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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ORNAMENTAL GINGER.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that *Alpinia purpurata*,  
2 commonly known as ornamental ginger, is a popular plant that is  
3 commonly used in tropical landscape designs. The plant's red  
4 and pink floral brackets are often used as an ornamental flower  
5 in floral arrangements seen everywhere across the State, from  
6 Waikiki hotel lobbies to cemeteries. However, due to emerging  
7 diseases, commercial production of ornamental ginger in the  
8 State declined by forty-six per cent between 2014 and 2018; no  
9 statistics are available after 2018. Producers in the affected  
10 areas are clearing their lands, as they can no longer  
11 economically produce ornamental ginger. Neighboring farmers and  
12 off-island clientele are concerned about the spread of the  
13 disease pathogens and have asked the department of agriculture  
14 to quarantine the movement of plants from these areas.

15           The legislature further finds that flower producers have  
16 brought their concerns about emerging diseases to the department  
17 of agriculture, University of Hawaii college of tropical



1 agriculture and human resources, East Oahu County Farm Bureau,  
2 and Hawaii Farm Bureau. In response, researchers and extension  
3 agents at the college of tropical agriculture and human  
4 resources performed a statewide survey and causal agent  
5 identification study. The study determined that a combination  
6 of six viruses, including two viruses never before identified,  
7 is the cause of the ornamental ginger's decline, with other  
8 pathogens and ornamental ginger genetic variation as possible  
9 contributing factors. The viruses are found statewide but are  
10 most prevalent on Oahu and Hawaii island. Virus-infected plants  
11 cannot be cured, and virus-infected plants are currently the  
12 main plants being propagated for more plantings, worsening the  
13 problem. Most large-scale operations have virus-infected  
14 plants. Without additional research and a multi-agency  
15 approach, these pathogens could spread further and impact the  
16 profitability and long-term sustainability of the local  
17 ornamental and landscape production industries.

18 The legislature additionally finds that, according to the  
19 study conducted by the college of tropical agriculture and human  
20 resources, the most effective solutions in the immediate term  
21 are to produce virus-free plants for the industry to begin



1 propagating and to test methods of managing virus-infected  
2 plants that are currently being grown. Recommended tasks are to  
3 develop protocols for tissue culture of *Alpinia purpurata* and  
4 its cultivars, produce virus-free plants in collaboration with  
5 the Hawaii Agriculture Research Center for distribution to  
6 statewide stakeholders, develop cultural management strategies  
7 for managing virus-infected plants, and educate growers about  
8 those management strategies and the importance of virus-free  
9 plants.

10 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to the  
11 University of Hawaii for statewide research and prevention of  
12 pathogens affecting ornamental ginger.

13 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
14 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$125,000 or so much  
15 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and the  
16 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
17 2024-2025 for statewide research into ornamental ginger  
18 pathogens, prevention of the spread of ornamental ginger  
19 pathogens, production and distribution of pathogen-free  
20 ornamental ginger plants, and outreach to ornamental producers.



1           The sums appropriated shall be expended by the University  
2 of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

3           SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

4

INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 19 2023



# H.B. NO. 306

**Report Title:**

Ornamental Ginger; Pathogens; Research and Prevention; UH;  
Appropriation

**Description:**

Appropriates funds for statewide research into ornamental ginger pathogens, prevention of the spread of ornamental ginger pathogens, production and distribution of pathogen-free ornamental ginger plants, and outreach to ornamental producers.

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