

JAN 28 2009

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that there are numerous
2 benefits to introducing the farm to school program in the
3 State's public schools. The farm to school program connects
4 schools with local farms with the objectives of supporting local
5 agriculture, educating students about food cultivation,
6 mitigating adverse environmental impacts caused by transporting
7 food across long distances, and instilling healthy eating habits
8 in students.

9 The farm to school program contains two major components.
10 First, students receive education on nutrition, and are taught
11 the value of buying and eating local food. The second component
12 involves the serving of local food in school cafeterias, giving
13 students the choice to eat healthier, more nutritious local
14 produce.

15 The National Farm to School Program reports that some form
16 of farm to school programs is currently operating in 8,776
17 schools in forty different states. Hawaii is one of the states



1 listed because some of the State's schools offer education in
2 the areas of nutrition and agriculture. However, unlike other
3 states involved in the farm to school program, no public school
4 in Hawaii regularly serves locally produced food to its
5 students.

6 The legislature further finds that the benefits of serving
7 locally produced food in school cafeterias have been
8 demonstrated by the success and growth of the farm to school
9 program in several states, including California, Florida,
10 Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, North
11 Carolina, and Oregon. Studies conducted by the Center for Food
12 and Justice have found that students who ate from the salad bars
13 provided through the program received an average of fifty-eight
14 per cent more servings of fruits and vegetables than those
15 eating hot meals. Additionally, the farmers supplying produce
16 gained an additional \$1700 monthly on average.

17 According to the Sustainable Living Institute of Maui,
18 Hawaii imports ninety per cent of its food, pays sixty-six per
19 cent more than the national average for food, and has, at any
20 given time, only seven days' worth of food in the State. The
21 Institute's assessment strongly recommends a decrease in
22 importation of food and an increase in local food production.



1 Students also support the farm to school program. At the 2008
2 Hawaii secondary student conference, more than seventy per cent
3 of the student delegates supported implementation of the program
4 in the State's public schools.

5 The demand for inexpensive, local food is growing as global
6 food prices and transportation costs increase. Statewide
7 implementation of the farm to school program would substantially
8 expand the market for local farmers and boost the local farming
9 industry to relieve the State's dependence on imported food.

10 The purpose of this Act is to require the University of
11 Hawaii, college of tropical agriculture and human resources, in
12 cooperation with the department of agriculture and the Hawaii
13 Farm Bureau Federation, to conduct a feasibility study on the
14 potential for establishing a farm to school program in Hawaii's
15 public schools.

16 SECTION 2. (a) The University of Hawaii, college of
17 tropical agriculture and human resources, in cooperation with
18 the department of agriculture and the Hawaii Farm Bureau
19 Federation, shall study the feasibility of establishing a farm
20 to school program in Hawaii's public schools, including but not
21 limited to an assessment of the:

22 (1) Student preferences and nutritional requirements;



- 1 (2) Infrastructure needs and costs of implementing the
- 2 farm to school program statewide;
- 3 (3) Financial aspects of implementing the program,
- 4 including price differentials between locally produced
- 5 and imported products; and
- 6 (4) Regulations and potential compliance issues as they
- 7 relate to federal school food programs.

8 (b) The University of Hawaii, college of tropical
9 agriculture and human resources, shall submit its findings and
10 recommendations to the legislature no later than twenty days
11 prior to the convening of the regular session of 2010.

12 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
13 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
14 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2009-2010 for a
15 feasibility study on establishing the farm to school program in
16 the State's public schools.

17 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the University of
18 Hawaii, college of tropical agriculture and human resources, for
19 the purposes of this Act.

20 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval;

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S.B. NO. 1179

1 provided that section 3 shall take effect on July 1, 2009.

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Report Title:

UH; DOE; Farm to School Program; Education; Appropriation

Description:

Directs the University of Hawaii, in cooperation with other public and private entities, to study the feasibility of introducing the farm to school program in Hawaii's public schools.

