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HB1931

Submitted on: 3/24/2014

Testimony for WAM on Mar 25, 2014 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Charles Ensey	Hawaiian Sunshine Farms Inc.	Support	No

Comments: I would urge you to consider supporting bill 1931 relating to diseases in macadamia nuts. If the Feltid Coccid is to become a wide spread epidemic it could destroy the Hawaii Macadamia Industry all together. The economy on the Big Island of Hawaii is dismal at best. If our industry fails it will impact all of us who farm including our employees and their families. I know that we would have to layoff/fire approximately twenty employees some of whom have been with us for over a decade. As you know that when the sugar industry came to a close our island hasn't recovered from that loss. I urge you to support this bill so that our industry doesn't only survive but will grow in the future. Thank you.

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The Twenty-Seventh Legislature
Regular Session of 2014



THE SENATE
Committee on Ways and Means
Senator David Y. Ige, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
State Capitol, Conference Room 211
Tuesday, March 25, 2014; 9:00 a.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON H.B. 1931, HD1, SD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

The ILWU Local 142 supports H.B. 1931, HD1, SD1, which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture and the University of Hawaii to research and develop methods for the prevention and treatment of macadamia felted coccid.

The ILWU represents hundreds of workers in the macadamia nut industry. Our members cultivate macadamia nuts in Pahala and Keaau and work at the factory that processes the macadamia nuts for sale to residents and visitors alike. Macadamia is one of the top five crops grown in Hawaii and offers jobs, supports tourism, and promotes agriculture, which contributes to the diversification of economic activity in Hawaii.

The macadamia felted coccid causes severe damage to macadamia nut trees and, if not controlled, could devastate the industry. The insect was first found in macadamia grown in Hawaii in 2005. Earlier measures to control infestation and its effects seem to be somewhat ineffective. More research is needed.

H.B. 1931, HD1, SD1 proposes appropriations to the Department of Agriculture and the University of Hawaii to research and develop methods for the prevention and treatment of macadamia coccid infestation. We believe the funds will represent a sound investment in maintaining the viability of a valuable industry for Hawaii's economy.

The ILWU urges passage of H.B. 1931, HD1, SD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.



SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

March 25, 2014 9:00 am Room 211

Relating to Agriculture HB 1931 HD1, SD1

Aloha Chairman Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Alan Yamaguchi and I am the former (retired) Director of Research for Royal Hawaiian Orchards, L.P. I strongly support this bill to fund a way to protect macadamia nut farmers from a devastating invasive pest.

Since 2005, when the Macadamia Feltid Coccid was first discovered, this insect pest has established itself on more than 7,000 acres of producing macadamia trees where greater than 50% of Hawaii's in-shell macadamia nuts are grown. The insect is distributed in, but not limited to, the South Kona, Ka'u, Hilo and Hamakua districts on the Big Island and is likely expected to spread over the entire island in due time and affect the entire 15,000 acres of macadamia trees. Most, if not all, of the growers that produce macadamia nuts for the State of Hawaii are on the Big Island.

Hawaii's ideal growth environment for macadamia is, unfortunately, highly suitable for the development and distribution of MFC to all locations where macadamia is grown. Our mild temperatures and tropical climate provides an environment where multiple generations of the pest are produced annually. The insect is found on the trunks, branches, leaves, immature racemes and developing/maturing nuts. It is easily distributed by wind, transport of infested plant parts, and possibly winged animals. The primary damage to the macadamia is through the piercing/sucking mouthpart used to extract moisture and nutrients to sustain its life cycle. Heavily infested trees die while others remain weak with low nut production.

Research is needed to identify long term economical solutions to manage MFC to sustain the Hawaiian macadamia industry. This requires studies to determine to determine short term measures that can reduce pest distribution in orchards to

support current nut production levels. Additionally, research is necessary to seek longer term solutions, such as biological control or use of natural enemies, to manage MFC. The use of natural enemies would reduce the need to use pesticides. Natural enemies identified by the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and released by the Hawaii Department of Agriculture significantly reduced the damage caused by the Southern Green Stink Bug on macadamia nuts and basically eliminated the use of pesticide to control the insect. We need to repeat this feat for MFC

Approximately 44-50 million pounds of macadamia nuts are handled or processed by about six processors, all on the Big Island annually. The two largest, MacFarms of Hawaii and Mauna Loa Macadamia Nut Corporation, are located on the east and southern parts of the Big Island and, combined, employ several hundred workers during harvest season and handle approximately 50% of the nut production on Hawaii island. Additionally, Royal Hawaiian Orchards has approximately 200 workers at their orchards located at Pahala, Keaau and Hilo. Four other processors handle the balance of the nuts produced generally in the Kona, Kohala and Hamakua regions of the Big Island.

It is anticipated that MFC will continue to spread, damage macadamia orchards and negatively impact nut production and employment in the industry if this pest is not managed. Past efforts to identify suitable control measures have had mixed results and require extensive research. Any delay will only hurt the macadamia growers, processors and marketers of Hawaii's premium macadamia nut products.

Please help the Hawaiian macadamia growers and industry by supporting this bill.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Mahalo,

Alan Yamaguchi