
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that addressing the
2 declining agricultural workforce and its ripple effects on our
3 fragile food systems require multiple solutions. In 2013, an
4 agriculture skills panel reported increasing youth education and
5 training as the most common theme arising from county discussion
6 groups on agricultural issues. Related goals included
7 developing agricultural career interests; increasing agriculture
8 programs in public secondary education, including internships
9 and mentorships; and developing clear pathways to post-secondary
10 education in agriculture.

11 The legislature further finds that progress has been made,
12 but to produce a new generation of innovative agriculturalists
13 and natural resources stewards who are informed about best
14 cultural practices and tools and methods of research, the State
15 needs to intensify training for secondary education agriculture
16 teachers and students. The State also needs to support them



1 with skill sets appropriate to foster agricultural growth in
2 present and future Hawaii.

3 The legislature also finds that the next generation of
4 farmers need a deep toolkit to measure and manage plant and
5 livestock production, nutrients, fair and inclement weather,
6 fuel and energy consumption, and finances. Whether farming
7 full-time or part-time, in order to thrive, the farmer must also
8 consider regenerative agriculture, low-impact farming,
9 integrated pest management, vertical farming, the use of robots,
10 and precision agricultural control systems.

11 The legislature further finds that the groundswell of
12 interest in agriculture, sourced in elementary schools and
13 nurtured by the sustainability movement, has created a
14 generation of informed students who must have quality secondary
15 agricultural education destinations to foster their agricultural
16 interests and support potential careers in agriculture.

17 Secondary agricultural education is part of the department
18 of education's natural resources career pathway. The three
19 essential parts of the pathway are:

20 (1) Natural resource courses, which provide agricultural
21 content;



- 1 (2) The Future Farmers of America program, which provides
2 an array of integrated leadership development
3 activities including public speaking, parliamentary
4 procedure training, and a host of national proficiency
5 award programs; and
- 6 (3) The Future Farmers of America supervised agricultural
7 experience program, which is the foundation for
8 business planning and the marketing of agricultural
9 products.

10 The Future Farmers of America has been in Hawaii for
11 ninety-one years and during that time, has produced successful
12 farmers, business and community leaders, and legislators.

13 The legislature further finds that the driving forces of
14 agricultural awareness cultivated in lower education, coupled
15 with the pulling forces of the State's post-secondary
16 agricultural science and technology programs, require a strong
17 secondary program to bridge the programs and complete the
18 continuum.

19 The legislature also finds that prior to 2000, the State
20 had a vibrant secondary agricultural education program in over
21 thirty high schools with a statewide Future Farmers of America



1 membership of over eight hundred members. After 2000, this
2 program began to decline due to:

- 3 (1) A system emphasis on traditional academics and the
4 need to improve standardized test scores. This
5 national trend produced results, but also eroded
6 enrollment in elective programs, including agriculture
7 and natural resources and career and technical
8 education;
- 9 (2) The removal of line-item budgeting that inadvertently
10 hurt small agricultural programs that were not able to
11 compete for funding essential activities, like Future
12 Farmers of America district, state, and national
13 leadership workshops and conferences;
- 14 (3) The removal of science credits for aquaculture and
15 horticulture classes;
- 16 (4) The downsizing of the state government's support for
17 all career and technical education programs. Twenty
18 years ago, agriculture and the Future Farmers of
19 America had half of a full-time equivalent position to
20 support professional development and Future Farmers of
21 America coordination functions. Presently, there is



1 only one full-time equivalent position supporting all
2 career and technical education programs. The needs
3 have increased and human resources have declined; and
4 (5) The growing disconnect between real-world agricultural
5 conditions and what is being taught in the schools.

6 As a result, by 2010, Future Farmers of America membership
7 was at a historical low. Still, a handful of agricultural
8 teachers refused to quit and maintained their facilities and
9 their Future Farmers of America chapters with severely
10 diminished budgets.

11 The legislature further finds that when the department of
12 labor and industrial relations took the initiative to invest in
13 secondary agricultural education in 2014, the State began to see
14 a reawakening of student interest in agricultural careers. As a
15 result, the State has groomed a new generation of informed and
16 articulate agricultural advocates. In the 2013-2014 school
17 year, Future Farmers of America state membership numbered one
18 hundred twenty-six members. Membership gradually increased to
19 four hundred thirteen members in the 2017-2018 school year and
20 continues to trend upward.



1 The legislature also finds that the growing interest and
2 hope in a better educational agricultural future are
3 attributable to:

4 (1) The empowerment of teachers with clear standards and
5 evaluation tools that have shown academic skills are
6 applied in agriculture classes;

7 (2) Supplemental grant funding from other agencies and the
8 sustainability community; and

9 (3) The commitment by the department of education and the
10 University of Hawaii at Manoa college of tropical
11 agriculture and human resources to implement the
12 Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education
13 agriscience curriculum that is aligned with the
14 rigorous Next Generation science standards. The
15 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
16 curriculum is not new to agriculture and in the past
17 year, Hawaii Future Farmers of America students placed
18 first, second, and third in the National Future
19 Farmers of America Agriscience Fair, the strongest
20 showing in over sixty years.



