Hawaii Revised Statutes, section 173A-2.6, the Legacy Land Conservation Program is mandated to prioritize the protection of lands that are unique and productive agricultural lands, as well as lands having resources that are in danger of being modified, changed, or diminished.

The 11 acres of land acquired by WCRC is prime agricultural land according to the USDA NRCS soil classification. The land was actively farmed as part of a family farm from the 1950s to the 1980s. After the end of the farming operations on the land it became overgrown with invasive grasses and weed species. Acquisition by WCRC puts the land back into agricultural production. WCRC manages the land as a certified organic farm under its organic farm plan.

Additionally, WCRC, through MA'O Organic Farm, provides an educational program that serves as a stimulus for agriculture in a low-income community. WCRC's mission is to plan and implement community-based economic development projects in the Leeward Oahu community of Wai'anae, that create employment opportunities through education and empowerment. The MA'O Community Food Security Initiative's specific mission is to build a movement to develop a comprehensive and living local food system – educating youth, fighting hunger, improving health and nutrition, growing the organic agricultural industry – to empower our community to move towards self-sufficiency. MA'O is the acronym for *mala 'ai 'opio*, which translates as “the youth food garden”.

