

**Project Title:** State of Hawai'i Game Meat Processing Plan

**Parties Involved:** Hawai'i Department of Agriculture  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

**Introduction:**

**ACT 054—Relating to Meat Donation**

**ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII**

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that there is a need for an increased protein donation capacity to feed local under-resourced populations. Existing law specifically prohibits the inclusion of meat as a donation; however, wild game can be a significant source of protein. The inclusion of wild game as a donation-eligible food resource creates a beneficial outlet for food-safe meat harvested from invasive species.

The legislature also finds that Wisconsin, Michigan, and Utah offer meat donation programs that can serve as models that Hawaii can assess to develop tools for long-term, sustainable, management programs for invasive species. For example, Utah amended its Good Samaritan law to enable the harvest of white tail deer meat for donation to charities and provided an exception to antemortem inspection if certain requirements and conditions are met.

Accordingly, the purpose of this is to amend the conditions for donations to allow provision of wild meat to under-resourced communities, including the homeless.

SECTION 2. Section 145D-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsections (d) and (e) to read as follows:

(d) The exceptions to liability specified in subsection (a) shall include:

- (1) The donation of perishable or nonperishable food that has exceeded the labeled shelf-life date recommended by the manufacturer;
- (2) The donation of farm produce; provided that the good-faith donor or distributor reasonably believes that the food is fit for human consumption; and
- (3) The donation of livestock or wild game meat; provided that the good-faith donor harvested the meat in a food-safe manner and processed the meat in accordance with federal law and the distributor reasonably believes that the food is fit for human consumption.

(e) For the purposes of this section:

"Donor" means any individual, food vendor, food manufacturer, food distributor, grocery or convenience store, charitable or nonprofit organization, butcher, meat processor, or government agency that donates food to needy persons where the food in question has been prepared and packaged in a facility meeting all relevant food safety guidelines, certifications, and requirements and has passed all food safety inspections.

SECTION 3. (a) There is established within the department of agriculture for administrative purposes a meat processing task force to develop and implement a plan to expand the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services.

## Purpose of Project:

The State of Hawai'i will enter into a professional services contract with a consultant to develop and implement a plan to expand the State's meat processing capacity to allow the meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by non-profit food distribution services to feed local under-resourced communities, including the homeless.

Project Objectives/Tasks	Timeline
<p><b><u>Project Objective 1</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Food Safe Handling Procedures</u></b></p> <p>Produce a list of food-safe handling procedures to be used by hunters, from the field to the slaughter facility, that has been submitted by the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture and reviewed and approved by the Hawai'i Department of Health.</p> <p><b><u>Task 1</u></b></p> <p>Work with the Hawai'i Department of Health to produce the food safe procedures a hunter needs to implement to field dress the game, transport it out of the field, and deliver it to a participating slaughter facility.</p> <p>Recommend research needed to determine best practices for food safe procedures.</p> <p>Have Department of Land and Natural Resources certify that a hunter is proficient in food safe handling procedures through an affordable short course. Administer an exam after reading food safe handling procedures similar to e-food certification (\$25).</p> <p><b><u>Task 2</u></b></p> <p>Survey or meet with the hunting clubs and hunters in the State.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Are they able to abide by the safe food handling procedures recommended by the Department of Health?</li><li>Would hunting clubs and large land owners be willing to hold several hunt days, throughout the year, to donate the game to the program?</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Begin with execution of the contract</li><li>● Complete by September 30, 2024</li></ul> <p><b>NOTE: Upon execution of the contract, the Contractor will have an initial meeting with the Task Force and will meet every 2 months thereafter.</b></p>

- c. How many wild game animals can they donate a week?
  - c1. What is the estimated amount (min-max) of feral deer/swine/goat/sheep taken per hunter/per hunt?
- d. What incentives will encourage the hunters to hunt and donate the game to the program?
  - i. Recognition for community service
  - ii. Financial award
  - iii. Tax credit

## **Project Objective 2**

### **Slaughter Facility's Capacity** **to Process Wild Game Protein–by County**

Determine the number of new facilities needed, their slaughter capacity and the expansion needs of current slaughter facilities to accommodate the increase in processing of wild game.