1 Despite the resurgence, agriculture teachers still need
2 administrative support to fully access the latest agricultural
3 trends and opportunities. As a relatively small, but growing
4 state program, with three thousand students enrolled in natural
5 resources and agriculture courses, a centralized support model
6 is still more effective than a distributed one.

7 The legislature further finds that when the department of
8 education committed years ago to flatten state-level operations,
9 it worked for larger core curriculum programs. However,
10 secondary agricultural education still needs a coordinator that
11 is closer to the source of emerging agricultural needs and
12 opportunities. The State also needs to support agriculture
13 teachers with targeted professional development that will help
14 them to inform and motivate their students at a critical point
15 in their education when interest in agriculture begins to taper
16 off.

17 The legislature also finds that agriculture teachers and
18 Future Farmers of America advisors must do all the things other
19 teachers do, but in addition, they tend to plants and animals on
20 land laboratories or school farms. Providing students with
21 agricultural work study project funding will enable them to run



1 agricultural enterprises on campus to learn about agribusiness
 2 and agriscience. This kind of dedicated funding will enable
 3 agriculture teachers to improve their facilities while providing
 4 students with relevant agricultural work experiences. With
 5 appropriate funding for agricultural and natural resources
 6 education programs, Future Farmers of America membership will
 7 continue to grow in numbers and abilities. There are over
 8 twenty public and charter high schools with over two thousand
 9 students enrolled in natural resources classes who are not
 10 exposed to the Future Farmers of America curriculum.

11 The purpose of this Act is to create a coordinator position
 12 in the department of agriculture to coordinate an agricultural
 13 technology transfer and workforce development program.

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

17 "§141- Agricultural technology transfer and workforce
 18 development program; coordinator; reports. (a) There is
 19 established within the department of agriculture an agricultural
 20 technology transfer and workforce development program. The
 21 purpose of the program shall be to:



- 1 (1) Share information among public and charter schools on
- 2 agricultural education needs and opportunities,
- 3 including innovative technology awareness and
- 4 transfers;
- 5 (2) Foster student entrepreneurship through Future Farmers
- 6 of America work-study programs;
- 7 (3) Assist public and charter schools and support the
- 8 department of education in encouraging and increasing
- 9 student participation and teacher collaboration; and
- 10 (4) Serve as a liaison between the department of education
- 11 and business and not-for-profit entities with
- 12 agricultural interests that can direct in-kind
- 13 resources to secondary education agricultural
- 14 programs.
- 15 (b) The agricultural technology transfer and workforce
- 16 development program shall be headed by an agricultural
- 17 technology transfer and workforce development coordinator who
- 18 shall provide support for secondary agricultural education and
- 19 Future Farmers of America programs by:



- 1 (1) Providing secondary department of education and
2 charter schools with agriculture and food systems
3 training and workshops;
- 4 (2) Working with Future Farmers of America programs to
5 provide mentoring and project funding for on-campus
6 work-study internship training;
- 7 (3) Providing workshop and conferencing opportunities for
8 students and teachers to engage in agricultural
9 leadership activities;
- 10 (4) Identifying partners to co-fund Future Farmers of
11 America projects and write grant applications for
12 additional funding; and
- 13 (5) Involving private school agricultural programs in
14 Future Farmers of America activities.
- 15 (c) The agricultural technology transfer and workforce
16 development coordinator shall submit an annual report to the
17 governor and legislature on the activities of, and other
18 relevant matters relating to, the program no later than twenty
19 days prior to the convening of each regular session, commencing
20 with the regular session of 2021."



1 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
 2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
 3 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for
 4 the agricultural technology transfer and workforce development
 5 program established by this Act. The sum appropriated shall be
 6 allocated as follows:

7 (1) \$ for full-time equivalent (FTE)
 8 agricultural technology transfer and workforce
 9 development coordinator position;

10 (2) \$ for Future Farmers of America training;

11 (3) \$ for Future Farmers of America agricultural
 12 work-study internships; and

13 (4) \$ for Future Farmers of America leadership
 14 training.

15 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
 16 agriculture for the purposes of this Act.

17 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

18 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2050.



Report Title:

Agricultural Technology Transfer and Workforce Development Program; Coordinator; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes the agricultural technology transfer and workforce development program and provides for a coordinator position to provide support for secondary agricultural education and Future Farmers of America programs. Appropriates funds. Effective 1/1/2050. (HD1)

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