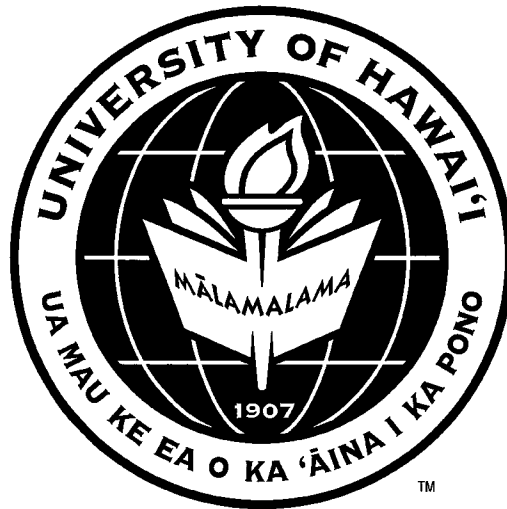


# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I SYSTEM

## LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



**SB2924 Making an Appropriation to the University of Hawai‘i  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources**

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs  
Senate Committee on Education

February 8, 2008 at 1:15 p.m.

by  
Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor  
Presented by  
Andrew G. Hashimoto, Dean  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

Testimony Presented before the  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs  
Senate Committee on Education

February 8, 2008 at 1:15 p.m.

by  
Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor  
Presented by  
Andrew G. Hashimoto, Dean  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

**SB 2924: Making an Appropriation to the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources**

Chair Tokuda, Chair Sakamoto, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on SB 2924, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) for additional researchers and specialists to support organic agriculture research and teaching programs. Unfortunately, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa can only support the intent of SB 2924 at this time because of our pressing priorities, such as our tremendous need for repairs and maintenance and health and safety issues, which are critical to our ability to perform our core mission for the State of Hawai'i. We are grateful to the Legislature's attention to these needs. We recognize that you have many priorities and issues to weigh for the state, so the following substantive information on this program is provided to assist you in your decision-making process.

The popularity of agricultural products grown using organic agriculture practices has increased remarkably in recent years. According to the Organic Trade Association's 2006 Manufacturer Survey, U.S. retail sales of organic food are growing at close to 20 percent per year, from \$3.6 billion in 1997 to \$13.8 billion in 2005. Hawai'i's organic agriculture industry has an estimated value of between \$5 and \$10 million and produces a variety of fruit, vegetable, and specialty crops.

Here in Hawai'i, consumer demand for organic goods outpaces supply. Because organic farmers can use only a proscribed set of pest control options, imported organic produce is an important route by which new pests and diseases organisms can enter the state. Replacing those imports with locally grown organic goods will lessen this risk of introducing new invasive species. Expansion of organic agriculture production in Hawai'i will also promote improved soil health, provide consumers with the freshest organic produce, and enable local farmers to benefit from consumer demand for organic goods by receiving a price premium for their crops.

CTAHR is committed to supporting Hawai'i's organic farming community. An in-depth analysis of the state's organic agriculture industry is currently underway. Input from stakeholders on five islands was gathered last year during listening sessions, and completion of the industry analysis report is anticipated later this year. Between September 2006 and January 2007, workshops for 250 farmers interested in organic agriculture practices were held on Maui, O'ahu, Moloka'i, the Big Island, and Kaua'i. Additional workshops are planned for 2008. An introductory manual has been developed for Hawai'i growers who want to learn more about organic and sustainable agriculture, and a CTAHR organic agriculture website offers numerous resources including more than 20 free college publications that can assist organic agriculture operations. An organic agriculture working group has brought together more than 30 faculty and staff engaged in research, instruction, and outreach relevant to organic agriculture. Field days for farmers and outreach events for gardeners have been held on O'ahu, Maui, and the Big Island, and the first in a series of virtual (on-line) field days is now available. Visiting scholars have shared diverse expertise in organic agricultural practices. An academic course in organic agriculture has been offered to students. Land at the Waimānalo Research Station is being certified for organic production, and a plot at the station is being made available for student use. Through work with the Hawai'i Cooperative of Organic Farmers (HICOF), the Agribusiness Incubator Program is supporting the continued growth of organic farming in the state.

