

# West Hawaii Today

## Honaunau Elementary School program offers students an opportunity to grow and taste fresh, organic food.

January 15, 2014

The Honaunau School garden, run by Melissa Chivers and Jessica Sobocinski, is more than just a place where flowers and vegetables grow; it is a living classroom where students and teachers can observe, interact with, and learn about the natural world that is responsible for supporting human existence on this planet.

While students fashion “mother nature tools” from sticks and hunt for cabbage worms eating the garden’s kale, they are discovering the value of their own observations, inferences and their role as caretakers of the Earth and growers of not only food, but beauty, medicine and fun. The students not only grow food, they also get to harvest, taste and learn how to prepare it in healthy ways.

Most recently, one garden class prepared two types of pesto using basil from the garden. When the students did the taste test, the majority of them said that they liked best the pesto with kale in it.

All produce is sent home with the students, given away to families at the end of the week or used in cooking demonstrations during the garden classes. Nothing goes to waste, so students know that wilting plants, weeds and food scraps from their snacks go straight into the compost pile. The first grade class is responsible for collecting organic waste from all the classrooms and bringing it into the garden to feed the “weebeasties” that live in the compost pile and grind the garbage into compost.



For more stories, photos, recipes and more, visit the school blog, [honaunauschoolgarden.wordpress.com](http://honaunauschoolgarden.wordpress.com).

Anyone interested in donating time, materials or funds should contact Sobocinski at

[jessica.sobocinski@foodcorps.org](mailto:jessica.sobocinski@foodcorps.org).

- See more at: <http://westhawaii.com/news/local-features/honaunau-elementary-school-program-offersstudents-opportunity-grow-and-taste#sthash.rRpXkxQJ.dpuf>

Photos:

- 1) Kindergartner Kylie Matsuoka uses a magnifying glass while looking for insects on plants.
- 2) Second-grader Kanaloa Biven uses a watering can to water his plants.

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