

Date: 01/27/2012

Committee: House Agriculture

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB 2093 Relating to Agricultural Education

Purpose of Bill: Requires the University of Hawaii to establish a Center for Agricultural Leadership. Requires the University of Hawaii to establish a two-year pilot project at one high school campus in each county to determine the steps necessary for a school farm to be food safety certified by the Department of Agriculture.

Department's Position: The Department of Education (Department) supports HB 2093 as long as its implementation does not impact or replace priorities set forth in the Executive Supplemental Budget for Fiscal Year 2012-2013. The Department will collaborate with the University of Hawaii Center for Agricultural Leadership in the establishment of one high school pilot project in each county and interface with the Department of Agriculture to identify and generate remedies regarding potential barriers to school farm food safety certification. The process of food safety certification will be incorporated into any agriculture-related curriculum associated with the school farm.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony presented before the
House Committee on Agriculture
January 27, 2012 at 8:30 a.m.

By Linda K. Johnsrud
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost, University of Hawai'i

HB 2093: RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Hashem, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture:

The University of Hawai'i appreciates the foresight of the legislature in its support of agriculture and agricultural sustainability in Hawai'i, and commends the legislature's interest in strengthening the development of agricultural education in the state. HB 2093 proposes a center for agricultural leadership at the University of Hawai'i with school farm projects at one high school in each county that pilot the steps necessary for achieving food safety certification through the US Department of Agriculture. It supports working collaboratively with industry and agricultural organizations, providing opportunities for agricultural teachers, and encouraging leadership and career growth for students.

Because establishing a center and pilot projects involves educational programs and locations statewide, the University respectfully recommends that the agriculture programs within the UH system first have a chance to discuss and develop plans about how best to do this. Creating a center also has budget impact and requires thoughtful planning. We would like to discuss this carefully within UH to ensure that any action we take will lead to positive outcomes that support the intent of HB 2093.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Hawaii Farm Bureau
F E D E R A T I O N

2343 Rose Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Phone: (808) 848-2074 • Neighbor-Islands: (800) 482-1272
Fax: (808) 848-1921 • Email: info@hfbf.org
www.hfbf.org

JANUARY 26, 2012

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON HB 2093
RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Room 312
9:00 AM

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Hashem, and Members of the Committee:

I am Mae Nakahata, Government Affairs Co-chair for the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation (HFBF). Organized since 1948, the HFBF is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interest of our diverse agricultural community.

HFBF is in opposition to HB 2093, establishing a two year pilot project at one high school campus in each county to determine the steps necessary for a school farm to be food safety certified by the Department of Agriculture. We recognize the intent of the measure but do not agree that this should be a priority responsibility of the Department of Education.

School farms at high schools serve multiple purposes. They serve not only to educate students on how to grow crops but also what it takes to turn a farm into a successful business enterprise that can be a career choice. Agronomy, economics, business planning, entomology, and pathology are some of the courses that can evolve around the farm. Courses that teach the principles behind good agricultural practices - steps that must be taken that protect the environment, product, and worker are critical components of a school farm. The purpose of the farm should be to educate and expose students to a career choice.

The Department of Education prepares students so they can pursue careers of their choice. The Department of Education is under budgetary constraints to meet these goals. As a farm organization we would like to see increased emphasis of agriculture in schools but this does not necessarily mean food safety certification. We are cognizant of the

limitations in the budget and the needs of the Department of Education. Pragmatism must rule in defining the scope of high school education.

Farm to School programs provide opportunities for our farmers and ranchers to provide the volume of products needed by cafeterias. Our focus at this time is to assist our commercial farmers and ranchers to meet food safety certifications. While it will be nice to have school farms food safety certified, we question whether this is a good use of limited resources at this time.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our opinion on this important matter.

Thank you for this opportunity to address this important issue. If there are questions, please contact Brian Miyamoto, Chief Operating Officer and Government Affairs Liaison at (808) 848-2074.



Poamoho Organic Produce
PO Box 728
Waialua HI 96791
808-637-4555
info@poamoho-organic.com

January 26, 2012

To: House Committee on Agriculture
Re: Hearings on January 27, 2012, 8:30 am, Rm #312
Subject: Testimony regarding HB2093, HB2245 and HB1945

Aloha Committee Chair and Committee Members,

I am an organic farmer on the North Shore of Oahu and President of the Hawaii Center for Organic Farming. Please accept my testimony on the subject Bills.