These activities have been conducted with limited human resources. Despite CTAHR having recently added faculty positions, the college's faculty FTE levels are only 75 percent of what they were 15 years ago, and CTAHR has only two faculty members whose major emphasis is on organic agriculture: one tenure-track extension specialist and one grant-funded researcher. Additional personnel would enable expansion of CTAHR's support for our state's organic agriculture industry, promoting economic growth and environmental stewardship.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. We appreciate all interest in the University, and want to emphasize that we will be able to perform better in all arenas and best serve the state with support of the current campus priorities approved by the Board of Regents.

LINDA LINGLE  
Governor



SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DUANE K. OKAMOTO  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512

TESTIMONY OF SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
AND EDUCATION  
FEBRUARY 8, 2008  
1:15 P.M.

SENATE BILL NO. 2924  
RELATING TO MAKING APPROPRIATION TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII  
COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Chairpersons Tokuda and Sakamoto and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 2924 relating to an appropriation for CTAHR to support organic farming agricultural research and teaching. The department supports the intent of this bill but is concerned on the impact on the priorities in the Executive Biennium budget.

Organic farming is a significant emerging market across the United States. Hawaii's organic farmers contribute to agricultural diversification and provide consumers with important food supply options.

Personal Testimony Presented  
before the  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs  
Senate Committee on Education  
February 8, 2008  
1:15 p.m.  
by  
Dr. Andrew G. Hashimoto

SB 2924, Making an Appropriation to the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

Chair Tokuda, Chair Sakamoto, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Andrew Hashimoto. I serve as the Dean of UH Mānoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) and an ex-officio member of the Board of Agriculture. I am pleased to provide this personal testimony on Senate Bill 2924, which appropriates funds to CTAHR for additional researchers and specialists to support organic agriculture research and teaching programs. This testimony does not represent the position of the University of Hawaii or CTAHR.

I strongly support SB 2924.

The popularity of agricultural products grown using organic agriculture practices has increased remarkably in recent years. According to the Organic Trade Association's 2006 Manufacturer Survey, U.S. retail sales of organic food are growing at close to 20 percent per year, from \$3.6 billion in 1997 to \$13.8 billion in 2005. Hawaii's organic agriculture industry has an estimated value of between \$5 and \$10 million and produces a variety of fruit, vegetable, and specialty crops.

Here in Hawaii, consumer demand for organic goods outpaces supply. Because organic farmers can use only a proscribed set of pest control options, imported organic produce is an important route by which new pests and diseases organisms can enter the state. Replacing those imports with locally grown organic goods will lessen this risk of introducing new invasive species. Expansion of organic agriculture production in Hawai'i will also promote improved soil health, provide consumers with the freshest organic produce, and enable local farmers to benefit from consumer demand for organic goods by receiving a price premium for their crops.

CTAHR is committed to supporting Hawaii's organic farming community. An in-depth analysis of the state's organic agriculture industry is currently underway. Input from stakeholders on five islands was gathered last year during listening sessions, and completion of the industry analysis report is anticipated later this year. Between September 2006 and January 2007, workshops for 250 farmers interested in organic agriculture practices were held on Maui, Oahu, Molokai, the Big Island, and Kauai. Additional workshops are planned for 2008. An introductory manual has been developed for Hawaii growers who want to learn more about organic and sustainable

agriculture, and a CTAHR organic agriculture website offers numerous resources including more than 20 free college publications that can assist organic agriculture operations. An organic agriculture working group has brought together more than 30 faculty and staff engaged in research, instruction, and outreach relevant to organic agriculture. Field days for farmers and outreach events for gardeners have been held on Oahu, Maui, and the Big Island, and the first in a series of virtual (on-line) field days is now available. Visiting scholars have shared diverse expertise in organic agricultural practices. An academic course in organic agriculture has been offered to students. Land at the Waimanalo Research Station is being certified for organic production, and a plot at the station is being made available for student use. Through work with the Hawaii Cooperative of Organic Farmers (HICOF), the Agribusiness Incubator Program is supporting the continued growth of organic farming in the state.

