

Food Business Workshops Offered in March

Value-added and specialty foods consultant Lou Cooperhouse will present “Food Business Basics: Getting Started and Finding Your Niche in the Specialty Foods Business” workshops in Hilo, Honoka‘a, and Pahala March 11–13.

The workshops are designed for farmers seeking to develop their raw product into a value-added product and bring it to market.

Entrepreneurs and restaurateurs looking to diversify their revenue streams with specialty food products, and established producers looking to take their food businesses to the next level will also find the workshops of interest.

Both the Kohala Center and the University of Hawai‘i Maui College are sponsoring and facilitating the workshops, which are made possible through support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and East Hawaii Community Development Corporation.



A sampling of specialty foods produced on Hawai'i Island with locally grown ingredients. Photo courtesy of the Laulima Center.

“Many of the constituents we serve are anxious for this knowledge and training,” said Anthony Marzi, executive director of the East Hawaii Community Development Corporation.

“Having this kind of direct access to Mr. Cooperhouse’s expertise will benefit our island’s farmers and entrepreneurs, and has great potential to strengthen our local economy. We’re thrilled be a part of this program by serving as host for Lou Cooperhouse’s Hilo workshop.”

Cooperhouse is the president of Food Spectrum, LLC, a management consulting company with expertise in business innovation and incubation.

Publisher and co-author of a landmark study on the prepared refrigerated food industry, Cooperhouse has served as director of the globally recognized Rutgers University Food Innovation Center, and as an adjunct professor in the Rutgers Business School.

Workshops will be held:

- Hilo: Monday, March 11, 8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m., Hawaii TechWorks, 230 Kekuanaoa St.
- Honoka'a: Tuesday, March 12, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., North Hawai'i Education and Research Center, 45-539 Plumeria St.
- Pahala: Wednesday, March 13, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., Pahala Community Center, 96-1149 Kamani St.

Following Cooperhouse's three-hour "Food Business Basics" workshops, Nicole Milne, agricultural business development specialist at The Kohala Center, will present two one-hour sessions focused on financial resources available to Hawai'i farmers and strategies for marketing agricultural products.

In addition, Cooperhouse will also conduct 30-minute one-on-one consulting sessions each afternoon with pre-selected workshop participants.

Registrants interested in the one-on-one consultations must complete and submit a brief application, available for download at http://www.laulimacenter.org/pdf/FBB_Consult_App.pdf, by March 1.

Applicants will be notified by March 8 whether or not they are selected for the consultations, which are being offered at no additional charge.

Registration is \$35 per participant in advance, and includes access to all three workshops and lunch.

Participants may register online at <http://www.laulimacenter.org/foodbasics.html> or by calling (808) 443-2755. Registrations at the door will be on a space-available basis for \$50 per participant with lunch subject to availability.