



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems
Wednesday, February 1, 2023 at 9:45 a.m.

By

Erika Lacro, Vice President for Community Colleges
University of Hawai'i System

HB 313 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB 313, which proposes to appropriate funds to the University of Hawai'i to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program at a University of Hawai'i community college program, and to identify and purchase foreign agricultural technology, including small equipment tractors, and retrofit engines to comply with the EPA's emission standards for small engines.

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB 313, on the condition that any funds appropriated in support of this program does not supplant any portion of the University's Budget Request.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 313.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
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TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2023
ROOM 325
9:45 A.M.

HOUSE BILL NO. 313
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Gates and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 313 that seeks to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program at a community college selected by the University of Hawaii. This pilot program is to identify and purchase foreign agricultural technology, including small equipment tractors, and retrofit engines to comply with the Environmental Protection Agency's emission standards for small engines. There is an appropriation to the University of Hawaii and a report is to be submitted to the 2024 Legislature.

Hawaii agricultural operations may be able to benefit from access to and use of foreign agricultural technology. The Department of Agriculture appreciates the intent of this measure, but otherwise defer to the University of Hawaii about the establishment of the proposed pilot program.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our testimony.





Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair

Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

HB313

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Wednesday, February 1, 2023, 9:45 AM
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Our 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 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports HB313** which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program.

This program will allow ranchers and farmers more options for equipment that is proven useful in other countries, but does not yet comply with Environmental Protection Agency standards. Ranchers are always looking for ways to improve operations, and this option for retrofitted equipment will be beneficial to Hawaii's producers.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director





Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS
Wednesday, February 1, 2023 — 9:45 a.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports HB 313, Relating to Agriculture.

Dear Chair Gates and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food, renewable energy and clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

Ulupono supports HB 313, which appropriates to the University of Hawaii to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program.

According to the 2017 USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Census of Agriculture, 66% of Hawai'i's 7,328 farms statewide, or 4,868 farms, are between 1–9 acres. In addition, 78%, or 5,701 farms, produce less than \$25,000 in sales. Since the average farmer in Hawai'i is a small farmer with limited land, it is critical for local growers to have access to farming equipment suitable for Hawai'i. Right-sized equipment can better help smaller farms develop into future medium- and large-sized farms that can grow more local food for our island communities.

As Hawai'i's local food issues become increasingly complex and challenging, organizations need additional resources and support to address and overcome them. We appreciate this committee's efforts to look at policies that support local food production.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



January 30, 2023

Representative Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair
Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

Testimony in Support of HB 313, Relating to Agriculture (Appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program; requires a report to the legislature.)

Wednesday, February 1, 2023 at 9:45 a.m., State Capitol Conference Room 325; Via Videoconference.

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers, and utility companies. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational, and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support of HB 313** and of the various agricultural stakeholder groups who defend the goals of viable agricultural operations and the conservation and protection of agriculture, including important agricultural lands (IAL) in Hawaii.

HB 313. This bill proposes to appropriate funds to the University of Hawaii to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program to identify and purchase foreign agricultural technology, including small equipment tractors and retrofit engines to comply with the United States Environmental Protection Agency's emission standards for small engines. This measure is vital to farmers and ranchers who must resort to alternative means and technology to operate their farms due to the increase in demand for unskilled labor.

LURF's Position. LURF members include farmers and ranchers who own, maintain, and engage in agricultural enterprises, and who consider such assistance immensely helpful, if not critical to the conduct of their operations and to help sustain their local businesses.

The purpose of this bill is consistent with the underlying intent and objectives of the IAL laws (Hawaii Revised Statutes, Sections 205-41 to 52), which were enacted to fulfill the mandate in Article XI, Section 3, of the Hawaii State Constitution, “to conserve and protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture, increase agricultural self-sufficiency and assure the availability of agriculturally suitable lands.”

LURF therefore appreciates the objective of HB 313, which is to support agriculture and provide needed assistance to agriculture-related or agribusinesses operations. Passage of the long-awaited IAL legislation would be meaningless without implementation of such measures. The establishment of the foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program is critically needed to help support viable agricultural activity in this State.

By recognizing the need to assist the local agriculture industry and the significance of implementing incentives and measures which help to support the growth and maintenance of agriculture in the State, this bill significantly helps to promote economically viable agriculture and food self-sufficiency in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of this measure.



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February 1, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

TESTIMONY ON HB 313
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
9:45 AM

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice-Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 313, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program.

