

ACT 239

S.B. NO. 1186

A Bill for an Act Relating to Sustainable Food Systems.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State is committed to promoting sustainable economic development, enhancing local food production, improving access to healthy food, promoting climate change adaptation and mitigation, minimizing food waste, and reducing food insecurity. This commitment is evident through initiatives such as:

- (1) The Hawaii 2050 sustainability plan, which highlights Hawaii's overall economic, climate, and food system-related goals;
- (2) Act 151, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019, which mandates doubling local food production and increasing food exports by 2030; and
- (3) Acts 175 and 176, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021, which establish goals for local food procurement in schools and other government entities, with a target of fifty per cent locally sourced food by 2050.

Despite these efforts and more, high food insecurity and barriers to local food production in Hawaii remain. According to a recent report by the Hawaii Foodbank, nearly one-third of households are food insecure, and food insecurity rates are consistently higher than the national average. Additionally, a recent study found that only twelve per cent of households maintain a fourteen-day emergency supply of food, water, and medicine, as recommended by emergency managers.

The legislature further finds that achieving a sustainable, resilient, and equitable food system requires collaboration across state agencies, producers, retailers, non-governmental organizations, and community members. Such a system can enhance environmental, economic, social, and cultural health; well-being; and equity while also helping the State respond effectively to disasters and crises. Interagency coordination and an integrated approach are essential to maximizing efficiencies and achieving impact.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- (1) Establish a statewide interagency food systems coordination team and an interagency food systems working group within the agribusiness development corporation; and
- (2) Appropriate funds for operating costs of the team and working group.

SECTION 2. Chapter 163D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new part to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

“PART . INTERAGENCY FOOD SYSTEMS COORDINATION

§163D-A Statewide interagency food systems coordination team. There is established within the corporation the statewide interagency food systems coordination team. The statewide interagency food systems coordination team shall coordinate and oversee the interagency food systems working group established under section 163D-B and develop a process to implement interagency food systems plans and actions.

§163D-B Interagency food systems working group. (a) There is established within the corporation an interagency food systems working group.

- (b) The working group shall consist of the following members:

- (1) The chairperson of the board of agriculture, or the chairperson's designee, who shall serve as co-chair;
 - (2) The director of business, economic development, and tourism, or the director's designee, who shall serve as co-chair;
 - (3) One member of the house of representatives, to be selected by the speaker of the house of representatives;
 - (4) One member of the senate, to be selected by the president of the senate; and
 - (5) Members with relevant experience, to be invited by the co-chairs.
- (c) The interagency food systems working group shall:
- (1) Develop governance, decision-making, and operating protocols;
 - (2) Coordinate with county and community-led organizations that are involved with food systems planning;
 - (3) Identify resources to support interagency food systems coordination and implementation efforts;
 - (4) Develop internal and external communication processes;
 - (5) Create time-bound implementation plans and ways to measure progress toward statewide food systems goals; and
 - (6) Utilize policy impact analysis tools to evaluate proposed actions.
- (d) The interagency food systems working group shall submit a report of its activities and any recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session.
- (e) The department of business, economic development, and tourism shall provide any necessary administrative support to the statewide interagency food systems coordination team and the interagency food systems working group established under this part."

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$100,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 for operating costs for the statewide interagency food systems coordination team and interagency food systems working group.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of business, economic development, and tourism for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 4. In codifying the new sections added by section 2 of this Act, the revisor of statutes shall substitute appropriate section numbers for the letters used in designating the new sections in this Act.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

(Approved June 27, 2025.)