

JAN 21 2026

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

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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12      data and outdated collection, analysis, and dissemination of  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



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

4       **\$148- 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) The United States Department of Agriculture;

10          (B) The United States National Agricultural  
11           Statistics Service;

12          (C) The United States Agricultural Marketing Service;

13          (D) The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics;

14          (E) The University of Hawaii college of tropical  
15           agriculture and human resilience;

16          (F) The 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



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

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

(1) \$                      for the establishment of                      full-time  
equivalent (                      FTE) agricultural economist  
positions;

(2) \$                      for the establishment of                      full-time  
equivalent (                      FTE) research statistician positions;

(3) \$                      for the establishment of secured office  
space, equipment, the development of electronic data  
collection systems, and program expenses for six  
islands; and

(4) \$                      for contracted specialty surveys to be  
conducted by third-party entities, focusing on  
critical agricultural data needs.

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

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



S.B. NO. 2404

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INTRODUCED BY: *David M. Rutter*





# S.B. NO. 2404

**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.*