The college has conducted these activities with limited human resources. Despite CTAHR having recently added faculty positions, the college's faculty FTE levels are only 75 percent of what they were 15 years ago, and CTAHR has only two faculty members whose major emphasis is on organic agriculture: one tenure-track extension specialist and one grant-funded researcher. The funds appropriated by SB 2924 for additional CTAHR personnel to support organic agriculture research and teaching programs will enable expansion of the college's support for Hawaii's organic agriculture industry and will offer valuable benefits to the state's economy and environment. For these reasons, I strongly support SB 2924.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



# HAWAII ORGANIC FARMERS ASSOCIATION

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February 5, 2008

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TO:

Norman Sakamoto, Chair, Committee on Education  
Jill Tokuda, Chair Senate Committee, Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs

RE: SB 2924

MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES.

HEARING: Thursday, February 8, 2008, 1:15 pm Conference Room 225

Aloha, Mr. and Ms. Chair and Committee Members,

The Hawaii Organic Farmers Association (HOFA) represents over 400 members including 137 certified organic farmers in the state of Hawaii. HOFA is the state of Hawaii's only third party certifying agency accredited by the USDA National Organic Program, and our certified farmers represent about 80% of the certified farms in the state of Hawaii.

The Board of Directors of this farmer organization **supports SB 2924**, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) for additional researchers and specialists to support organic agriculture research and teaching programs.

Several CTAHR researchers and specialists have been instrumental in providing educational programming to organic farmers and those conventional farmers who are transitioning to more sustainable methods in recent years. The producers continue to request that additional research, training and outreach be made available to those who are farming organically. We are currently processing nearly seventy new applications in the past six months; each of these producers may require education, research and outreach that the University can provide. CTAHR is instrumental in helping farmers support environmental stewardship and reduce the risk of invasive species entering the state by increasing the production of locally grown product for the market. **For this reason we wholeheartedly urge you to support the funding of research in organic methods specifically designed for Hawaii's growing conditions through the passage of SB 2924, funding UH CTAHR's organic research programs.**

Sincerely,  
Franz Weber, President  
Hawaii Organic Farmers, Board of Directors

Hawaii Organic Farmers Association

*Our mission is to protect the life of the land and the health of our communities through education about organic land care practices. We believe that developing and strengthening certified organic farms would enhance Hawaii's many fragile ecosystems and be a base for a local sustainable economy*

Hawaii  
Crop  
Improvement  
Association

Sarah Styan, President  
P.O. Box 609  
Waimea, Hawaii 96796  
Phone: 808- 338-8300 ext 113

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Testimony by: Sarah Styan  
SB2640, Relating to the University of Hawaii  
Senate AHW/EDU Committees  
Friday, Feb. 8, 2008  
Room 225: 1:15 pm

Position: Support

Chairs Tokuda and Sakamoto, and Members of the Senate AHW/EDU  
Committees:

My name is Sarah Styan. I am a Kauai resident, President of HCIA and research scientist of Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Waimea Research Station. The HCIA represents seed production and research facilities operating in Hawaii for nearly 40 years. The HCIA is comprised of five member companies that farm an estimated 8,000 acres on four islands, valued at \$97.6 million in operating budget (2006/2007 HASS). We are proud members of Hawaii's diversified agriculture and life sciences industries.

HCIA strongly supports this measure that recognizes the rare opportunity for multiple agencies (HFBF, HARC, ALFH, UH-CTAHR and Landscape Industry Council of Hawaii) to not only work together, but co-locate their operations at the proposed site. This synergy will assist, and create new opportunities for the growth of Hawaii agriculture. The co-location of CTAHR's field support functions for the agricultural incubator and moving its Poamoho station to that area makes sense, as the former Del Monte lands are the most fertile agricultural lands on Oahu. The support of this endeavor does much to preserve agricultural lands on Oahu.

Please seize the opportunity and support this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.





TO: SENATOR JILL TOKUDA, CHAIR  
SENATOR J. KALANI ENGLISH, VICE CHAIR  
MEMBERS OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

FROM: CHERYL VASCONCELLOS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
HANA HEALTH

DATE: February 5, 2008

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 2924**  
**MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE**  
**OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES**  
**Friday, February 8, 2008**  
**1:15 p.m., Room 225**

I am speaking in support of S.B. 2924 which provides funds to CTAHR to hire additional staff to support organic agriculture research and teaching programs. The Hana Fresh farm, a project of Hana Health, is aimed at fulfilling the health center's mission to promote a healthy lifestyle and reduce the risk factors associated with the development of chronic disease through improved access to and consumption of nutritious, fresh, chemical free produce. Häna Fresh is growing high quality, organic produce which is the foundation for all of Häna Health's nutrition/meal programs.

