

JAN 18 2019

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 eighty-five to ninety per cent of Hawaii's food is
4 imported, which makes Hawaii particularly vulnerable to natural
5 disasters and global events that disrupt shipping and other
6 modes of transporting food. The Hawaii emergency management
7 agency has estimated that the State will have food and water for
8 only five to seven days after a port closure.

9 Furthermore, the economic impact of food import replacement
10 is significant. Food expenditures of local consumers in 2014
11 are estimated at \$4,100,000,000. Assuming that eighty-five per
12 cent of the food consumed in the State is imported, this
13 translates to \$3,500,000,000 of food expenditures leaving the
14 State each year. In 2016, the department of business, economic
15 development, and tourism released reports on consumer spending
16 in 2014 (2013-2014 survey period for the city and county of
17 Honolulu) by county. Based on those reports, each household in



1 Hawaii spent an average of \$9,100 on food during the survey
2 period. Using the same estimate of eighty-five per cent for
3 imported food, each household in Hawaii spent an average of
4 \$7,740 on imported food during the survey period. Growing food
5 within the State enables the expenditures on food to remain in
6 the local economy.

7 According to the most recent Census of Agriculture
8 (published in 2012), there are seven thousand farms in Hawaii,
9 with the average age of the farmer at 60.4. Of these farms,
10 only twelve per cent, or 829 farms, earn \$50,000 or more in
11 sales per year. To increase local food production and ensure
12 continued interest in farming as a profession, support is needed
13 to develop financially viable agricultural operations. Existing
14 farms must expand revenues and yield while new farmers focused
15 on commercial production are developed.

16 The University of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture
17 and human resources developed the GoFarm Hawaii program to
18 provide business consulting and technical assistance to farmers
19 and food manufacturers using locally-grown produce and develop
20 new commercial-scale farmers.



1 In each of the past three years, the business consulting
2 group has assisted about seventy farmers with business plan
3 development for loans, leases, and grants, financial and cost of
4 production analysis, marketing, and value-added production.
5 Examples of value-added products where GoFarm Hawaii has
6 consulted include poi, drinks, dressings, pickles, flour, chips,
7 ice cream, and dips using locally grown produce.

8 To develop new commercial farmers, GoFarm Hawaii has
9 established infrastructure and staff to operate beginning farmer
10 training at five locations on four islands: two on Oahu and one
11 each on Maui, Kauai, and Hawaii islands. The experiential,
12 certificate-based program includes production and business
13 education. During the past three years, over one hundred
14 students have graduated from the farmer training program, with
15 almost fifty per cent starting a farm business and eighteen per
16 cent working for others in the agricultural industry. A recent
17 survey of all graduates reflected that sixty-five per cent were
18 still farming on a total of one hundred eighty-two acres of
19 land, with thirty-five per cent of land in active production.
20 There continues to be demand for the program. In 2018, sixty-



1 nine aspiring farmers applied for twenty-four Oahu-based
2 openings.

3 The legislature finds that the GoFarm Hawaii program can
4 improve food security and self-sufficiency, benefit the local
5 economy by promoting locally sourced inputs and the
6 manufacturing thereof, and create financially sustainable
7 commercial-scale farmers. It has established a partnership
8 network of educators, established farmers, landowners, market
9 outlets, government programs, and support organizations that is
10 prepared to support participants and increase the likelihood of
11 success.

12 In 2017, program costs totaled approximately \$1,300,000.
13 The program has relied completely on federal, state, and private
14 grants. To manage the program at existing levels, operating
15 costs for fiscal year 2020 are anticipated at \$1,400,000 with
16 anticipated grant income of \$400,000.

17 The purpose of this Act is to:

- 18 (1) Appropriate funds for the GoFarm Hawaii program to
19 provide business consulting, technical assistance, and
20 beginner farmer training on at least four islands; and



1 (2) Require the GoFarm Hawaii program to provide the
 2 chairperson of the board of agriculture with the
 3 program's annual goals and outputs and outcomes.

4 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
 5 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,000,000 or so much
 6 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the
 7 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
 8 2020-2021 for the GoFarm Hawaii program to provide business
 9 consulting, technical assistance, and beginning farmer training
 10 on at least four islands.



11 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the University
 12 of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

13 SECTION 3. The GoFarm Hawaii program shall provide the
 14 chairperson of the board of agriculture with:

15 (1) The program's annual goals for the chairperson's
 16 review; and

17 (2) A semi-annual report outlining the program's outputs
 18 and outcomes.

19 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.

20  INTRODUCED BY: 



S.B. NO. 261

Ronald de Beu

Ed Riviere

Michelle Tedani

[Signature]



S.B. NO. 261

Report Title:

GoFarm Hawaii; Food Sustainability; New Farmer Training and Business Support; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds for the GoFarm Hawaii program. Requires GoFarm Hawaii to provide the chairperson of the board of agriculture with the program's annual goals and a semi-annual report outlining program outputs and outcomes.

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