

JAN 20 2017

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



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

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

18 SECTION 2. (a) There is established in the department of
19 agriculture a farmer apprentice mentoring program that shall
20 teach farmers about methods to improve soil health by using
21 whole farm systems that:



1 (1) Practice sustainable agriculture as defined by the
2 Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of
3 1990, Public Law 101-624, title XVI, subtitle A,
4 section 1603; and

5 (2) Recycle locally available organic, diverse plant and
6 animal agricultural nutrients, enhanced by
7 fermentation and other ecological processes such as
8 Korean natural farming as defined by the University of
9 Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and human
10 resources.

11 (b) The chairperson of the board of agriculture shall be
12 responsible for approval of any grants to organizations with
13 farmer apprentice mentoring programs. There shall be at least
14 one grant approval for each county.

15 (c) The chairperson of the board of agriculture shall
16 establish the curriculum for the farm apprentice mentoring
17 program.

18 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
19 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,000,000 or so much
20 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 as a grant
21 pursuant to chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, for the farm



S.B. NO. 356

1 apprentice mentoring program to provide mentoring on a whole
2 farm system approach to agriculture.

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

5 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2017.

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S.B. NO. 356

Report Title:

Agriculture; Food Sustainability; Farmer Apprentice Mentoring;
Whole Farm System; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes a farmer apprentice mentoring program to teach and train farmers to utilize a whole farm system approach to agriculture. Makes a grant to the department of agriculture for the farmer apprentice mentoring program to provide mentoring on a whole farm system to agriculture.

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