
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO COMMUNITY FOOD FORESTS.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the number of food
2 stamp recipients in Hawaii has nearly doubled over the last six
3 years. The legislature also acknowledges that Hawaii residents
4 face among the highest costs of living in the nation, with the
5 inflation of cost-of-living often outpacing the growth of
6 provisional rates for state welfare.

7 The legislature further finds that due to the island
8 geography of Hawaii, the long-term sustainability of the State
9 depends upon improved uses of land that has already been
10 developed. The legislature also finds that food production in
11 populated areas may contribute significantly to community
12 sustainability by providing locally-produced healthy food to
13 those who cannot otherwise afford it.

14 Community and urban gardens, concepts which have been
15 adopted statutorily in states like New York, California,
16 Massachusetts, Tennessee, and Maine, may provide a solution to
17 the problem of increasing food costs and the dwindling



1 availability of undeveloped land. By identifying and utilizing
2 public lands, particularly those near existing community
3 gathering places such as parks and community centers, to create
4 community food forests that adopt edible landscaping concepts,
5 the State may be able to provide additional sources of low- or
6 no-cost food to residents, while also utilizing developed land
7 for community sustainability purposes.

8 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish a
9 community food forest program and to make an appropriation for
10 this program.

11 SECTION 2. Chapter 171, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
12 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
13 and to read as follows:

14 "§171- Community food forest program. (a) The
15 department shall establish and maintain a community food forest
16 program.

17 (b) The community food forest program shall develop a
18 statewide network of locally-directed community food forests in
19 viable locations around the State by working with the various
20 county governments and community-based citizen organizations to:



- 1 (1) Identify potential locations such as parks, community
2 centers, or other locations that may be suitable for
3 community food forest use;
- 4 (2) Examine the fiscal impacts of implementing a community
5 food forest in identified areas, particularly in
6 regards to the provision of food assistance to
7 residents, and the impact on local farm revenues;
- 8 (3) Determine what types of edible plants may be
9 appropriate for growth in each planned community food
10 forest, including assessing relevant community
11 culture, food and landscape preferences, and
12 environmental conditions;
- 13 (4) Take appropriate steps to implement community food
14 forests in identified locations, including developing
15 land, planting plants, and maintaining existing
16 gardens;
- 17 (5) Provide guidance and technical assistance to
18 communities where community food forests are to be
19 placed to ensure continued food forest sustainability
20 through community participation;



- 1 (6) Develop guidelines for the harvesting of plants grown
2 in community food forests to discourage theft and the
3 harvesting of garden plants for sale;
- 4 (7) Develop policies and procedures to protect public
5 health and safety in the operation of community food
6 forests; and
- 7 (8) Lease public land or improvements under the control of
8 the department to county agencies or community-based
9 citizen organizations, at nominal consideration, by
10 direct negotiation and without recourse to public
11 auction, for a period not to exceed fifteen years and
12 on such terms and conditions as may be prescribed by
13 the board, for the purpose of managing or maintaining
14 a community food forest.
- 15 (c) The department shall adopt rules in accordance with
16 chapter 91 to carry out the purposes of this section.
- 17 (d) The community food forest program shall collaborate
18 with interested stakeholders, including the communities where
19 community food forests will be placed, the department of
20 agriculture, and other state and county government agencies and



1 private organizations concerned with the development of
2 community food forests.

3 (e) The department shall report to the legislature no
4 later than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular
5 session, beginning with the regular session of 2018, describing
6 the progress made in implementing the program, including a
7 review of potential community food forest locations and the
8 amount of community involvement in each potential community food
9 forest location.

10 (f) For the purposes of this section:

11 "Plant" means any member of the plant kingdom, which bears
12 edible fruit, seeds, or roots."

13 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
14 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
15 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 and
16 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
17 year 2018-2019 for the establishment of a community food forest
18 program.

19 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
20 of land and natural resources for the purposes of this Act.

21 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.



H.B. NO. 259

1 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2017.

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H.B. NO. 259

Report Title:

Community Food Forest Program; Department of Land and Natural Resources; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes a community food forest program in the Department of Land and Natural Resources and requires Department of Land and Natural Resources to work collaboratively with local government and community organizations to provide sources of healthy food statewide. Appropriate funds.

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