

FEB 06 2009

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PLAN FOR A STATE ORGANIC PROGRAM
TO UNIFY THE STATE'S ORGANIC CERTIFICATION PRACTICES AND
PROGRAMS.

1 WHEREAS, there are several organic certification agents
2 operating in the State who have been reported to interpret the
3 rules of the National Organic Program of the United States
4 Department of Agriculture differently; and

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6 WHEREAS, no statewide system for collecting data on organic
7 farms and small farms exists; and

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9 WHEREAS, the general public does not have adequate
10 information about what organic certification means; and

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12 WHEREAS, it is suspected that some farmers self-declare
13 their products organic without pursuing the organic
14 certification process, which leads to confusion for consumers;
15 and

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17 WHEREAS, fifteen other states conduct organic certification
18 programs through their department of agriculture; and

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20 WHEREAS, local conditions and considerations could be used
21 to bolster the National Organic Program rules and assist local
22 organic farmers; and

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24 WHEREAS, more attention is needed for organic farming to
25 ensure its future success and integration into the larger
26 farming community both locally and nationwide; now, therefore,

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28 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
29 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2009, the
30 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of
31 Agriculture is requested to develop a plan for a State Organic
32 Program to unify the State's organic practices and programs by:



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- (1) Providing consistent interpretation and application of National Organic Program rules;
- (2) Actively collecting and disseminating information on organic farms in the State;
- (3) Educating the general public about what organic certification means;
- (4) Becoming a primary point of contact for the public reporting and the investigation of violations of the National Organic Program;
- (5) Providing local guidelines for and administering the National Organic Program; and
- (6) Establishing an Office for Organic Advocacy that would be committed to building a reliable, safe, and responsive organic farming industry, including coordinating other state agencies for organic farming research and marketing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture is requested to confer with the Hawaii Cooperative of Organic Farmers, the Hawaii Organic Farmers Association, and the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation when preparing the plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, the President of the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Cooperative of Organic Farmers, the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Hawaii Organic Farmers Association, and the Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation.

OFFERED BY: 

