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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 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. Furthermore, the economic impact of  
7 food import replacement is significant. Food expenditures of  
8 local consumers from 2004 to 2005 amounted to \$3,700,000,000.  
9 Assuming that eighty-five per cent of the food consumed in the  
10 State is imported, this translates to \$3,145,000,000 of food  
11 expenditures leaving the State each year. Growing food within  
12 the State enables the expenditures on food to remain in the  
13 local economy.

14           The development of a whole farm system approach to  
15 agriculture in Hawaii that pays close attention to soil health,  
16 specifically increasing mineral availability and improving soil  
17 structure, water-holding capacity, crop health, and food  
18 nutrition levels, will lower water usage through deployment of



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

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

17 SECTION 2. (a) There is established in the department of  
18 agriculture an on-farm mentoring program that shall teach  
19 farmers about methods to improve soil health by using whole farm  
20 systems that practice sustainable agriculture as defined by the  
21 Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, Public



1 Law 101-624, title XVI, subtitle A, section 1603, that recycle  
2 locally available organic, diverse plant and animal agricultural  
3 nutrients, enhanced by fermentation and other ecological  
4 processes such as Korean natural farming as defined by the  
5 University of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and human  
6 resources.

7 (b) The chairperson of the board of agriculture shall  
8 appoint one or more on-farm mentors for each island with a  
9 population greater than five thousand; provided that the  
10 chairperson of the board of agriculture may appoint an on-farm  
11 mentor for an island with a population of five thousand or fewer  
12 upon request.

13 (c) The department of agriculture shall establish  
14 curriculum for the on-farm mentoring program in collaboration  
15 with the education committee of the Hawaii Farmers Union United,  
16 which:

17 (1) Shall include instruction on:

18 (A) Farming techniques that utilize locally sourced  
19 organic and other ecological and bio-diverse  
20 agricultural amendments and techniques relying on  
21 integrated farming practices using vegetative and



1 animal waste products and diverse crops for soil  
2 amendments, seed, and other farm inputs;

3 (B) The culturing and enhancement of indigenous  
4 microorganisms; and

5 (C) The recycling of nutrients back onto the farm;  
6 and

7 (2) May include instruction on:

8 (A) Farm management, including whole farm system  
9 farming;

10 (B) Animal husbandry, including animal and crop  
11 production;

12 (C) Crop management with an emphasis on soil health;

13 (D) Harvesting and storage for farmer cooperatives;

14 (E) Farm marketing with an emphasis on food  
15 cooperatives;

16 (F) Integrated pest management and multi-cropping;  
17 and

18 (G) The breeding and release of beneficial insects.

19 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
20 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$500,000 or so much  
21 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2016-2017 to the



1 department of agriculture to support existing on-farm mentoring  
2 programs and for a pilot on-farm mentoring program in the county  
3 of Maui to provide mentoring on a whole farm system approach to  
4 agriculture.

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

7 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2016.

8.



**Report Title:**

Agriculture; Food Sustainability; On-farm Mentoring;  
Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes an on-farm 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 support existing on-farm mentoring programs and for a pilot on-farm mentoring program in Maui. (SD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