HB2093: I can not support Section 3 of HB2093 that calls for a UH pilot program to subject school gardens to food safety certification by the Department of Agriculture. Although there is significant uncertainty as to what effect the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) will have on our food systems, it is absolutely clear that: 1) the FSMA will be implemented through our Department of Health (DoH), not DoA; 2) that the existing food safety program administered by DoA and taught by UH CTAHR cannot be trusted as it has diverges greatly from the broadly accepted good agricultural practices (GAPs); and 3) that a working group that convened this summer of farmers from across the State, the farm bureau and representatives from DoH and DoA all agreed that the existing system did not meet the needs of either farmer or consumers. Therefore, please delete Section 3 from the text.

HB2245: this appears to be an excellent bill to institutionalize the connection between farms and schools. In order to ensure that this connection includes the majority of Hawaii's farms – its small farmers, I highly recommend that the task force also include a representative from the Hawaii Farmers Union United.

HB1945: as a farmer I appreciate the intent of this bill to reduce the costs of utilities for active farming enterprises. I noted in the draft that the words related to "water" were deleted in favor of "public utility services" and am concerned that these words may only refer to publicly owned, government controlled resources and will not apply to privately held water companies or even "irrigation water". I suggest the words be changed to include all utility companies providing services to any farm operation on Ag lands.

Mahalo,

Al Santoro

Testimony for AGR 1/27/2012 8:30:00 AM HB2093

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Steve HIRakami
Organization: HAASPCS; HCSN
E-mail: steve_hirakami@notes.k12.hi.us
Submitted on: 1/26/2012

Comments:

Testimony
House Committee on Agriculture
January 27, 2012 Room 312
8:30 AM
Strongly Support

Dear Chair Tsuji and committee,

I am in strong support of this measure to promote agricultural practices on school campuses across the State. Although this program will initially be introduced in high schools, I believe that sustainability efforts such as agriculture be also included in elementary and middle schools. Hawaii's year-round growing climate combined with its rich mix of arctic to tropical to desert environments afford us a rich palette on which to establish gardens and farms. Across the nation, movements for agriculture in the schools have caught the attention of many school leaders and prompted the formation of the Green Schools National Network. Their national conference is coming up on February 26 and 27 in Colorado and their mission is to green the nation's schools as the way to save money, improve student health and achievement and save the planet.

As far as getting the school's produce on to the cafeteria's meals, we must be sure that in addition to State food safety standards, we need to meet USDA standards to qualify the produce for inclusion in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). This may mean "middle manning" the product to a USDA certified distributor. One way the school could insure that it gets its own produce is to simply rename it. Instead of calling the lettuce Manoa lettuce (which it actually is) schools may give it another name like Kapoho lettuce. In ordering the lettuce from the wholesaler, a request would be made for Kapoho lettuce instead of Manoa lettuce. Just an idea that will prevent re-creating the wheel on food safety.

Sincerely,

Steve HIRakami, Director

Hawaii Academy of Arts & Science PCS

Treasurer,

Hawaii Charter Schools Network

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2093. I am the Deputy Director of The Kohala Center, currently involved in a number of initiatives to revive agricultural education and food production on Hawaii Island and across the state. It has become abundantly clear that, if we want to have more food raised in Hawaii, our public educational institutions must increase their agricultural program offerings and help prepare a new generation of farmers and ranchers. Robust, production-oriented high school agricultural programs will be an important addition to the overall effort to revive local food production; pilot projects on each island are a start. Please understand and support HB 2093 as one element in the process of rebuilding our agricultural career pipeline.

Testimony for AGR 1/27/2012 8:30:00 AM HB2093

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Elizabeth Cole
Organization: The Kohala Center
E-mail: cole@kohalacenter.org
Submitted on: 1/25/2012

Comments:

The university level Agricultural Leadership Center or program should be housed at the West Oahu campus with satellites on each island.

hashem1 - Julie

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, January 25, 2012 6:45 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: gypsieme@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB2093 on 1/27/2012 8:30:00 AM

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Testimony for AGR 1/27/2012 8:30:00 AM HB2093

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: teri nguyen
Organization: Individual
E-mail: gypsieme@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 1/25/2012

Comments:
HI should be know as a leader in agriculture and become food independent.