

JAN 23 2015

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that macadamia nuts are
2 among the top five grossing agricultural commodities in Hawaii.
3 According to the United States Department of Agriculture,
4 National Agricultural Statistics Service, Hawaii harvested an
5 estimated forty-four million pounds in macadamia nut crop for
6 the 2012-2013 crop year. The estimated farm value of macadamia
7 nuts for that same year is \$35,200,000.

8 In March 2005, the macadamia felted coccid, *Eriococcus*
9 *ironsidei*, was discovered on macadamia nut trees in south Kona.
10 Originally from Australia, this insect can cause severe damage
11 to macadamia nut trees when uncontrolled. Initially,
12 insecticidal oils researched and recommended by the University
13 of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and human resources
14 were effective at controlling the spread of these insects.
15 However, infestations of macadamia felted coccid have now spread
16 from south Kona to as far north as Honokaa, causing severe
17 damage to orchards in the Pahala area. Although insecticidal



1 oil treatment has been effective in controlling the insect in
2 young macadamia trees, this treatment has proven ineffective on
3 older macadamia nut trees due to size and heavy canopy. Since
4 insecticidal oil is proving to be ineffective, farmers must
5 develop new methods to control the infestation of the macadamia
6 felted coccid.

7 Research is currently being done by the department of
8 agriculture and the University of Hawaii college of tropical
9 agriculture and human resources to develop new methods to
10 control the macadamia felted coccid. The following research
11 work is currently being conducted or planned:

- 12 (1) Investigation of the role of tree canopy modification
13 and understory plants to encourage the presence of
14 natural enemies to the macadamia felted coccid;
- 15 (2) Analysis of potential alternative pesticides;
- 16 (3) Examination of the impact of macadamia felted coccid
17 on plant health and yield;
- 18 (4) Evaluation of action thresholds for macadamia felted
19 coccid management;
- 20 (5) Assessment of the phenology of macadamia felted coccid
21 in the field; and



1 (6) Identification and testing of biological control
2 agents in Australia that could be introduced in Hawaii
3 to control the macadamia felted coccid.

4 The legislature anticipates that the macadamia felted
5 coccid will continue to spread to other regions and counties of
6 Hawaii if uncontrolled and devastate the macadamia nut industry.

7 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds for
8 research to develop new methods of preventing and treating
9 macadamia felted coccid infestations.

10 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
11 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,000,000 or so much
12 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2015-2016 and the
13 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
14 2016-2017 for the department of agriculture, in cooperation with
15 the University of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and
16 human resources, to research and develop methods for the
17 prevention and treatment of macadamia felted coccid.

18 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
19 of agriculture for the purposes of this Act.

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1 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2015.

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S.B. NO. 583

Report Title:

Agriculture; Macadamia Nut Trees; Macadamia Felted Coccid;
Research and Development; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds to the department of agriculture to research and develop methods for the prevention and treatment of macadamia felted coccid.

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