

United States Department of Agriculture
Project Initiation

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Project Title

Pacific Nutrition Hub

Project Details

Sponsoring Institution National Institute of Food and Agriculture	Project Status ACTIVE
Funding Source NIFA Non Formula	Grant Year 2025
Grant No. 2025-68015-44279	Cumulative Award Amt. \$1,500,000.00
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Program Code [A1722] USDA Nutrition Hubs	

Project Director

Butel, J.

Recipient Organization

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
2425 CAMPUS RD SINCLAIR RM 1
Honolulu, HAWAII 968222247

Performing Department

(N/A)

Non Technical Summary

Nutritional data are limited in the region. Since the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) does not sample the Pacific region, nor present data on Native Hawaiian, Native Alaskan or Pacific Islander race/ethnic groups, measured data on obesity, dietary intake and physical activity are not available without CHL, and are critical to guide programs and policies for this region and populations. Further, since Pacific foods are not identified in these surveys, they are not analyzed by national labs for nutritional composition, to guide nutrition guidance and programs. The lack of local produce and foods in the national compositions limits the knowledge, use and presence of local produce in federal nutritional programs. Having more locally produced foods in the community could decrease reliance on imported foods, support local farmers, and increase resiliency in this geographically isolated region. By combining data from EFNEP and CHL specific to the region, we will identify shared characteristics that aim to understand their complex interrelations and provide more targeted dietary guidance accordingly. Nutrition capacity in the region will be

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enhanced through a coordinated Extension, Education and Research approach. We will use a conceptual framework with key components to implement the activities. The approach with consist of four phases: 1) initial research, 2) resource development 3) training and capacity building, and 4) full operation. This project will contribute to the reduction of diet-related chronic diseases and advance nutrition security in the USAPR leading to a healthier population.

Animal Health Component

Animal Health Component: 0%

Research Effort Categories

Basic	0%
Applied	60%
Developmental	40%

Classification

Knowledge Area (KA)	Subject of Investigation (SOI)	Field of Science (FOS)	Percent
703	6099	1010	100%

Knowledge Area

[703] Nutrition Education and Behavior

Subject Of Investigation

[6099] People and communities, general/other

Field Of Science

[1010] Nutrition and metabolism

Keywords

US Affiliated Pacific Region; precision nutrition; nutrition capacity; translational research; Insul

Goals / Objectives

The Pacific Nutrition Hub's goal is to enhance nutrition capacity in the US Affiliated Pacific Region (USAPR), through data-driven strategies and professional trainings that are tailored for the area's indigenous populations that are culturally and biologically distinct with native languages, and customs. Objectives of this program are: 1) Conduct regional nutritional research related to federal nutrition programs such as EFNEP and SNAP/NAP to more precisely meet the unique needs of the region's diverse population and health programs. 2) Develop a repository of comprehensive nutrition resources that includes community outreach resource materials, recipe and nutrition database, templates, and images that are based on the specific and unique populations of the US Affiliated Pacific Region. 3) Provide professional training for diverse Pacific health and nutrition practitioners to enhance capacity to effectively communicate precision nutrition and health concepts focused on Pacific and other remote, rural populations. The Pacific Nutrition Hub will leverage partnerships to establish a central hub of nutrition data to make

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recommendations based on precision nutrition methodology. Professional training will be provided to effectively communicate Pacific-focused nutrition and health concepts by developing and implementing training modules for developing impact reports, Pacific MyPlate materials, and infographics based on regional dietary intake and health data. A repository will be developed to house outreach materials and trainings. Local advisory councils will advise in translating research findings into practical, culturally appropriate applications. This integrated approach will foster a greater understanding of precision nutrition, ultimately leading to improved policies, practices, and health outcomes in the USAPR.

Project Methods

The methods for the Pacific Nutrition Hub are based on a conceptual framework with key components with and implementation strategy (listed below).

Conceptual Framework Key Components:

- Data Analysis** Focus on federal nutrition programs (WIC, EFNEP, SNAP/NAP) Integrate data for population subgroups Apply precision nutrition methodology
- Resource Development** Create culturally appropriate nutrition materials Develop recipe database based on regional dietary intake Design Pacific-focused MyPlate materials
- Training and Capacity Building** Offer professional development for health/nutrition practitioners Enhance ability to communicate precision nutrition concepts Focus on remote, rural populations
- Partnerships and Centralized Data Hub** Establish partnerships with local organizations and research institutions Create a central hub for nutrition data and research findings
- Community Engagement** Utilize local advisory councils for cultural translation Engage community nutrition education programs
- Monitoring and Evaluation** Develop impact reports based on regional data Create infographics highlighting key nutrition trends and challenges

Conceptual Framework Implementation Strategy:

- Initial Research Phase (Year 1-2):** Conduct baseline studies on food consumption patterns Analyze existing nutrition programs' effectiveness
- Resource Development Phase (Year 2-3):** Create initial set of culturally appropriate nutrition materials Begin developing recipe and nutrition databases
- Training and Capacity Building Phase (Year 3-4):** Launch professional training programs for health/nutrition practitioners Introduce precision nutrition concepts tailored to Pacific populations
- Full Operational Phase (Year 4+):** Continue research and data collection Expand resource repository Scale up training programs Implement community outreach initiatives

During the first-year evaluations will be conducted on the development of the repository and materials. The evaluations will be formative evaluations that include qualitative feedback from the jurisdiction leads and LAC members, along with surveys to region nutrition and health programs. A summative evaluation on the use of the repository and materials using website analytics during years 2 through 5. A formative evaluation using qualitative feedback from jurisdiction LACs, will be conducted to suggest improvements to training content and modality. Evaluation of training effectiveness on using the developed materials and ability to convey information in a culturally-appropriate way will use participants surveys.