SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii is located approximately 2,506 miles from the continental United States. About eighty-five to ninety per cent of Hawaii's food is imported, which makes Hawaii particularly vulnerable to natural disasters and global events that disrupt shipping and other modes of transporting food. Furthermore, the economic impact of food import replacement is significant. Food expenditures of local consumers from 2004 to 2005 amounted to $3,700,000,000. Assuming that eighty-five per cent of the food consumed in the State is imported, this translates to $3,145,000,000 of food expenditures leaving the State each year. In 2016, the department of business, economic development, and tourism released reports on consumer spending in 2014 (2013-2014 survey period for the city and county of Honolulu) by county. Based on those reports, each household in Hawaii spent an average of $9,100 on food during the survey period. Using the same estimate of eighty-five per cent for imported food, each
household in Hawaii spent an average of $7,740 on imported food during the survey period. Growing food within the State enables these expenditures on food to remain in the local economy.

The development of a whole farm system approach to agriculture in Hawaii that pays close attention to soil health, specifically increasing mineral availability and improving soil structure, water-holding capacity, crop health, and food nutrition levels, will lower water usage through deployment of green manure, compost, and cover crops; reduce crop loss from pest damage; and decrease weed pressure. This whole farm system approach to agriculture can improve food security and benefit the local economy through reducing production costs by promoting locally sourced inputs and the manufacturing thereof. Teaching a new generation of farmers to use this whole farm system approach will create an alternative method of farming that appeals to many young farmers across the State. Currently, there is a shortage of qualified teachers for these farm methods. Farmer apprentice mentoring aims to fulfill this need by bringing the students to the farm and providing qualified farm mentors with funding.
The purpose of this Act is to improve food security and self-sufficiency in the State by encouraging the development and implementation of a whole farm system approach to agriculture in Hawaii.

SECTION 2. Chapter 141, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to part I to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"§141- Farmer apprentice mentoring program. (a) There is established in the department of agriculture a farmer apprentice mentoring program that shall teach farmers about methods to improve soil health by using whole farm systems that:

(1) Practice sustainable agriculture as defined by the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, Public Law 101-624, title XVI, subtitle A, section 1603 (codified as 7 United States Code section 3103); and

(2) Recycle locally available organic, diverse plant and animal agricultural nutrients, enhanced by fermentation and other ecological processes such as Korean natural farming as defined by the University of
Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and human
resources.

(b) The chairperson of the board of agriculture shall
establish the curriculum for the farmer apprentice mentoring
program."

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $1,000,000 or so much
thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the
same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
2020-2021 for the farmer apprentice mentoring program to provide
mentoring on a whole farm system approach to agriculture.

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

SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.

INTRODUCED BY: Richard Ige
Ron Kouchi
Rada Nakamura
Roy De Lima

JAN 2 4 2019
Report Title:
Farmer Apprentice Mentoring Program; Whole Farm System; Appropriation

Description:
Establishes a Farmer Apprentice Mentoring Program to teach and train farmers to utilize a whole farm system approach to agriculture. Makes an appropriation to the Department of Agriculture to provide mentoring on a whole farm system approach to agriculture.

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