The success of Hana Fresh has been limited by many factors including inter-island shipping costs, distribution difficulties, land availability, etc., but we are especially challenged by the many complexities of organic farming in a sub-tropical climate. The limited technical support that has been available to Hana

Fresh, generally comes from outside of the state, is quite expensive and is short term in nature. The remoteness of the Hana District further hinders our ability to secure needed technical assistance when specific problems arise, i.e. fruit fly infestation. We hope that the organic agriculture research and teaching programs proposed in this legislation will include a strong, field based technical assistance program that will benefit small organic farms like Hana Fresh. Increasing the capacity of CTAHR in the area of organic agriculture will go a long way toward institutionalizing the organic farming sector in Hawaii.

We look forward to the further "greening" of Hawaii through this important legislation. Thank you.

Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair  
Senate Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs Committee

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair  
Senate Education Committee

**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2924**

Friday, February 8, 2008 1:15pm  
State Capitol, Rm. 225

I am Tara McLean Co-founder of Moms Going Green a non-profit organization aimed at helping families make informed decisions about the health of their families as well as the impact those decisions have on the environment.

I am testifying today in strong support of SB 2924. This bill would give the University of Hawaii's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources additional funding to hire staff to support organic agriculture research and teaching programs.

I am very passionate about this bill because it represents so much of what our organization is trying to achieve. Through education, the people of Hawaii are becoming aware of their responsibility to the environment and that the actions of each of us has a huge impact. One of the topics we cover is the importance of eating organic foods and to stop supporting commercial farming because of its detrimental effects it has on the environment.

Over the last year alone we have seen a dramatic increase in the demand for organic produce and goods. Not only does Moms Going Green encourage people to buy and eat organic but to also buy locally. Due to the increased demand on the local farmers they are not able to keep up with the demand. We have to import more and more produce from the mainland and even overseas. There are many reasons why this will have an ill affect on the environment as well as the islands. One example is the ongoing threat of the introduction of foreign invasive species to the islands.

What I like so much about this bill is that on a local level we will be able to expand organic agriculture here in Hawaii. This will enable us to have fresher organic produce with the least carbon footprint. A strong organic farming industry will only bring health to the islands, environmentally, physically and economically.

Thank you so much for your time and I urge you to please pass this bill.

Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair  
Senate Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs Committee

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair  
Senate Education Committee

**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2924**

Friday, February 8, 2008 1:15pm  
State Capitol, Rm. 225

Aloha Chair Tokuda and Chair Sakamoto,

My name is Jasmyrn Sarns. I am here today on behalf of Moms Going Green to testify in support of bill SB 2924.

Moms Going Green is a locally based non-profit organization. We are committed to educating parents and children about how they can make environmentally conscience choices in their daily lives to help improve their family's health and the health of Mother Earth. We do this by offering free public workshops in the community.

This bill really caught our attention because organic food is one of the main topics in our workshops. From our experience in the public, we've found that the awareness of the importance of eating organic food is really growing quickly. Not only are the people that attend our workshops already aware of the fact that pesticides contaminate their produce, they also want to eat healthier foods, and do what's best for the environment.

Another thing we discuss is the importance of buying locally. Transporting foods from the mainland and overseas has a huge carbon footprint, compared to growing those foods locally. Not to mention the risk of importing invasive species to the islands.