## **Task 3**

Survey the Slaughter Facilities in the State.

- a. Are they willing to accept wild game, alive or dead, for processing and distribution to food distribution organizations?
  - a1. How would they process game for donation? i.e. Accept throughout week, hold and keep under refrigeration/process one day, etc.?
  - a2. Are slaughter facilities willing to accept game killed within the previous 12 hours or less prior to presentation?
  - a3. Are slaughter facilities willing to accept game killed within the previous 13 hours or more prior to presentation?
- b. How many wild game can they process in one week?  
Is there enough cold storage capacity?

- September 1, 2024 – November 30, 2024

- c. How many slaughter facilities will have to be constructed to meet the processing demand?
- d. What are the expansion requirements for the existing slaughter facilities to increase their capacity to process wild game?
- e. What are the legal issues preventing the slaughter facilities from participating in the wild game protein program?
  - e1. Could USDA FSIS inspect the processing of game meat if Hawaii HRS was amended to allow non-antemortem inspected product to be used in the state (not for sale) What would cost for FSIS inspection be?
- f. What fiscal incentives will encourage the slaughter facilities to participate in the wild game protein program?
  - f1. Also, if they could, what would they charge to process?

### **Project Objective 3**

### **Food Distribution Organizations**

#### **Task 4**

Survey the food distribution organizations in the State.

- a. List the organizations that would be willing to accept “uninspected wild game protein” for distribution to the under-resourced communities and homeless.
- b. How much wild game protein could they distribute a week?  
(Need to consider the size packaging (family size portions: 1 pound, 2 pounds, etc.) which are ready for defrosting and cooking, not needing reportioning.)
- c. What are the legal issues preventing the organizations from participating in the wild game protein distribution?

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- d. List any other concerns they may have about distribution of non-inspected wild game protein.  
- Add disclaimer on label, “Not for retail sale.”

#### **Project Objective 4**

### **Legislative Actions Needed to Support this Wild Game Protein Distribution Program**

#### **Task 5**

List the Legislative actions needed to support this plan.

- a. Bill to protect the hunters, who follow the Department of Health guidelines for field dressing wild game, from liability.
- b. Bill to protect the slaughter facility and its owners from liability for receiving and processing wild game.
- c. Bill to protect the food distribution organizations, from liability, from distributing non-inspected wild game protein.
- d. Bills to incentivize the participation of hunters and slaughter facility operators in the wild game protein distribution program.
- e. Amend Ch 159, HRS to allow non-antemortem inspected product to be used in the state (not for sale).
- f. Request funding for research on best management practices for food safe procedures.

- September 1,  
2024 – May 3,  
2025

## **Project Deliverables:**

- Procedures approved by the Hawai'i Department of Health for hunters to follow to ensure that the wild game protein is food safe.
- A checklist of food safe procedures that the hunter(s) followed to ensure the safety of the wild game donation. It shall include the time of the kill, time the game is dropped off at the slaughter facility, a tag number to link the hunter(s) with the game donation for traceability, etc.
- A list of hunting clubs and hunters interested in participating in the donation program.
  - The list shall be by County and will include contact information.
- A list of the slaughter facilities in the State that will participate in the processing of donated wild game.
  - The list shall be by County and will include contact information.
  - List the capacity to process wild game by individual facility.
  - List the expansion needs of each facility to increase its capacity to accommodate the donated wild game.
  - List new facilities needed by County and possible locations.
  - List of the food distribution organizations in the State that will participate in the distribution of donated wild game protein.
  - The list shall be by County and will include contact information.
  - List any concerns preventing them from participating in the program.
- List of the legal concerns that need to be addressed legislatively for the program.
  - Liability issues addressed by hunters, slaughter facilities, food distribution organizations, etc.
  - Incentives to encourage participation in the program.

- Other

Reports	Due Dates
First Draft	June 3, 2025
Second Draft	September 30, 2025
Final Report	December 2, 2025