



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 16, 2021

### VOTING BEGINS MONDAY FOR ALOUN FARMS MAHI‘AI CULINARY COMPETITION CHEFZONE PEOPLE’S CHOICE AWARD

Kapolei – [Aloun Farms](#) is inviting the general public to select the ChefZone People’s Choice Award for this year’s “Eat Local, Shop Local, Live Sustainably” themed Aloun Farms Mahi‘ai Culinary Competition. Starting at noon Monday, Sept. 20, through midnight Wednesday, Sept. 22, anyone can vote by liking the photo of their favorite dish via Aloun Farms’ [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages ([@Aloun-FarmsHawaii](#)). The school team that receives the most likes will receive a prize pack from event sponsors.

“We’re excited to partner with ChefZone to bring back our culinary competition this year,” said Aloun Farms President Alec Sou. “While we wanted to hold the competition at ChefZone, and host a gala featuring dishes from the winning culinary team, we’re grateful that we could still put on this event and be able to support our local high schools, and promote eating and shopping local, and living and farming sustainably.”

The competition took place this past week at the nine participating high schools where students, advisors, and a judge socially distanced and followed COVID-19 protocols. This year’s participants included teams from Campbell High School, Farrington High School, Lahainaluna High School, Leilehua High School, Moanalua High School, Nānākuli High School, Waipahu High School, Waialua High School, and Wai‘anae High School.

Teams were required to create a unique dish with Aloun Farms’ ‘Ewa Sweet Onion and ChefZone’s Exclusive Brand “Villa Frizzoni” Pasta. Bonus points were awarded to teams who used additional ingredients including: Kauai Shrimp, Maui Cattle Company, and/or other in-season Aloun Farms’ produce including Chinese parsley, eggplant, zucchini, long bean, kabocha, green onion, head cabbage, cantaloupe, watermelon, Meyer lemon, mint, kamote leaves, green papaya, or honeydew melon.

Each judge rated dishes based on: creativity; locality and ingredient choice; presentation; flavor profile; texture and density; and seasonality. The team that receives the highest score will receive \$2,500 in scholarship prize money to further their education in the culinary field. Second and third place will receive \$1,500 and \$500, respectively. The winning teams, including the ChefZone People’s Choice Award, will be notified via email and announced by Friday, Sept. 24, via Aloun Farms and ChefZone’s social media and websites.

Participating schools will also receive \$4,000 each to benefit their culinary programs, custom chef coats, and other prizes thanks to presenting sponsor ChefZone, a division of Y. Hata & Co., Limited and other sponsors including Mahi Pono, Meadow Gold, Krause Family Foundation and Leeward Community College.

“ChefZone is committed to supporting the culinary community, both current and future,” said Russell J. Hata, chairman, president and CEO of Y. Hata. “We source our quality produce for ChefZone from Aloun Farms so stepping up to sponsor their culinary competition was a proud moment for us and a natural next step in our partnership. We believe in the spirit of the competition in encouraging aspiring chefs to think creatively and locally.”

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In addition to voting for the ChefZone People’s Choice Award, the public may also make a donation to support the high school culinary programs across Oahu, Maui and Hawai’i Island online at [www.aloun-farms.com](http://www.aloun-farms.com). In lieu of an in-person gala this year, Aloun Farms is taking the festivities virtual. Visit the

VOTING BEGINS MONDAY FOR ALOUN FARMS' CULINARY COMPETITION  
CHEFZONE PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD *continued*

website for family-friendly recipes, footage of the culinary competition and an opportunity to win prizes from sponsors for hotel stays, restaurant and dining experiences, gift sets and more. Winners will be announced in October and prizes will be distributed by mail.

For more information about Aloun Farms Mahi'ai Culinary Competition, visit [www.alounfarms.com](http://www.alounfarms.com).

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**About Aloun Farms**

For more than 40 years, Aloun Farms has been providing fresh, locally grown produce, direct from their farms to supermarkets throughout the state. As a local, family-run business with 160 employees, the 2,000-acre commercial farm in West O'ahu harvests signature fruits and vegetables like 'Ewa sweet onion and sweet corn, cantaloupe, honeydew melon and seedless watermelon. Aloun Farms also supports the Future Farmers of America and school-to-work programs, provides educational farm tours, and hosts community events like Pumpkin Festival and 'Ewa Sweet Onion Festival high school culinary competition to strengthen and sustain Hawaii's agricultural industry. For more information, visit [www.alounfarms.com](http://www.alounfarms.com).

**About ChefZone**

ChefZone, the cash and carry division of Y. Hata, was developed to provide a one-stop solution for the food service industry, including a demonstration kitchen, tabletop showroom and business center to help partners succeed. A dedicated sales team provides solutions to achieve more profitability, including cost control, inventory management and menu development. Offering more than 7,000 products, including exclusive specialty items, ChefZone has become a popular destination for families and "foodies" and offers two levels of free membership: foodservice operators and 'Ohana (public). For additional information, visit [@chefzonehi](https://www.chefzone.com) or [www.chefzone.com](http://www.chefzone.com).

**About Y. Hata & Co., Limited**

Since its humble beginnings in 1913 in Hilo, Y. Hata & Co., Limited has expanded to become one of Hawaii's most recognized and respected businesses serving customers statewide, and was named one of Hawaii's most charitable businesses of 2020 by Hawaii Business Magazine. ChefZone, the cash and carry division of Y. Hata, opened its doors in 2014 to serve the local culinary community of restaurateurs and at-home chefs. ChefZone carries over 7,000 products including specialty items, local products, and exclusive brands that can not be found anywhere else in Hawaii. Russell J. Hata is now the third generation Hata to serve as President and CEO, continuing his grandparents' legacy to serve the people of Hawaii and provide Solutions Delivered with Aloha. For additional information, visit [@yhata-aco](https://www.yhata.com) or [www.yhata.com](http://www.yhata.com).

Media Contact:

Lea Okudara

[lokudara@gmail.com](mailto:lokudara@gmail.com)

(808) 729-6776