
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO NUTRIENT CYCLING.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that nutrient cycling
2 fosters agricultural production by building soil health and
3 fertility. Without nutrient cycling, nutrients flow from
4 farmland into aquifers and shorelines, depleting nutrients in
5 the soil and forcing farmers to use commercial fertilizers,
6 which require fossil fuels to produce, decrease soil health and
7 species diversity, increase pesticide use, and reduce the
8 nutrient density of food. Nutrient cycling puts end products
9 back into the land-based food chain instead of generating waste
10 or causing pollution as with food waste.

11 The legislature further finds that nutrient cycling
12 benefits local agriculture by lowering production costs,
13 increasing yields, and leaving the soil in revitalized
14 condition. Nutrient cycling also reduces waste streams.
15 Research conducted at nutrient cycling centers focuses on a
16 whole system of agriculture, identifying the optimum overall



1 solution instead of one that just produces the highest crop
2 yield.

3 The legislature further finds a regional nutrient cycling
4 pilot program on Maui supports Hawaii's transition away from a
5 plantation agriculture economy to a diversified agriculture
6 model of farming. This is especially important on Maui with the
7 closure of the Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar Company plantation
8 and the end of the cane era. Maui county agriculture helps to
9 feed the community, fuel the economy, and provide many jobs on
10 Maui. With the closure of the Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar
11 Company plantation, a regional nutrient cycling pilot program on
12 Maui will continue to support farming jobs. Further, the pilot
13 program will generate soil fertility amendments that in turn
14 will lower farm production costs, increase food security, and
15 mitigate climate change by sequestering carbon into the soil and
16 reducing methane emissions from Maui's landfill.

17 The legislature further finds that a regional nutrient
18 cycling pilot program on Maui would promote environmental,
19 economic, and social benefits for the State along with food and
20 energy security for Hawaii residents. Food waste on Maui is
21 buried in landfills, creating voluminous methane gas that is



1 emitted into the atmosphere. A feasible alternative is to
2 process food waste and other organic waste through a nutrient
3 cycling center. The end result is that the waste goes back into
4 the farming system as a whole, which spares landfills. Waste is
5 processed into low-cost fertilizer to supply farmers who can use
6 the fertilizer for crops, thereby fostering food security,
7 decreasing climate change, and improving air quality.
8 Furthermore, regional nutrient cycling minimizes the interisland
9 transfer of waste streams, reducing the likelihood of
10 transporting invasive species.

11 The legislature further finds that a regional nutrient
12 cycling pilot program on Maui would assist in the compilation of
13 scientific evidence from public and private sources, including
14 the scientific community, industry, conservation organizations,
15 and federal, state, and county agencies to identify the net
16 environmental impacts that agriculture creates. The pilot
17 program would serve as a repository of this information and
18 provide it as needed to federal, state, and local governments.

19 The purpose of this Act is to make an appropriation for a
20 regional nutrient cycling pilot program on Maui and require
21 reporting on the efficacy of the pilot project.



1 SECTION 2. The regional nutrient cycling pilot program on
2 Maui established pursuant to this Act, in consultation with a
3 panel to be selected by the department of agriculture:

4 (1) May determine priorities of the program and give
5 priority to projects that are located in and benefit
6 disadvantaged communities;

7 (2) Shall strive to show promise of being replicated in
8 other parts of the State; and

9 (3) Shall provide environmental and agronomic co-benefits,
10 such as improved air and water quality, improved crop
11 yield, lowered production costs, and soil erosion
12 reduction.

13 SECTION 3. The department of agriculture shall report to
14 the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening
15 of the regular session of 2019 on the operational and economic
16 efficacy of the regional nutrient cycling center pilot project
17 on Maui established pursuant to this Act.

18 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
19 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$2,000,000 or so much
20 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 and the
21 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year



1 2018-2019 for the establishment of a regional nutrient cycling
2 pilot program on Maui, including costs for program operations,
3 equipment, regulatory compliance, land development and leasing,
4 administration, personnel, and contaminant testing.

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

7 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2017.

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H.B. NO. 780

Report Title:

Appropriation; Agriculture; Nutrient Cycling Center Pilot Project

Description:

Makes an appropriation for a regional nutrient cycling pilot program on Maui. Requires DOA to report on the efficacy of the pilot project.

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