
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii has a long
2 and rich history of agricultural production, not only to feed
3 residents but also for commercial and entrepreneurial endeavors.
4 The history of agriculture in Hawaii reveals the State's natural
5 ability to grow, process, and distribute food. However, the
6 growth, peaking, and waning of agriculture in the State over the
7 last seventy-five years is an unfortunate cycle of decline of an
8 industry well-suited to Hawaii.

9 The legislature further finds that planting new high- and
10 medium-value crops to supplement existing production, as well as
11 deploying innovative, proven, and modern methods of farming,
12 will boost the ability of the State to feed and sustain its
13 population. Additionally, increasing food production and
14 availability of farm jobs and creating a cadre of agri-technical
15 workers will help to diversify the economy of the State beyond
16 tourism and military-related industries.



1 The legislature also finds that the Philippines has built
2 an infrastructure of farmlands, animal husbandry, cooperatives,
3 wet and dry markets, agri-industrial processing, food terminals,
4 farm-to-market roads, and other support systems. Additionally,
5 there are dozens of agricultural science colleges and
6 universities in the Philippines, including agricultural science
7 vocational schools, apprenticeships, journeyman trades, and
8 practical field experience in sustenance farming and fishing.

9 Annually, Hawaii accepts over three thousand immigrants
10 from the Philippines via regular immigration procedures. Many,
11 if not all, already hold or are qualified for work permits
12 without any other visa requirements under federal law. Because
13 many of these new immigrants are farmers, fisherfolk, and agri-
14 tech workers, they must be identified upon coming to Hawaii so
15 they can be offered work in a familiar industry in which they
16 excel.

17 The purpose of this Act is to plan, organize, develop, and
18 maintain agricultural programs to ensure that the State can grow
19 its agriculture industry and become more sustainable in its food
20 security efforts.



1 SECTION 2. (a) The office of the governor shall inquire
2 and coordinate with the United States Citizenship and
3 Immigration Services and the United States Embassy in the
4 Philippines, by way of the Hawaii congressional delegation, as
5 appropriate, to provide a profile of Filipino immigrants
6 approved for entry into the State who have come to Hawaii within
7 the last five years and will prospectively enter the State in
8 the next five years. The profile shall contain information
9 related to demographics, profession, education, vocation, and
10 present occupation.

11 (b) The department of education shall gather and provide
12 the office of the governor with information regarding the
13 educational attainment, occupational interest, and post-
14 secondary school field of work of any of the individuals
15 identified pursuant to subsection (a) who graduate from a
16 department of education school.

17 (c) The office of the governor shall submit a report of
18 its findings and recommendations, including any proposed
19 legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior
20 to the convening of the regular session of 2026.



1 SECTION 3. (a) The department of agriculture shall
2 establish lines of communication with the Philippines Department
3 of Agriculture; selected agricultural science colleges and
4 universities in the Philippines; and major agricultural
5 cooperatives in the Philippines, such as those in tomato
6 farming, rice production, and food terminal management, to
7 facilitate information exchange, technology exchange, and
8 possible academic, student, and worker exchange programs between
9 Hawaii and the Philippines.

10 (b) The department of agriculture shall inform, coordinate
11 with, and share resources with the Hawaii Farm Bureau and
12 similar organizations in the State to unite public and private
13 sector interests in expanding and moving forward the
14 agricultural development and agricultural sustainability in the
15 State.

16 SECTION 4. (a) The departments of labor and industrial
17 relations and human resources development shall develop a
18 program that brings in agricultural workers from the Philippines
19 for short-, medium-, and long-term work in Hawaii.

20 (b) In developing the program, the departments of labor
21 and industrial relations and human resources development shall



1 consider the interests of the public and private sector labor
2 unions, Hawaii Farm Bureau, and related organizations in
3 blending new immigrant workers with the local worker market in
4 the agricultural sector in the State.

5 SECTION 5. (a) The department of agriculture shall
6 establish a hydroponics pilot program on the west side of Hawaii
7 island. The hydroponics facility shall be located where there
8 are sufficient underground minerals and nutrients suitable for
9 hydroponics and drip irrigation farming.

10 (b) In establishing the pilot program, the department of
11 agriculture shall study similar hydroponic projects in the
12 Philippines and Israel where companies have collaborated in
13 hydroponics, drip irrigation, and controlled farming methods
14 using established technology, management, and financing models.

15 (c) The department of agriculture shall submit a report of
16 its findings and recommendations to the legislature no later
17 than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session
18 of 2026. The report shall include measures necessary to expand
19 small, medium, and large hydroponics and drip irrigation
20 projects in the State.



1 SECTION 6. There is appropriated out of the general
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
3 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and
4 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
5 year 2026-2027 for the purposes of section 2 of this Act.

6 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the office of
7 the governor for the purposes of this Act.

8 SECTION 7. There is appropriated out of the general
9 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
10 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and
11 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
12 year 2026-2027 for the purposes of sections 3 and 5 of this Act.

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

15 SECTION 8. There is appropriated out of the general
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
17 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and
18 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
19 year 2026-2027 for the purposes of section 4 of this Act.

20 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
21 of labor and industrial relations for the purposes of this Act.



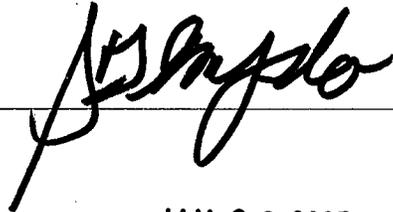
1 SECTION 9. There is appropriated out of the general
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
3 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and
4 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
5 year 2026-2027 for the purposes of section 4 of this Act.

6 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
7 of human resources development for the purposes of this Act.

8 SECTION 10. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

9

INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 22 2025



H.B. NO. 1310

Report Title:

Agriculture; Sustainability; Philippines; Office of the Governor; Department of Agriculture; Department of Labor and Industrial Relations; Department of Human Resources Development; Exchange; Hydroponics Pilot Program; Appropriation

Description:

Requires and appropriates funds for the Office of the Governor to provide profiles of Filipino immigrants related to demographic, education, and vocation data. Requires and appropriates funds for the Department of Agriculture to collaborate with certain agricultural entities in the Philippines. Requires and appropriates funds for the Departments of Labor and Industrial Relations and Human Resources Development to develop a program that brings agricultural workers from the Philippines to Hawaii, under certain conditions. Requires and appropriates funds for the Department of Agriculture to establish a hydroponics pilot program.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

