

LINDA LINGLE
Governor



State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512

SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DUANE K. OKAMOTO
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
FRIDAY, JANUARY 30, 2009
9:30 A.M.
ROOM 312**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 663
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill No. 663 directing the University of Hawaii, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (UH-CTAHR) to undertake a feasibility study for the development of an animal feed industry in the State. The department believes the livestock industry is a vital part of Hawaii's food self-sufficiency future and feed is a major cost component that can determine the viability of the industry. The department supports the intent of this measure provided its passage does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Biennium Budget for Fiscal Years 2009-2010.

We defer to UH-CTAHR as to whether they have adequate staff and resources to carry out the requirement of HB663.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Agriculture
January 30, 2009 at 9:30 a.m.

by

Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor
and

Andrew G. Hashimoto

Dean and Director

College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 663 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Wooley, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Andrew Hashimoto, and I serve as Dean and Director of the UH Mānoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR).

The purpose of HB 663 is to direct the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources to determine the feasibility of developing an animal feed industry in the State to assist the cattle, pork, dairy, and poultry industries by providing another source for animal feed as an alternative to purchasing the feed on the mainland and transporting it to Hawai'i.

The bill further directs CTAHR to provide, minimally, the approximate existing and potential future demand for animal feed in the State; present and estimated future cost of imported feed; types of crops that would be suitable; estimated cost to produce crops to meet current and future needs; estimated total acreage required; suitable and available lands, including public lands, for growing these crops; potential sources of capital that may be available to assist in the private development of an animal feed industry in the State; and other relevant information to determine the feasibility of development of an animal feed industry in the State.

We support the intent of this bill, as a viable local animal feed industry will reduce Hawai'i's dependence on imported food and will increase Hawai'i's food self-sufficiency, will strengthen and preserve agriculture for future generations as required by our State Constitution, and supports and promotes local animal and agricultural industries, all of which are in keeping with CTAHR's vision and the Governor's 2009 State of the State address initiatives. However, we are concerned about the cost implications of conducting a study of this magnitude on our limited budget and manpower resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



P.O. Box 1630
Kamuela, HI. 96743

Re: HB 663 Relating to Agriculture; Animal Feed
Hearing Date: Jan. 30, 2009 @ 9:30 AM
AGR; House Conference Room 312

Phone: 808-885-5580
Fax: 808-885-5582
E-mail: bifb@hawaiiantel.net

Position: Support with amendments

Representative Cliff Tsuji
Committee on Agriculture

Chair Tsuji, and Members of the Committees on Agriculture,

My name is Lorie Farrell; I am the executive director for the Big Island Farm Bureau. We are the largest general agriculture organization in the State of Hawaii & the Big Island; representing over 650 agricultural members/producers on the Island of Hawaii & over 1600 statewide. We are unique in representing all agricultural commodities & utilize our diverse membership base to direct our policies. The Big Island Farm Bureau is comprised of the individual farm bureau chapters on the Big Island and we are directly related to the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation and affiliated with the American Farm Bureau Federation.

We support HB663 in developing an animal feed study for the State of Hawaii; however we ask that you amend the bill; reflecting clear objectives with achievable milestones and appropriately fund the study and the implementation of the plan. The industry has little need for another plan that sits on the shelf gathering dust; whereas a plan that is implemented can help ensure a successful livestock industries in the future. As we testify today our dairy's are on the brink of extinction; we have only 1.5 dairies operating on Hawaii Island which is more than all the other Islands combined. The poultry industry has seen a huge decline on the Big Island with our largest egg producer shut down; the others are in the same downward spiral. The pork industry may be the next hardest hit. How long do we wait to support our agriculture industries sustainability? There we used that buzz word again "sustainability" in reality it means nothing if you have no producers growing your food. There is no one size fits all cure for Hawaii's agriculture sustainability but we can attack it one problem at a time with the same vision in mind. We are after all the most remote location in the United States and face unique circumstances to feed the people of Hawaii.

