

LATE

SB 247

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor



RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

JAMES J. NAKATANI
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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TESTIMONY OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

LATE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 2011
2:45 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 229

SENATE BILL NO. 247
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill No. 247. The Department of Agriculture (DOA) supports the overall intent of the bill provided that its passage does not impact the priorities set forth in the executive biennium budget.

The purpose of this bill is to support agricultural producers who implement natural farming by establishing a grant program. This farming method is said to protect the environment, improve product quality, increase product yields and reduce production costs and water consumption. We greatly appreciate your committee's interest in supporting our agricultural producers in adopting this natural farming method.

Natural farming has an important niche contribution to the evolving "green" economy; however, at this time given the difficult economy, we respectfully recommend that to expedite funding for these ventures that applicants apply for a loan under the DOA loan program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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Testimony for Senate Bill 247
Agriculture: Natural Farming

Public Hearing January 27, 2011 @ 2:45p.m. Room 229

Dear Senator Nishihara, Senator Kahele, and members of the Committee:

My name is Susan Matsushima, owner of Alluvion, Inc., a diversified agricultural operation on the North Shore of Oahu. I would like to testify in support of Senate Bill 247.

In August of 2010, a group of us had the opportunity to meet and visit various operations on the North Shore of Oahu with Master Cho. He is the founder of this very unique method of agricultural production. Hawaii must explore the value and possibilities of this Natural Farming method.

The results of production by David Wong that was recently showcased in the Star Advertiser, show that this production method can prove invaluable to Hawaii farmers. Methods used lower production costs since chemical fertilizers are not used and water consumption is minimal.

If Hawaii farmers can experience the results of Master Cho's Natural Farming, we in Hawaii will be closer to sustainability within our state.

Please support Senate Bill 247.

Sincerely, Susan Matsushima CEO