

TEA CHEST HAWAII - FABEX

ABOUT TEA CHEST. Tea Chest Hawaii is an award-winning tea company founded in 1995 by husband and wife team, Byron and Satomi Goo. The company is based in Honolulu, Hawaii. Tea Chest Hawaii is known globally for their gourmet teas that use local ingredients from Hawaii for a truly unique flavor.

The company specializes in gourmet teas and distributes their products on both a wholesale and consumer level basis. Tea Chest Hawaii has been recognized for using organic certified, natural and local ingredients in addition to its support of sustainable agricultural practices.

Tea Chest Hawaii has been integral in fostering tea growers in Hawaii and in 2015 the U.S. Small Business Administration recognized the company's efforts with a Small Business of the Year award.

THE CHALLENGE. Tea Chest Hawaii's management was looking for ways to expand the company's exposure and export into international markets, specifically the Asia region and Japan in particular. Management understood that before they could build wholesale food service partnerships (i.e. hotels and restaurants) in other countries, they first needed to build relationships with the respective buyers.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. In 2018 and 2019, Innovate Hawaii, part of the MEP National Network™, invited Tea Chest Hawaii to participate in the FabEx Trade Show in Japan to help the company meet international buyers and build their export relationships. FabEx is one of the largest trade fairs in Japan covering the entire range of commercial foods, food products, equipment and packaging.

Owner Byron Goo used the FabEx Trade Show to research market trends in Japan, connect with prospective buyers and to take the time to start forming relationships. Working with international businesses means that a level of trust needs to be established beforehand. Being able to meet with potential partners two years in a row helped build those export connections.

"Innovate Hawaii provides unique business services that you can't find anywhere else in Hawaii. Whether it's expanding our footprint, working on the efficiency of our production line or building our manufacturing skillset—Innovate Hawaii has been able to assist us."

-Byron Goo, Owner

RESULTS



Tea Chest Hawaii's food service program in Japan grew by **300%** in 2019.



Met international buyers and built their export relationships.

CONTACT US



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