
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TARO

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that S.C.R. No. 206,
2 2007, recognized the need to develop a taro security and
3 research program to ensure that taro can be saved and protected
4 from natural attack of pests and diseases.

5 Taro and taro markets are in a state of decline. In
6 addition, the threats that taro farming families and communities
7 face in cultivating taro are numerous and growing. Taro lands
8 in Hawaii represent less than one per cent of all agricultural
9 lands in cultivation in the state, yet it remains the most
10 important traditional cultural crop in Hawaii. Taro production
11 is clearly underfunded.

12 The department of agriculture's preliminary report on the
13 implementation of S.C.R. No. 206 found that the invasive apple
14 snail, *Pomacae canaliculata*, represents the greatest concern to
15 taro farmers. The apple snail accounted for 18 to 25 per cent
16 of crop losses in recent years.

17 A September 2006 report, entitled "Statewide Strategic
18 Control Plan for Apple Snail (*Pomacea canaliculata*) in Hawaii"



1 and funded by the department of land and natural resources
2 division of aquatic resources, clearly documented the rapid
3 spread of this pest in wetland taro systems, natural wetlands,
4 estuaries, streams, ditches, reservoirs, ponds, and springs on
5 all islands except Molokai and Kahoolawe; provided information
6 on the apple snail's biology and behavior, and past control
7 efforts locally and globally; and documented the negative
8 environmental, agricultural, economic, health-related,
9 educational, and cultural impacts of this invasive species on
10 the taro farming community, the taro market, and the overall
11 natural environment since its arrival in 1983-1984. This report
12 also documented that the State has spent less than \$400,000 on
13 snail control efforts, with little success. The importance of
14 addressing the decline in crop yields due to apple snails
15 continues to increase as Hawaii continued to import more and
16 more taro in 2006 and 2007.

17 Taro farmers have demonstrated their commitment to the
18 survival of taro and to finding a solution to the apple snail
19 problem despite many hurdles, including the lack of committed
20 funding and institutional support. They have initiated and
21 collaborated on an economic impact study, a statewide strategic
22 control plan, and self-initiated research and practices, and



1 have demonstrated a willingness to participate in the taro
2 purity and security dialogue.

3 The purpose of this Act is to provide funding for statewide
4 taro research that focuses specifically on the apple snail
5 problem.

6 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
7 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
8 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2008-2009 for
9 statewide taro research that focuses specifically on the apple
10 snail problem.

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

13 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2008.



Report Title:

Taro; Apple Snails; Research

Description:

Appropriates funds for statewide taro research that focuses on the apple snail problem. (HB3425 HD1)

