

JAN 21 2026

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 also a contractual obligation with the United States
8 Department of Agriculture to ensure robust data collection and
9 reporting across the State. However, the department has
10 experienced several shortcomings in the agricultural statistics
11 program, including limited access to accurate and timely
12 agricultural data and outdated collection, analysis, and
13 dissemination of agricultural statistics, which results in
14 limited insights to data that is critical to the movement of
15 agricultural goods into and within the State.

16 The legislature further finds that in 2024, the department
17 of agriculture and biosecurity launched a statewide process to



1 address key economic challenges facing the agricultural sector
2 and developed short-term actions and a long-term strategy aimed
3 at addressing the shortcomings of its statistics program and
4 other goals, such as boosting local product availability and
5 expanding market capacity. The objectives of the long-term
6 strategy are to:

7 (1) Collect, analyze, and report data and trends on the
8 inter-island production, distribution, and sale of
9 select agricultural products;

10 (2) Provide producers with the information needed to make
11 informed decisions about planting, scaling operations,
12 and exploring new growth or market opportunities;

13 (3) Provide other decisionmakers with key analyses of
14 production and production opportunities, trends, and
15 growth to better allocate public resources to support
16 agriculture and the public; and

17 (4) Support the strategic growth and development of
18 Hawaii's agricultural sector by enhancing the
19 statistics program's data collection, analysis, and
20 reporting capabilities.



1 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to revitalize and
2 enhance the department of agriculture and biosecurity's
3 agricultural statistics program by statutorily establishing an
4 agricultural statistics program and appropriating funds for the
5 program.

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

9 **"PART . AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS**

10 **S148-** **Agricultural statistics program.** The department
11 of agriculture and biosecurity shall:

- 12 (1) Collect data, provide analysis, and report on the
13 inter-island transportation of fresh fruit and
14 vegetable products;
- 15 (2) Develop and maintain electronic systems for capturing
16 and analyzing data on the inter-island transportation
17 of fresh fruit and vegetable products; and
- 18 (3) Establish a structured rotation schedule for expanded,
19 consistent, sector-specific surveys to collect
20 comprehensive data on key agricultural activities,
21 including:



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

13 **\$148- Exemption.** Data and information collected by the
14 department of agriculture and biosecurity for the purposes of
15 this part or collected, compiled, and stored in the agricultural
16 statistics program, shall be confidential and shall not be
17 subject to discovery or to disclosure under chapter 92F;
18 provided that nothing in this section shall preclude the
19 disclosure of the information in a statistical or aggregate form
20 that does not allow the identification of an individual or
21 entity. Unauthorized review, use, disclosure, or distribution



1 of data shall be strictly prohibited. The State shall not be
2 liable for any dissemination of information collected, compiled,
3 or stored for use in the agricultural statistics program.

4 **S148- Collaboration; partnerships.** The department of
5 agriculture and biosecurity may:

6 (1) Collaborate with national and local entities,
7 including the following, to enhance data collection,
8 analyses, and reporting efforts:
9 (A) United States Department of Agriculture;
10 (B) United States National Agricultural Statistics
11 Service;
12 (C) United States Agricultural Marketing Service;
13 (D) United States Bureau of Labor Statistics;
14 (E) University of Hawaii college of tropical
15 agriculture and human resilience;
16 (F) University of Hawaii economic research
17 organization; and
18 (G) Other state agencies as needed; and
19 (2) Establish partnerships with local producers,
20 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:

7 (1) \$ for the establishment of two full-time
8 equivalent (2.0 FTE) agricultural economist positions;
9 (2) \$ for the establishment of four full-time
10 equivalent (4.0 FTE) research statistician positions;
11 (3) \$ for the establishment of secured office
12 space, equipment, the development of electronic data
13 collection systems, and program expenses for six
14 islands within the State; and
15 (4) \$ for contracted specialty surveys to be
16 conducted by third-party entities, focusing on
17 critical agricultural data needs.

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

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

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INTRODUCED BY: Mike Gabbard



S.B. NO. 2318

Report Title:

Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity; Agricultural Statistics Program; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes the Agricultural Statistics Program in statute. Appropriates funds.

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