

The Pa'auilo School Agriculture Program

Written by Donna Mitts

Thursday, 24 June 2010 11:49



Kids holding chick at Pa'auilo Elementary & Intermediate School garden. Pa'auilo Elementary & Intermediate School is located on the Hamakua Coast, between Honoka'a and Laupahoehoe. Its student population is around 275 and is the last K-9th

grade school in the state. The school has had a long history of promoting agriculture and I started the garden here as a volunteer ten years ago. I've been leading the school's agriculture program since then. Besides staffing the parent center, my purpose is to teach students how to produce healthy food and care for small-scale livestock.

This former sugar plantation town is surrounded by hundreds of acres of farmable lease land. One goal of this program is that some of the students will choose to go into organic farming as an occupation, possibly on some of the surrounding acreage. Our island needs a steady supply of farmers in order to provide a sustainable food supply. But the methods they use will need to be environmentally sound so that our resources are managed wisely. The old ways of food production using chemical fertilizers and herbicides are not conducive to sustained productivity, soil health and most importantly, personal health.

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