

International Year of the Woman Farmer 2026



Raia Olsen

O'ahu Grazers
North Shore of O'ahu, Hawai'i
www.oahugrazers.com
Instagram: @oahu_grazers

How long have you/your family been involved in agriculture?

I still consider myself relatively new to agriculture compared to many multi-generation farming and ranching families. But I've been raising sheep for about 14 years. What started with a love of horses eventually led to rodeo and to raising cattle and sheep with my husband, Daniel. Today, we operate O'ahu Grazers, specializing in solar grazing, prescribed grazing, and local meat production.

What do you raise?

We raise hair sheep, including Dorper (including black and white-headed) and Katahdin, primarily, with some Barbados Blackbelly and St. Croix. Our sheep work year-round on utility-scale solar facilities and wildfire fuel reduction projects. What makes our flock unique is that they're selected not only for production traits, but also for their temperament, adaptability, and their ability to thrive in Hawai'i's diverse environments while performing an important environmental service.

What message would you like to share with other women in agriculture?

Don't wait until you feel like "you are ready" or until you know everything before getting started. Agriculture has taught me that every challenge is an opportunity to learn. To learn about your business, the environment, and more about yourself.

Don't be afraid to ask questions, seek advice, build relationships with other producers, or try something new. Some of the most meaningful opportunities in my career have come through the incredible people I've met and the friendships I've built, including with fellow producers from across the ocean.

There is room for women to lead, innovate, and make a lasting impact in agriculture. Your perspective, your ideas, and your willingness to keep learning are valuable. Don't underestimate what you can accomplish. You may end up creating opportunities not only for yourself but also for others.



What is your proudest accomplishment in agriculture?

My proudest accomplishment has been helping demonstrate that prescribed grazing can be a practical and valuable land management tool here in Hawai'i and other places. Alongside my husband, Daniel, we've built O'ahu Grazers while raising our family together, and I'm incredibly proud of what we've accomplished as a team.

Seeing our livestock reduce wildfire fuels, improve vegetation management, and support renewable energy projects has been especially rewarding because it demonstrates that agriculture can provide meaningful environmental solutions while creating new opportunities for local producers. Some of those opportunities we've experienced include strengthening Hawai'i's food security by expanding local sheep production and providing another consistent source of locally raised protein for our island communities. Knowing that our work contributes not only to healthier landscapes but also to a more resilient local food system is something I'm deeply proud of.

What impact do you hope to have on the next generation of solar graziers?

I hope the next generation of solar graziers sees that agriculture can be innovative, adaptable, and an essential part of solving some of our state's biggest challenges. My goal is to demonstrate that livestock can play an important role in renewable energy, wildfire fuel reduction, invasive species management, and local food production, while also creating viable agricultural businesses.

I also hope to encourage more young farmers, especially women, to feel confident pursuing innovative ideas and partnerships that may not have existed a generation ago. Agriculture is constantly evolving, and some of the greatest opportunities come from being willing to think differently and work collaboratively.

If my journey has shown anything, it's that livestock can be much more than a source of food. They can be an important part of land stewardship, renewable energy, and stronger local food systems. I hope the next generation continues to push those possibilities even further.