So by promoting organic agriculture and increasing the supply of locally grown produce, we can address many important issues at the same time such as:

- promoting agriculture that is healthier for the land
- growing food that is healthier for people to eat
- reducing carbon emissions from unnecessary transporting of produce from the mainland that could be grown here
- and benefiting our local economy by producing products that are in high demand locally, rather than importing them

So in conclusion, we are strongly in favor of our state government doing anything you can to promote local organic agriculture, and on behalf of Moms Going Green, I urge you to also support bill SB 2924.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jasymn Sarns  
Kailua

**testimony**


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**From:** Shelly Wilkinson [shellywilkinson@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 06, 2008 5:30 PM  
**To:** testimony  
**Subject:** testimony on SB 2924  
**Attachments:** 3165730324-SWilkinson\_SB 2924.docx

**Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair**  
**Senate Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs Committee**  
**Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair**  
**Senate Education Committee**  
**SB 2924**

Friday, February 8, 2008, 1:15 PM  
 Conference Room 225  
 State Capitol - 415 South Beretania Street

Dear Senators Tokuda and Sakamoto,

My name is Shelly Wilkinson and I am a Big Island home-schooling mother and long-time Hawaii resident (17 years). I am writing to testify **in favor of SB 2924** which would give the University of Hawaii's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) additional funding to hire staff to support organic agriculture research and teaching programs.

Hawaii is overdue for a law such as SB 2924 would enact. Being an isolated state, as you know we are more vulnerable than our mainland counterparts to disruptions in fuel prices, events of national security, drought, or any such thing that interferes with our "business as usual" which is largely comprised of importation of our daily necessities. Moving towards greater self-reliance is a win-win for Hawaii, especially in these unstable times. By giving CTAHR more funding to focus on organic agriculture, we could reduce our current importing of organic goods both from the mainland and other countries. Demand for organic produce currently outstrips supply. It is good demand is high; it shows that we increasingly value fresh, nutrient-rich and chemically-absent foods to nourish strong bodies better able to withstand the modern onslaught of cancer, diabetes and other skyrocketing ills affecting the people of Hawaii nei. Hawaii is totally able to be self-reliant on foodstuffs. Our beautiful climate, rich volcanic soils, plentiful rainfall, tradition of farming and health-conscious people produces a successful formula for agricultural self-reliance. This is most definitely an area which we should be moving towards.

Another important benefit of SB 2924 is the protection of Hawaii's unique, fragile and tourist-attracting ecosystems. Importation of produce from other places greatly increases the chance of infestation of malicious flora or fauna able to wipe out quickly what nature incubated over thousands of years. Environmental quality is the mainstay of our economy, along with Hawaii's culture. I see farm tours and practice of traditional Hawaiian agricultural becoming a segment of ecotourism, especially here on the Big Island.

Organic farming is a health-promoting practice that invigorates the soil, protects our fresh water systems and provides wholesome jobs for our people, positions our keiki can aspire to in their quest to "save the earth", make a difference and do something for good and not leave a legacy of poison and destruction for their children. Shutting down dairies and moving towards greater dependence is NOT going in the right direction. Please let us not allow short-term economic vision solely to guide our decisions. In the very near future, an expanded agricultural sector from support of organic produce will

benefit Hawaii and provide a solid platform for continued economic growth. It is likely that given the proper support, more and more residents will return to agriculture as a lifestyle and career choice. It is a profession of not just dollars and cents, but of integrity and dollars and "sense."

As the plague of global warming ignites, one relatively easy and profound step Hawaii can take to alleviate this pestilence is becoming more self-sufficient, thereby reducing the number of ships and planes that need to bring goods – ships and planes that produce harmful greenhouse gases. I know Hawaii longs to be a Center of Health for the Pacific basin. What better step than increasing our production of organic farming, organic produce and low to no-impact agriculture in general, thereby preserving green lands and controlling the blight of over-urbanization? I would like to teach my children that Hawaii is becoming a better place, a haven for health and goodness and a green land, rather than leave them a legacy of toxins, cancer, cement and fragility brought on by international distress (oil markets) and poor economic practices when better ones were available. We must jump on this opportunity to "do the right thing".

For these reasons I strongly urge you to **vote in favor of SB 2924**. Thank you for hearing my testimony and for representing us in Legislature.

Yours Very Truly,

Shelly Wilkinson  
PO Box 1632  
Pahoa, HI 96778  
(808) 966-8033

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## testimony

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**From:** Al Santoro [asantoro@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 06, 2008 1:42 PM  
**To:** testimony  
**Subject:** SB2924

For: Senate Committee on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs; hearing Fri  
8 Feb, 1:15pm, Rm 225, SB2924 An Appropriation for UH CTAHR for Organic Farming Teaching  
and Research

Aloha,

I am President of the Hawaii Cooperative of Organic Farmers (HICOF) and I submit this testimony on behalf of our co-op, its members and other organic farmers. We enthusiastically support this bill to provide funds to establish organic farming systems teaching and research staff positions at UH CTAHR.

