
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the department of
2 agriculture and biosecurity's existing agricultural statistics
3 program plays a crucial role in providing producers and
4 policymakers with essential data to guide short-term decision-
5 making and long-term strategic planning. In fact, the
6 department of agriculture and biosecurity has a statutory duty,
7 and a contractual obligation with the United States Department
8 of Agriculture, to ensure robust data collection and reporting
9 across the State. However, the department has experienced
10 several shortcomings in the agricultural statistics program,
11 including limited access to accurate and timely agricultural
12 data and outdated collection, analysis, and dissemination of
13 agricultural statistics, which results in limited insights into
14 data that are critical to the movement of agricultural goods
15 into and within the State. Additionally, the United States
16 Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics
17 Service personnel count has been reduced by thirty per cent



1 since January 2025, and the National Agricultural Statistics
2 Service recently announced that surveys will focus on collecting
3 mandatory, core, national-level data, increasing the urgency to
4 for the State to ramp up its ability to accurately map the
5 State's agricultural commodities.

6 The legislature additionally finds that the department of
7 agriculture and biosecurity's agricultural statistics program is
8 critical to understanding the State's existing agricultural
9 resources, including locally-grown agricultural products.

10 Without the ability to accurately map the State's agricultural
11 commodities, the State will be unable to meet the purchasing
12 goals established by the Farm to School Act (Act 175, Session
13 Laws of Hawaii 2021) and Farm to State Act (Act 176, Session
14 Laws of Hawaii 2021).

15 The legislature further finds that in 2024, the department
16 of agriculture and biosecurity launched a statewide process to
17 address key economic challenges facing the agricultural sector
18 and developed short-term actions and a long-term strategy aimed
19 at addressing the shortcomings of its statistics program and
20 other goals, such as boosting local product availability and



1 expanding market capacity. The objectives of the long-term
2 strategy are to:

- 3 (1) Collect, analyze, and report data and trends on the
4 intra- and inter-island production, distribution, and
5 sale of select agricultural products;
- 6 (2) Provide producers with the information needed to make
7 informed decisions about planning, scaling operations,
8 and exploring new growth or market opportunities;
- 9 (3) Provide other decision makers with key analyses of
10 production and production opportunities, trends, and
11 growth to better allocate public resources to support
12 agriculture and the public; and
- 13 (4) Support the strategic growth and development of
14 Hawaii's agricultural sector by enhancing the
15 statistics program's data collection, analysis, and
16 reporting capabilities.

17 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to revitalize and
18 enhance the department of agriculture and biosecurity's
19 agricultural statistics program by statutorily establishing an
20 agricultural statistics program and appropriating funds for the
21 program.



SECTION 2. Chapter 148, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new part to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"PART . AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

§148- Definitions. For the purposes of this part, "tropical fruit" includes but is not limited to nuts, herbs, spices, kalo, taro, or any other fruit or nut identified as a tropical fruit by the United States Department of Agriculture.

§148- Agricultural statistics program. The department of agriculture and biosecurity shall:

(1) Collect data, provide analysis, and report on the intra- and inter-island transportation of fresh fruit and vegetable products;

(2) Develop and maintain electronic systems for capturing and analyzing data on the intra- and inter-island transportation of fresh fruit and vegetable products; and

(3) Establish a structured rotation schedule for expanded, consistent, sector-specific surveys to collect comprehensive data on key agricultural activities, including:



1 (A) Agricultural theft;
2 (B) Agricultural tourism;
3 (C) Aquaculture;
4 (D) Coffee;
5 (E) Crop and livestock losses;
6 (F) Farm technology;
7 (G) Horticulture and nursery;
8 (H) Livestock numbers and productivity;
9 (I) Producer expansion;
10 (J) Seed;
11 (K) Tropical fruits;
12 (L) Vegetables and melons; and
13 (M) Other surveys as may be determined necessary.

14 **§148- Exemption.** Data and information collected by the
15 department for the purposes of this part or collected, compiled,
16 and stored in the agricultural statistics program shall be
17 confidential and shall not be subject to discovery or to
18 disclosure under chapter 92F; provided that nothing in this
19 section shall preclude disclosure of the information in a
20 statistical or aggregate form that does not allow the
21 identification of an individual person or entity. The State



shall not be liable for any dissemination of information collected, compiled, or stored for use in the agricultural statistics program.

§148- Collaboration; partnerships. The department of agriculture and biosecurity may:

- (1) Collaborate with national and local entities, including the following, to enhance data collection, analyses, and reporting efforts:
 - (A) The United States Department of Agriculture;
 - (B) The United States National Agricultural Statistics Service;
 - (C) The United States Agricultural Marketing Service;
 - (D) The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics;
 - (E) The University of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and human resilience;
 - (F) The University of Hawaii economic research organization; and
 - (G) Other state agencies as needed; and
- (2) Establish partnerships with local producers, transportation companies, aggregators, and



1 distributors to facilitate the electronic capture of
2 and access to other data sets."

3 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
5 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for
6 the following purposes:

- 7 (1) \$ for the establishment of full-time
8 equivalent (FTE) agricultural economist
9 positions;
- 10 (2) \$ for the establishment of full-time
11 equivalent (FTE) research statistician positions;
- 12 (3) \$ for the establishment of secured office
13 space, equipment, the development of electronic data
14 collection systems, and program expenses for six
15 islands; and
- 16 (4) \$ for contracted specialty surveys to be
17 conducted by third-party entities, focusing on
18 critical agricultural data needs.

19 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
20 agriculture and biosecurity for the purposes of this Act.

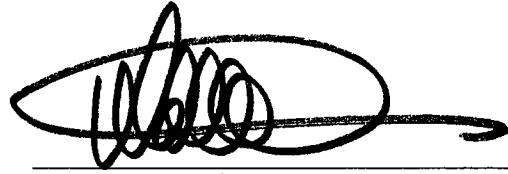
21 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.



H.B. NO. 2155

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INTRODUCED BY:

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JAN 26 2026



H.B. NO. 2155

Report Title:

DOA; Agricultural Statistics Program; Positions; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to revitalize and enhance the Agricultural Statistics Program to collect data on local agricultural interests. Appropriates funds.

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

