

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

SHAN S. TSUTSUI
Lt. Governor



State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

April 2, 2015
9:30 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 211

**HOUSE BILL NO. 573 SD 1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Ruderman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 573, Senate Draft 1, which proposes to establish the Hawaii good agricultural practices program to develop and support good agricultural practices for Hawaii farms growing food products. The department supports the intent of this bill.

The department currently has the authority and conducts voluntary audits of farms and facilities on good agricultural practices. This activity is conducted through a cooperative agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and an agreement with PrimusLabs, a private certifying agency.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is currently reviewing comments received on the revised provisions on the Standards for the Growing, Harvesting, Packing and Holding Produce for Human Consumption, under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). The USDA is also working with the FDA to ensure that the USDA's Good Agricultural Practices program is aligned with the FSMA regulations.

Additionally, the department has been working in partnership with the University of Hawaii, College of Tropical of Agriculture and Human Resources, who provides education and training of farmers implementing good agricultural practices. Future



plans include developing a consumer-based program to provide information on recommended safe handling practices, and simpler, more efficient method of record keeping and traceability for the farmers.

We welcome additional funding and resources to continue our efforts in advocating and assisting in educating our farmers on good agricultural practices provided it does not adversely impact the priorities in the Administration's budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Thursday, April 2, 2015 at 9:30 am

By

Robert Bley-Vroman, Chancellor

And

Maria Gallo, Dean

And

J. Kenneth Grace, Associate Dean

College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 573 SD1 – RELATING TO HAWAII GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kouchi, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 573 SD1, which establishes the Hawai'i good agricultural practices program to develop and support good agricultural practices for Hawai'i farms growing agricultural food products.

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) are essential to protect the health and safety of consumers and the economic livelihood of Hawai'i's farmers. Although the Tester amendment to the Food Safety and Modernization Act (FSMA) may continue to shelter small farmers from mandatory adoption of FSMA requirements for several years, it is very unlikely that this will be acceptable to processors, retailers, and the companies that provide their insurance. A case of food-borne illness resulting from farmers' market purchases could well have a devastating impact on our local farming industry. Thus, it is essential that the State provide training and assistance to our 7,000 farmers to train and assist them in GAP compliance to minimize the risk of such public health issues, and prepare future compliance with FSMA and food safety certifications that are already required by the larger food retailers.

Cooperative Extension Service faculty within the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR), University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, have partnered very successfully with the Department of Agriculture and Department of Health to provide GAP education and training. HB 573 SD1 provides a vehicle to ensure that these essential efforts continue by formally establishing a Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) program within the Department of Agriculture.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 573 SD1.



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April 2, 2015

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

TESTIMONY ON HB 573 SD 1
RELATING TO HAWAII GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

Room 211
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kouchi, and Members of the Committee:

I am Christopher Manfredi, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,932 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

HFB strongly supports HB 573 SD 1, which establishes the Hawaii good agricultural practices program to develop and support good agricultural practices for Hawaii farms growing agricultural food products.

While Hawaii's farmers recognize the critical importance of food safety, the current system of third-party food safety certification is unwieldy, expensive, and often impractical for the many small and diverse farms that make up the major part of Hawaii's food producers.

The recently passed Food Safety Modernization Act directs the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to create new, stronger regulations to prevent bacterial contamination of produce and to improve traceability of farm products. FDA's proposed rules were distributed for public comment in early 2013, and due to the large number of comments received, the FDA revised their proposed rules. Public comment for the revised proposed rules were distributed and comments were due in December 2014. The comments for the revised proposed rules are currently being reviewed by the FDA.

Nationwide, and particularly in Hawaii, there is a great deal of concern among farmers and farm organizations regarding the impact of the new rules. Farmers are confused as to which rules apply to their individual farms, what practices will satisfy the new rules, and what the cost of these practices will be. Further, Hawaii's climatic, social, and economic circumstances differ from those on the U.S. mainland, as do many of Hawaii's food crops,

so criteria established for the U.S. as a whole may not be appropriate for Hawaiian conditions.

