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# 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 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, *Pomacea 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 pest control  
7 efforts locally and globally; and documented the adverse  
8 environmental, agricultural, economic, health-related,  
9 educational, and cultural effects 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, 2020.



**Report Title:**

Taro; Apple Snails; Research; Appropriation

**Description:**

Appropriates funds for statewide taro research that focuses on the apple snail problem. Effective 7/1/2020. (HB3425 HD2)

