

JAN 17 2014

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that agriculture will
2 continue to play a vital role in Hawaii's efforts to become more
3 self-sustaining. Agriculture not only contributes to the
4 State's economy by providing employment opportunities, products
5 for export, and a stage for tourism, but also performs a public
6 service by helping to perpetuate a rural lifestyle for Hawaii's
7 residents who, in turn, provide stewardship for Hawaii's lands
8 and water.

9 Based on 2010 information from the United States Department
10 of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service,
11 Hawaii's agriculture industry generates farm gate revenues
12 totaling \$690,000,000 per year. A recent analysis indicates
13 that only 11.6 per cent of food available for consumption in
14 Hawaii was actually sourced from local production in 2010.
15 However, approximately sixty per cent of Hawaii's fresh fruit
16 consumption and thirty-two per cent of fresh vegetables are
17 produced locally.



1 The majority of Hawaii's farms, about five thousand of
2 approximately eight thousand crop farms statewide, are less than
3 ten acres in size. More than ninety per cent of Hawaii's farms
4 generate less than \$100,000 per year in revenue. The cost of
5 necessary farm inputs such as land and lease costs, water,
6 labor, feed, fertilizer and energy are all higher in Hawaii than
7 in most areas of the United States mainland, placing many of
8 these farms at risk if they are exposed to further financial
9 burdens.

10 The United States Food and Drug Administration will soon
11 formalize stricter food safety regulations for agriculture under
12 the recently passed Food Safety Modernization Act. While
13 Hawaii's farmers and ranchers share a strong commitment to the
14 safety of their food products, the new standards are likely to
15 include provisions such as frequent sampling of irrigation water
16 that will be burdensome and expensive. The new regulations will
17 not necessarily recognize the wide variety of crops grown in
18 Hawaii, be suitable for Hawaii's unique growing conditions, or
19 accommodate the small size of most Hawaii farms. The
20 anticipated regulations also appear to conflict with standards
21 governing organic farming. If implemented as currently written,
22 compliance with these new regulations could cost a significant



1 proportion of a small farm's revenues, potentially making many
2 of Hawaii's farms unprofitable and threatening the State's
3 efforts to increase food self-sufficiency.

4 The Food Safety Modernization Act does allow the use of
5 alternative farming methods other than those prescribed by the
6 Food and Drug Administration's published regulations, provided
7 that these methods are scientifically shown to be at least as
8 safe as the Food and Drug Administration's prescribed
9 procedures. Therefore, research is needed to demonstrate to the
10 Food and Drug Administration's satisfaction that alternative
11 methods are safe and acceptable under the Food Safety
12 Modernization Act. The burden of proof is placed on the farmer,
13 but the conduct of scientific research is beyond the financial
14 capability of most of Hawaii's farmers.

15 The legislature believes that the Hawaii Agriculture
16 Research Center, the University of Hawaii's college of tropical
17 agriculture and human resources, the Hawaii department of
18 agriculture, and the United States Department of Agriculture's
19 Pacific Basin Agricultural Research Center should work
20 collaboratively to expand their agricultural research efforts.
21 These research operations are critical to the State's efforts to
22 strengthen and improve the agriculture industry, expand



1 employment opportunities for residents, and revitalize the
2 economy.

3 The legislature also finds that the Hawaii Farm Bureau
4 Federation is a nonprofit agricultural organization representing
5 the interests of, and exemplifying a strong commitment to, the
6 agriculture industry in Hawaii and can ensure that agricultural
7 research meets the needs of local farmers and ranchers. The
8 Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation has frequently partnered with
9 institutions like the Hawaii Agriculture Research Center, the
10 University of Hawaii's college of tropical agriculture and human
11 resources, and the department of agriculture on many research
12 and market development projects. The Hawaii Farm Bureau
13 Federation has also worked with many other kinds of commodity
14 organizations, including sugar, pineapple, papaya, macadamia,
15 coffee, flower, fruit, vegetable, aquaculture, forestry, and
16 livestock organizations to formulate research needs for the
17 entire agriculture industry.

18 Therefore, the legislature finds that the most logical
19 organization to oversee and expend funding for agricultural
20 research is the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation.

21 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds for a grant
22 to the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation to:



- 1 (1) Conduct research into alternative, less burdensome
- 2 methods by which Hawaii's farmers can satisfy the
- 3 requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act; and
- 4 (2) Demonstrate to the Food and Drug Administration that
- 5 such methods are acceptably safe.

6 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
 7 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$2,000,000 or so much
 8 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2014-2015 for a
 9 grant, pursuant to chapter 42F, Hawaii Revised Statutes, for the
 10 Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation to conduct agricultural research
 11 and projects demonstrating to the United States Food and Drug
 12 Administration that Hawaii's farmers can comply with the food
 13 safety requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act using
 14 alternative, less burdensome methods.

15 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
 16 agriculture for the purposes of this Act.

17 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2014.

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INTRODUCED BY: Clarence K. Iwihiko

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S.B. NO. 2291

Report Title:

Appropriation; Agriculture; Grant

Description:

Appropriates funds to be expended by the department of agriculture and granted to the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation for agricultural research.

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