As the demand for agricultural labor continues to increase, while the availability of labor decreases, farmers and ranchers continue to look for alternative means to operate their farms through technology, like small equipment tractors. A limited number of weed management solutions and the increase in labor costs have made weed management a major challenge for many small farmers in Hawai'i. Many small farmers also require smaller harvesting and field prep equipment that is not readily available in Hawai'i. These growers include vegetable crops, wetland crops, and livestock forage crops. There is a need to identify high-technology small equipment and evaluate its applicability for Hawai'i's diverse agriculture systems.

Countries such as Japan have small equipment that is suitable for Hawai'i's small farmers, however, the engines that are attached to small equipment from foreign countries like Japan are not in compliance with EPA standard regulations. This pilot program would help identify desired small equipment as well as find solutions that would allow Hawai'i farmers to import foreign equipment that complies with EPA standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HB-313

Submitted on: 1/31/2023 12:45:27 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Frederick M. Mencher	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice-Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee:

I support HB 313, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai‘i to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program.

As the demand for agricultural labor continues to increase, while the availability of labor decreases, farmers and ranchers continue to look for alternative means to operate their farms through technology, like small equipment tractors. A limited number of weed management solutions and the increase in labor costs have made weed management a major challenge for many small farmers in Hawai‘i. Many small farmers also require smaller harvesting and field prep equipment that is not readily available in Hawai‘i. These growers include vegetable crops, wetland crops, and livestock forage crops. There is a need to identify high-technology small equipment and evaluate its applicability for Hawai‘i’s diverse agriculture systems.

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Mahalo,

Frederick M. Mencher

HB-313

Submitted on: 1/31/2023 1:07:58 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
J Ashman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloe, and members of the Committee,

I **support** this bill which appropriates funds to UH to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program.

This bill is needed because farmers, like others in business need appropriate modern technology to stay viable. For example, the typical farmer in Hawaii operates on a much smaller farm than those on the mainland so they need smaller and customized field equipment which may not be available.

Japan, and other countries, have developed small equipment that would work on Hawaii's smaller farms but the engines don't comply with EPA standards. The program this bill would fund would be used to help find solutions to allow Hawaii farmers to import foreign equipment and ensure EPA regulations are met.

Thank you.

HB-313

Submitted on: 1/31/2023 1:46:44 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/1/2023 9:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Phillipson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice-Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee:

I support HB 313, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai‘i to establish a foreign agriculture small equipment pilot program.

As the demand for agricultural labor continues to increase, while the availability of labor decreases, farmers and ranchers continue to look for alternative means to operate their farms through technology, like small equipment tractors. A limited number of weed management solutions and the increase in labor costs have made weed management a major challenge for many small farmers in Hawai‘i. Many small farmers also require smaller harvesting and field prep equipment that is not readily available in Hawai‘i. These growers include vegetable crops, wetland crops, and livestock forage crops. There is a need to identify high-technology small equipment and evaluate its applicability for Hawai‘i’s diverse agriculture systems.

Countries such as Japan have small equipment that is suitable for Hawai‘i’s small farmers, however, the engines that are attached to small equipment from foreign countries like Japan are not in compliance with EPA standard regulations. This pilot program would help identify desired small equipment as well as find solutions that would allow Hawai‘i farmers to import foreign equipment that complies with EPA standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Best regards

Mark Phillipson



MAUI COUNTY FARM BUREAU

PO Box 148, Kula, HI 96790
mauicountyfarmbureau.org

TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

February 1, 2023
9:45 AM
Conference Room 325

HB 313

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Gates and Members of the Committee:

Maui County Farm Bureau(MCFB) appreciates this opportunity to testify on this important issue. MCFB is a general agriculture advocacy organization representing farm and ranch families and organizations on the island of Maui.

MCFB strongly supports HB313 appropriate funds to UH-CTAHR to explore small equipment from foreign countries to increase mechanization on farm and ranch operations.

Mechanization is a major impediment to expansion of farming in Hawaii. Currently much of crop production work depends on manual labor. This results in a negative perception of farming as an occupation. Thailand, Vietnam, Japan, China all have small scale equipment designed for farms that are similar in size to those in Hawaii. .

MCFB respectfully requests your strong support of HB307 in the interest of supporting Hawaii's agricultural production. Here is a tomato harvester in Japan specifically designed for small farms. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIXSGqvP-A8> . While production per unit time may be slower than a human, the machines have proven to be reliable resulting in higher productivity over time. However EPA emission requirements do not exist in these countries and therefore, importing them for use in Hawaii is not possible without adapting them to meet U.S. standards.

This measure is critical to address one of the pinch points for Hawaii agriculture. MCFB respectfully requests your strong support to providing CTAHR with funds to help farmers in this critical area.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our opinion on this matter. Please contact Warren Watanabe at 8082819716 if there are any questions.