
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

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

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 141, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by adding a new section to part I to be appropriately
3 designated and to read as follows:

4 "§141- Healthy soils program; established. (a) The
5 department of agriculture shall establish a healthy soils
6 program. The healthy soils program shall:

7 (1) Create a healthy soil assessment and education
8 program;

9 (2) Provide farmers with education and technical
10 assistance to implement farm management practices that
11 contribute to healthy soils;

12 (3) Operate the healthy soil grants program;

13 (4) Administer existing financial incentives to implement
14 farm management practices that contribute to healthy
15 soils, including the compost reimbursement program

16 under section 141-16 and cover crop reimbursement



1 pilot program established pursuant to Act 312, Session
2 Laws of Hawaii 2022; and

3 (5) Establish other programs to accomplish the purposes of
4 the healthy soils program based on the findings of the
5 greenhouse gas sequestration task force established
6 pursuant to section 225P-4.

7 (b) In administering the healthy soil assessment and
8 education program, the department shall:

9 (1) Work through technical assistance providers or
10 eligible entities to:

11 (A) Encourage farmers, ranchers, and land managers to
12 undertake voluntary soil health measurements;

13 (B) Raise awareness about desirable soil health
14 characteristics;

15 (C) Facilitate on-site, producer-led workshops and
16 training sessions to promote and engender soil
17 health stewardship; and

18 (D) Complete a baseline soil health assessment by
19 testing the organic matter, water infiltration
20 rate, microbiology, and aggregate stability of



- 1 soils, in addition to analyzing phospholipids and
2 monitoring soil cover;
- 3 (2) Establish a statewide network of champions to promote
4 soil health stewardship, offer guidance to producers
5 and land managers, and encourage teamwork;
- 6 (3) Create a program to provide ongoing training in soil
7 health stewardship and workshop facilitation for
8 champions and eligible entities;
- 9 (4) In collaboration with technical assistance providers,
10 sponsor soil health workshops and training sessions at
11 research centers and learning sites throughout the
12 State; and
- 13 (5) Educate students and the general public about the
14 importance of soil health stewardship.
- 15 (c) In administering the health soil grants program, the
16 department shall:
- 17 (1) Award grants to eligible entities to provide technical
18 assistance to producers and land managers in advancing
19 soil health principles and implementing supported
20 methods;



- 1 (2) Award grants as financial assistance to eligible
- 2 farmers, ranchers, and other land managers who
- 3 implement soil health practices on their lands;
- 4 (3) Develop a user-friendly grant program application and
- 5 application and reporting processes;
- 6 (4) Develop criteria for the award of grants; provided
- 7 that grants shall be awarded equitably and priority
- 8 may be given to eligible entities serving young
- 9 producers, veterans, small farms, or ranches or for
- 10 projects that benefit economically or socially
- 11 disadvantaged communities; and
- 12 (5) Ensure that grant funds are only used to advance soil
- 13 health and soil health stewardship.
- 14 (d) The department shall encourage producer, land manager,
- 15 landowner, and interagency collaboration in the management of
- 16 healthy soils and shall:
- 17 (1) Work with technical assistance providers to advance
- 18 soil health stewardship across federal, state, and
- 19 private land jurisdictions by fostering collaboration
- 20 among producers, land managers, and landowners; and



- 1 (2) Conduct outreach to producers and land managers to
- 2 promote the program and other federal, state, or local
- 3 grant opportunities that support and promote healthy
- 4 soils.

- 5 (e) The following standards shall apply to all grants
- 6 awarded under the program:

- 7 (1) Any grant shall be used exclusively for the purposes
- 8 of the program;

- 9 (2) The grantee shall comply with all applicable federal
- 10 and state laws prohibiting discrimination against any
- 11 person on the basis of race, color, national origin,
- 12 religion, creed, sex, age, sexual orientation,
- 13 disability, or any other characteristic protected
- 14 under applicable federal or state law;

- 15 (3) The grant shall not be used for purposes of
- 16 entertainment or perquisites;

- 17 (4) All activities undertaken with grant funds received
- 18 shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and
- 19 county statutes and ordinances;

- 20 (5) The grantee shall:



- 1 (A) Indemnify and hold harmless the State of Hawaii
2 and its officers, agents, and employees from and
3 against any and all claims arising out of or
4 resulting from activities carried out or projects
5 undertaken with funds received from the program;
6 and
7 (B) Obtain sufficient insurance to provide the
8 indemnification under subparagraph (A), if
9 requested to do so by the department of
10 agriculture; and
11 (6) The grantee shall agree to make available to the
12 department of agriculture all records the grantee may
13 have relating to the grant to monitor the grantee's
14 compliance with the requirements of the program.
15 (f) The department of agriculture shall adopt rules to
16 implement the grant program. The grant applications shall be
17 reviewed and approved by an administrative staff member of the
18 department.
19 (g) The department shall submit a report detailing the
20 status and progress of the healthy soils program, including the
21 number of grants awarded, the types of soil health practices



1 being implemented, and the benefits to soil health and
2 agricultural productivity, and its recommendations, including
3 any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than
4 twenty days before the convening of each regular session."

5 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
6 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
7 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and
8 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
9 year 2024-2025 to establish the healthy soils program and to
10 issue grants and other financial incentives pursuant to the
11 program.

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

14 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

15 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on June 30, 3000.



S.B. NO. 660
S.D. 2
H.D. 1

Report Title:

HDOA; Healthy Soils Program; Carbon Sequestration; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes the Healthy Soils Program within the Department of Agriculture. Appropriates funds. Requires an annual report to the Legislature. Effective 6/30/3000. (HD1)

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