We are very excited about the potential for this bill because it addresses what organic farmers believe has been an imbalance at our university for a very long time. Of the current CTAHR staff of about 200, only one position is designated as a "sustainable" teaching position and it is only a temporary position at this time. This committee is already aware of the huge demand for local organic produce, that our local supply does not meet that demand and the direct link of invasive insects due to this shortfall. We all know that we must increase our own organic production to protect our environment and to improve our food security. Underlying this requirement is a basic fact but overlooked fact: Organic farmers need organic research. Presently there is no institutional knowledge base for organic farming techniques; in fact the entire experience of organic farming exists only in the memories of each individual farmer. This bill will help establish a public information base for existing, new and transitional organic farmers and create a system for focused, on-farm organic research.

In addition to my testimony we have over 50 responses to date from organic farmers who also support this bill which I can provide for the record.

Thank you...Al Santoro, Pres, HICOF, 637-4555

I support SB 2924.

Thank You

Leo Wisniewski  
91-1090 Koanimakani St.  
Kapolei, HI 96707



## testimony

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**From:** Joan Santoro [joan.santoro@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 07, 2008 3:21 PM  
**To:** testimony  
**Subject:** SB2924

My name is Joan Santoro. I am an organic farmer on the North Shore and am here to testify in support of Senate Bill 2924 to increase the organic teaching and research staff at CTAHR.

I believe this bill will have a direct positive effect on organic farmers throughout the State. As you know the cost of organic produce is higher than conventionally grown produce and many believe that is due to higher labor costs. In my experience on my farm which specializes in tropical fruit, the biggest reason for high costs is our overall lower production rate due to a lack of focused research on organic pest, nutrient, and weed management. For example, our citrus is particularly susceptible to the ant-aphid-mite cycle which damages nearly 50% of our limes. This is a common problem with virtually no locally developed organic solutions.

While conventional farmers have benefited greatly from agricultural research, the solutions have generally excluded organic methods. For example: the solution to Papaya Ringspot Virus was development of the genetically-modified rainbow papaya; the solution to Banana Bunchy-Top Virus is to cut down and spray with Roundup; and the solution for post-harvest treatment for exporting produce is irradiation. Unfortunately, none of these solutions can be used by organic farmers.

Therefore I urge you to pass SB2924. Thank you.

Joan Santoro

Hawaii  
Crop  
Improvement  
Association

Sarah Styan, President  
P.O. Box 609  
Waimea, Hawaii 96796  
Phone: 808- 338-8300 ext 113

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Testimony by: Sarah Styan  
SB2924, Making an Appropriation to the UH-CTAHR  
Senate AHW/EDU Committees  
Friday, Feb. 8, 2008  
Room 225: 1:15 pm

Position: Support

Chairs Tokuda and Sakamoto, and Members of the Senate AHW/EDU Committees:

My name is Sarah Styan. I am a Kauai resident, President of HCIA and research scientist of Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Waimea Research Station. The HCIA represents seed production and research facilities operating in Hawaii for nearly 40 years. The HCIA is comprised of five member companies that farm an estimated 8,000 acres on four islands, valued at \$97.6 million in operating budget (2006/2007 HASS). We are proud members of Hawaii's diversified agriculture and life sciences industries.

HCIA believes in co-existence of all farming practices, whether it might be organic, conventional and biotechnology methods. We continue to be supportive of increasing the organic agriculture sector. Certainly, with a robust organic agriculture sector there will be less reliance on imported organic produce, which contributes to the importation of invasive species into Hawaii. Consumer demand for organic produce is at an all time high and Hawaii grown organic produce will increase its contribution to the general revenue of the State.

Increasing the research and specialist capacity at the UH-CTAHR that is based on peer reviewed science and fact based information is an important aspect of growing the organic industry in Hawaii and educating the consumer. This should not be done at the detriment of conventional and biotechnology growing practices, particularly since organic growers do use approved organic pesticides and fertilizers, and that the USDA finds that organic and conventionally grown foods are nutritionally comparable to biotech crops.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.