FSMA allows states to establish food safety criteria, provided that the alternative procedures can be shown scientifically to be at least as safe as the procedures prescribed by FDA's standards. HB 573 proposed program would encourage the Department of Agriculture to develop science- and risk-based good agricultural practices that should meet these standards, while allowing for the diversity of crops, farm sizes, and farming practices present in Hawaii. It also would provide education and training for farmers to learn and implement these practices. The certification program would likely be more practical, more cost-effective, more farmer-friendly, and better suited to Hawaii's unique situation than the current patchwork of third-party certification and impending, but uncertain, new regulations. The ultimate result should be more, and safer, local food for Hawaii's consumers.

We therefore urge you to pass HB 573 and help Hawaii's farmers continue to produce safe, wholesome produce.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter of importance to Hawaii's farmers.



March 31, 2015

Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair
Senator Ronald D. Kouchi, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Comments in Support of HB 573, SD1, Relating to Hawaii Good Agricultural Practices (establishes the Hawaii Good Agricultural Practices Program to develop and support good agricultural practices for Hawaii farms growing agricultural food products).

Thursday, April 2, 2015, 9:30 a.m., in Conference Room 211

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and a utility company. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support of HB 573, SD1** and of the various agricultural stakeholder groups who defend the goals of viable agricultural operations and the conservation and protection of agriculture, including important agricultural lands in Hawaii. This bill articulates the need to establish a good agricultural practices program in order to mitigate the risks involved in food production by identifying good agricultural practices and preventative measure guidelines to ensure safe food throughout the State's agricultural industry and the farm-to-consumer food supply system.

HB 573, SD1. The purpose of this bill is to develop and support good agricultural practices by establishing a permanent Hawaii good agricultural practices program for farms growing local agricultural food products.

LURF's Position. Agricultural safety is vital for the safe and secure production, processing, sale, distribution, importation and consumption of food products and agricultural commodities in Hawaii. This bill will result in the establishment of a good agricultural practices program which is needed to help the State's agricultural industry identify and develop good agricultural practices and preventative measure guidelines in

order to help local farms meet food safety objectives and certification standards, and effectively comply with any applicable governmental rules, regulations and guidelines.

LURF understands that such a program and the practices and guidelines established thereby are necessary on a local level in order that the State may, amongst other things, improve the overall safety of locally grown food, and ensure that local food safety regulations and certifications conform to governmental and other uniform requirements and standards.

This push toward good practices and acceptable measures of agricultural safety which are transparent to all is needed in Hawaii. Establishment of the program will provide a practical means for the State to support agriculture, and will assist the State in its effort to attain increased food self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Based on the above, LURF **supports HB 573, SD1**, and respectfully urges your favorable consideration of the bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and to express support for this measure.



Email: communications@uluPono.com

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS
Thursday, April 2, 2015 — 9:30 a.m. — Room 211

UluPono Initiative Supports HB 573 SD 1, Relating to Hawaii Good Agricultural Practices

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kouchi, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kyle Datta and I am General Partner of the UluPono Initiative, a Hawai'i-based impact investment company that strives to improve the quality of life for the people of Hawai'i by working toward solutions that create more locally grown food, increase clean, renewable energy, and waste reduction. We believe that self-sufficiency is essential to our future prosperity, and will help shape a future where economic progress and mission-focused impact can work hand in hand.

UluPono supports HB 573 SD 1, which establishes the Hawai'i good agricultural practices program. As the number of small farms in Hawai'i has grown in importance during the last ten years, this trend is necessitating the development of a Hawai'i good agricultural practices program. The program's intent is to reduce the potential for contamination of food products on farms via science-based guidelines that support safe farming practices, including considerations for various farm sizes, techniques, and crops. Currently, food safety certification audits are costly for many Hawai'i farmers and preventing more local food from entering the marketplace.

There is a lot of uncertainty around food safety issues. Therefore, we are hopeful that this bill can develop programs to educate and train local farmers in best practices to meet food safety requirements. Furthermore, we are supportive of a consumer information program to teach the public about safe handling of agricultural products.

As Hawai'i's local food issues become more complex and challenging, organizations need additional resources and support to address and overcome them. We appreciate this committee's efforts to look at policies that support local food production.

We believe that by collaborating we can help produce more local food, support an economically strong homegrown agriculture industry, which strengthens our community with fresh, healthy food. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



Respectfully,

Kyle Datta
General Partner

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: mendezj@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB573 on Apr 2, 2015 09:30AM*
Date: Tuesday, March 31, 2015 11:38:20 AM

HB573

Submitted on: 3/31/2015

Testimony for WAM on Apr 2, 2015 09:30AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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