

# The Molokai News

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## Value Added Food Expert to Conduct Food Business Basics Workshop

Value-added and specialty foods consultant Lou Cooperhouse will present a workshop called “Food Business Basics: Getting Started and Finding Your Niche in the Specialty Foods Business” in Ho‘olehua on March 15.

The workshop is designed for farmers seeking to develop their raw product into a value-added product and bring it to market. It is also for entrepreneurs and restaurateurs interested in diversifying their revenue streams with specialty food products as well as established producers looking to take their food businesses to the next level.



The Kohala Center and University of Hawaii Maui College are sponsoring and facilitating the workshops, which are made possible by a U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Program grant.

The workshop will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Friday, March 15, at the Lanikeha Community Center in Ho‘olehua, 2200 Farrington Ave.

Following Cooperhouse’s three-hour “Food Business Basics” workshop, Nicole Milne, Agricultural Business Development Specialist at The Kohala Center, will present two one-hour sessions focused on financial resources available to Hawaii farmers and strategies for marketing agricultural products.

Registration is \$10 per participant in advance, and includes access to all three workshops and lunch. Participants may register online at the [Laulima Center for Cooperative Business Development](#) or by calling 443-2755. Registrations at the door will be on a space-available basis for \$15 per participant with lunch subject to availability.

In addition, Cooperhouse will also conduct 30-minute one-on-one consulting sessions that 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 [The Kohala Center](#) website by Friday, 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.

“Lou Cooperhouse’s workshops will prepare island agricultural producers and culinary entrepreneurs to enter the specialty foods industry,” Milne said. “These workshops will help participants understand the specialty foods marketplace, distribution channels, and current and emerging food industry trends, while also helping them define their target audiences, unique selling propositions, and the importance of business and strategic planning.”

“We are thrilled that The Kohala Center and UH-Maui College are bringing Mr. Cooperhouse to Hawaii, and to be a part of this program by serving as host for Lou Cooperhouse’s Molokai workshop,” said Jennifer Hawkins, junior extension agent and Department of Hawaii Home Lands agriculture technician with the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources Molokai Extension Service. “Members of our agricultural community are excited about receiving this knowledge and training. Having direct access to Mr. Cooperhouse’s expertise will benefit our island’s farmers and entrepreneurs, and has great potential to strengthen our local economy.”



Lou Cooperhouse, president of Food Spectrum, LLC

Cooperhouse is the president of Food Spectrum, LLC, a management consulting company with expertise in business innovation and incubation. He has led cross-functional teams in a wide array of settings throughout his career, including new business startups, family-run companies, global manufacturing operations, and retail and foodservice operations.

Cooperhouse also served as director of the globally recognized Rutgers University Food Innovation Center, and as an adjunct professor in the Rutgers Business School. Earlier in his career, Cooperhouse held positions at Campbell Soup Company, ConAgra and Nestlé-funded Culinary Brands in areas of business development, product development, quality assurance and operations. He is the publisher and co-author of a landmark study on the prepared refrigerated food industry, and has spoken at over 100 industry conferences.