

JAN 23 2015

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# 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 Hawaii is located  
2 approximately 2,506 miles from the continental United States.  
3 About 85 to 90 per cent of Hawaii's food is imported, which  
4 makes Hawaii particularly vulnerable to natural disasters and  
5 global events that disrupt shipping and other modes of  
6 transporting food. Furthermore, the economic impact of food  
7 import replacement is significant. Food expenditures of local  
8 consumers from 2004 to 2005 amounted to \$3,700,000,000.  
9 Assuming that 85 per cent of the food consumed in the State is  
10 imported, this translates to \$3,145,000,000 of food expenditures  
11 leaving the State each year. Growing food within the State  
12 enables the expenditures on food to remain in the local economy.  
13           The development of a whole system approach to agriculture  
14 in Hawaii that pays close attention to soil health, specifically  
15 increasing mineral availability and improving soil structure,  
16 water-holding capacity, crop health, and food nutrition levels  
17 will lower water usage through deployment of green manure,



1 compost, and cover crops; reduce crop loss from pest damage; and  
2 decrease weed pressure. This whole system approach to  
3 agriculture can improve food security and benefit the local  
4 economy through reducing production cost by promoting locally  
5 sourced inputs and the manufacturing thereof. Teaching a new  
6 generation of farmers to use this whole system approach will  
7 create an alternative method of farming that appeals to many  
8 young farmers across the State. Currently, there is a shortage  
9 of qualified teachers for these farm methods. On-farm mentoring  
10 aims to fulfill this need by bringing the students to the farm  
11 and providing qualified farm mentors with funding.

12 The purpose of this Act is to improve food security and  
13 self-sufficiency in the State by encouraging the development and  
14 implementation of a whole system approach to agriculture in  
15 Hawaii.

16 SECTION 2. (a) There is established in the department of  
17 agriculture an on-farm mentoring program that shall provide  
18 existing on-farm mentoring programs with funding support to  
19 teach farmers about methods to improve soil health by using  
20 whole system practices that recycle locally available organic,  
21 diverse plant and animal agricultural nutrients, enhanced by



1 fermentation and other ecological processes such as Korean  
2 natural farming as defined by the University of Hawaii college  
3 of tropical agriculture and human resources.

4 (b) The chairperson of the board of agriculture shall  
5 appoint an on-farm mentor for each island with a population  
6 greater than five thousand; provided that the chairperson of the  
7 board of agriculture may appoint an on-farm mentor for an island  
8 with a population of five thousand or fewer upon request.

9 (c) The department of agriculture shall establish  
10 curriculum for the on-farm mentoring program, which:

11 (1) Shall include instruction on:

12 (A) Farming techniques that utilize locally sourced  
13 organic and other ecological and bio-diverse  
14 agricultural amendments and techniques relying on  
15 integrated farming practices using vegetative and  
16 animal waste products and diverse crops for soil  
17 amendments, seed, and other farm inputs;

18 (B) The culturing of indigenous microorganisms; and

19 (C) The recycling of nutrients back onto the farm;

20 and

21 (2) May include instruction on:



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- 1 (A) Farm management, including whole system farming;
- 2 (B) Animal husbandry, including animal and crop
- 3 production;
- 4 (C) Crop management with an emphasis on soil health;
- 5 (D) Harvesting and storage for farmer cooperatives;
- 6 (E) Farm marketing with an emphasis on food
- 7 cooperatives;
- 8 (F) Integrated pest management and multi-cropping;
- 9 and
- 10 (G) The breeding and release of beneficial insects.

11 (d) The department of agriculture, as part of the on-farm  
12 mentoring program, shall provide grants to support existing on-  
13 farm mentoring programs and a pilot on-farm mentoring program in  
14 the county of Maui.

15 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$60,000 or so much  
17 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2015-2016 as a grant  
18 pursuant to chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to existing  
19 on-farm mentoring programs and a pilot on-farm mentoring program  
20 in the county of Maui to provide mentoring on a whole system  
21 approach to agriculture.

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

3 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2015.

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**Report Title:**

Agriculture; Food Sustainability; On-Farm Mentoring;  
Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes on-farm mentoring program to teach and train farmers to utilize a whole system approach to agriculture. Appropriates funds as a grant for existing on-farm mentoring programs and a pilot on-farm mentoring program in Maui.

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