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# SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO MAKE IT A PRIORITY TO EDUCATE  
THE PUBLIC ON THE PROPER CLEANING OF PRODUCE.

1           WHEREAS, the Department of Health is responsible for  
2 administering programs designed to protect, preserve, care for,  
3 and improve the health of the people of the State, including  
4 food safety; and

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6           WHEREAS, food safety encompasses the preparation of  
7 uncooked foods, such as fruits and vegetables; and

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9           WHEREAS, in December 2008, three Big Island residents were  
10 hospitalized because of a rare ailment, commonly called rat  
11 lungworm disease; and

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13           WHEREAS, rat lungworm disease arises from parasitic worms  
14 that can be ingested when eating raw produce containing a small  
15 snail or slug, that migrates through the body; and

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17           WHEREAS, rat lungworm disease can cause significant pain  
18 and trauma, including paralysis, blindness, and death; and

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20           WHEREAS, a study identified twenty-four cases of rat  
21 lungworm disease in Hawaii from January 2001 to February 2005;  
22 and

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24           WHEREAS, rat lungworm disease is only one of the serious  
25 diseases that affect raw produce consumption; and

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27           WHEREAS, proper cleaning of produce may also reduce the  
28 incidence of emerging and known pathogens and contaminants that  
29 may affect raw produce consumption; and

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31           WHEREAS, a growing number of Hawaii residents are consuming  
32 home-grown produce, thereby increasing the importance of  
33 educating the public on the proper cleaning of fruits and  
34 vegetables; now, therefore,  
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1 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth  
2 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2009,  
3 that the Department of Health is urged to make it a priority to  
4 educate the public on the proper cleaning of produce to reduce  
5 the incidence of rat lungworm disease and all emerging and known  
6 pathogens and contaminates that may affect raw produce  
7 consumption; and

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9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this  
10 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health.