We respectfully ask for your support. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.

Respectfully,
Lorie Farrell

Lorie Farrell, Executive Director
Big Island Farm Bureau

**Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
64-957 Mamalahoa Highway Ste2
Kamuela, Hawaii
96743**

**House Committee on Agriculture
Testimony in support of House Bill**

Chairman Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

My name is John Brooks and I am supplying this written testimony in support of House Bill 663 on behalf of the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc. (HCC) is the statewide umbrella organization comprised of the five county level Cattlemen's Associations. Our 130+ member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 1 Million acres of land in Hawaii, 25% of the State's total land mass.

As we have all watched the demise of many segments of the Hawaii livestock industry in recent years, including poultry, dairy and the struggling hog industry, Law and policy makers have been asking the beef cattle industry what we need to be sustainable.

As the industry has reevaluated itself and the future, we have determined that one of our primary weakness has been our dependence on feed shipped in from the mainland. Whether this are feeds used in the feedlot finishing process or feeds being purchased to be provided to our animals during periods of drought, most of it has come from the mainland. There have been several attempts to establish production level feed and hay operations here in Hawaii, none of them successful. Most of these were operations "farming" a product such as alfalfa or corn.

The industry supports the intent of this bill and looks forward to working with UH-CTHAR. We also ask that funding for this project will be made available, as we would not want to negatively impact other important CTHAR work by taking funding from other projects to make this happen.

Thank You
John R. Brooks II
Contact Information:
Office Phone: 808-572-1500
Cell Phone: 808-757-2168
Email: bbrooks@haleakalaranch.com

**Maui Cattlemen's
Association**

PO Box 473

Kula, HI 96790

(808) 878-2660

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**Sustaining
ranching
communities in
Hawaii**

January 29, 2009

Submitted via email

Honorable Clift Tsuji, Chair
House Committee on Agriculture

Re: Support for HB 663 Relating to Agriculture – Livestock Feed Study

Dear Representative Tsuji,

The Maui Cattlemen's Association is a non-profit organization representing small and large beef cattle producers in Maui County. Cattle producers in Maui County have always taken a practical approach to feeding their animals. There is a history of utilizing by-products from other agricultural commodities, and combining these by-products with purchased feeds, as well as harvesting cane and other forage on a small scale basis.

With the dwindling supply of agricultural by-products in Maui County, and the increased demands on ranchers, the means of feeding animals has changed over recent years. Lacking options, producers have been forced to import feed from the mainland. The cost of this imported feed has increased significantly due to the widening demand for grains and corn for other industries, as well as the sharp increases in costs to transport feed to Hawaii.

The College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) has been a leading agency in researching animal forages and feeds. The proposed studies could provide a wide scope of much needed information for the livestock industry, government agencies, and our public officials. As such, the Maui Cattleman's Association humbly asks that the House Committee on Agriculture approve HB 663 relating to Agriculture.

You may reach Maui Cattlemen's Association President, William Jacintho, at jacinthow001@hawaii.rr.com. Vice-President, Amber Starr, may be reached at amber1starr@yahoo.com.

Thank you.

William Jacintho, President

Amber Starr, Vice President

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Rep. Clift Tsuji, Chair

Rep. Jessica Wooley, Vice Chair

Hearing: Friday, January 30, 2009 Please deliver this testimony to the Committee Clerk for this 9:30 am hearing in Conference Room 312. Mahalo!

Re: HB 663

Position: OPPOSE

Chair Tsuji and Members of the House Agriculture Committee:

Animal Rights Hawai'i opposes any expenditure of tax monies on the floundering livestock industry in Hawai'i. Every year industry members come to the Legislature with their hands out for more and more support...and it is never enough!

In these difficult times, we ask that you end propping up the meat, dairy and egg business. The taxpayers should not be burdened with supporting the rural lifestyle of a very few.

Thank You.

Cathy Goeggel
Director
Animal Rights Hawai'i