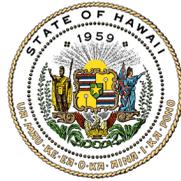


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & BIOSECURITY
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI A KIA'I MEAOLA
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
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SHARON HURD
Chairperson
Board of Agriculture & Biosecurity

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

LATE

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

**FEBRUARY 11, 2026
9:30 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 325 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 2246
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 2246 that creates an agricultural grant program and revolving fund for the purposes of grant application, execution, reporting and auditing to be administered by the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB). The Department supports the bill.

Creating an agricultural grant program and revolving fund maximizes the Department's ability to submit a successful grant application by providing resources to seek, apply, and administer federal agricultural grant opportunities that benefit Hawaii.

Many federal grant applications include reimbursement for indirect overhead costs and an allowable grant administration fee to reimburse the state for costs associated with the management of the grant, such as executing the contract agreements, drawing down funds, submitting the required reports and closing the grant. This bill provides for a portion of these fees to be deposited in a grant revolving fund to be expended by the Department, for example, to secure consultant services for outreach and data collection required by the application as well as temporary staff for the management of the grant.

Thank you for consideration of our request and the opportunity to testify.

HB-2246

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 1:10:56 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/11/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ronald Weidenbach	Hawaii Fish Company Inc.	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii Fish Company strongly supports this measure to establish a grant program and revolving fund within DAB to support the grant writing position and capture the full benefits of pursuing and managing federal grant funds.



02/09/2026

To: Chair Cory M Chun, Vice Chair Matthias Kusch, and the House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems.

Subject: Testimony in Support of HB2246, relating to agricultural grant administration.

Aloha,

We are writing in support of **HB2246**, which establishes an agricultural grant program and revolving fund to support grant application, execution, reporting, and auditing by the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity.

Consistent and well-managed funding is important to Hawai'i's agricultural sector to support investments in improving the state's localized food production and to ensure growth in our local economy. There are barriers to federal grant opportunities, such as the work required to identify, apply for, manage, and report on these grants. These administrative burdens create barriers to accessing potential funds. **HB2246** initiative aims to provide administrative support to streamline grant management and reporting to ensure adequate investments for Hawai'i farmers and agricultural industry.

Additionally, with the creation of the agricultural revolving fund provides consistent monies to be used in supporting additional administrative burdens such as auditing, operational cost, and hiring of temporary staff.

Without dedicated programs to help with securing, managing, and searching for potential grants, Hawai'i risks securing critical funding for our local farmers, producers, and communities statewide.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to pass **HB2246**. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo for your consideration,

The Food+ Policy Team
#fixourfoodsystem

The Food+ Policy internship develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2026, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food system. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Rep. Cory M. Chun, Chair
Rep. Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair

HB2246

RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION.

Wednesday, February 11, 2026, 9:30 AM
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports HB2246** which creates an agricultural grant program and revolving fund for the purposes of grant application, execution, reporting and auditing to be administered by the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity.

Creating this grant program will provide a pathway for the federal grant funds obtained by the state to be distributed to producers in the state. Allowing for overhead costs to be applied to the program will ensure that the support to seek, apply for, and administer these grants continues. This program will provide more opportunities for Hawaii's producers to utilize federal grant funds through the state, supporting our goals to increase local food production.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Ranchers produce a high-quality protein and are the stewards of almost 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or nearly 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director





P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

February 11, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

TESTIMONY ON HB 2246
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, 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 2246, which establishes an agricultural grant program and revolving fund within the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to improve the State's capacity to pursue, manage, and administer federal agricultural grants.

Federal agricultural grants are a critical source of funding for Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers, supporting research, infrastructure, value-added production, food systems development, and on-the-ground implementation of agricultural programs. However, limited administrative capacity and rigid funding structures can constrain the State's ability to fully leverage these opportunities.

HB 2246 provides a practical and fiscally responsible solution by allowing the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to retain and reinvest allowable federal indirect cost reimbursements to support grant development, execution, compliance, and auditing. This approach strengthens accountability while ensuring that Hawai'i is better positioned to compete for and manage federal agricultural funding.

By improving the State's administrative capacity and reducing barriers to accessing federal agricultural funding, HB 2246 supports the long-term growth, resilience, and sustainability of Hawai'i's agricultural industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Officers

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Mason Scharer
Haleakalā, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros
Mauna Kahālāwai,
Maui

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Wai'anae, O'ahu

Rachel LaDrig
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska
Kaua'i

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

The Hawai'i Farmers Union is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFU supports HB2246.**

By instituting an agricultural grant program and revolving fund, HB2246 provides an essential infrastructure for robust grant management, ensuring that Hawaii is fully equipped to secure and utilize federal funding. This bill not only creates an efficient process for grant application and execution but also ensures stringent auditing and reporting standards, which are crucial for maintaining the integrity and transparency of our agricultural funding. By addressing these administrative bottlenecks, Hawaii can significantly enhance its capacity to support and develop a resilient local food system.

The establishment of the Agricultural Grant Revolving Fund is an innovative fiscal mechanism designed to use federal indirect reimbursements strategically. Leveraging these reimbursements to cover necessary auditing and monitoring functions presents a sustainable model that protects Hawaii's general funds, allowing for continuity and stability in agricultural funding. By securing federal investment, Hawaii can build an economically viable local food system that will not only support current agricultural needs but also foster long-term resilience and food security.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Farmers Union

HB-2246

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 3:05:56 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/11/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT!!!