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Governor

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Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Acting Chairperson
Board of Agriculture

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS**

**FEBRUARY 12, 2019
10:00 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 211**

**SENATE BILL NO. 519 SD1
RELATING TO FOOD SAFETY**

Chairperson Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 519 SD1 which proposes to require the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) to partner with the agricultural community to establish a food safety certification training program to assist small and medium sized farms to be certified by the USDA Good Agricultural Practices certification program. The Department supports this measure.

The Department currently works in partnership with the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (UH-CTAHR), who performs coaching and training with farmers to comply with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Produce Safety Rule and the USDA Good Agricultural Practices requirements.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



SB-519-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2019 9:55:48 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/12/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i	Support	No

Comments:



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 | Honolulu, HI 96813
P: 808-533-1292 | e: info@hawaiiifood.com

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Paul Kosasa, ABC Stores, *Advisor*
Barry Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Derek Kurisu, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*

TO:

Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 12, 2019
TIME: 10am
PLACE: Conference Room 211

RE: SB519 Relating to Food Safety

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

Local agriculture is important to HFIA. Small farms in Hawaii face many challenges, including the financial and administrative burden of meeting state and federal regulations. Providing Hawaii farms with the support they need to comply with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Good Agricultural Practices Certification will help to get more local Hawaii produce into the hands of Hawaii consumers. Many of our members require USDA GAP Certification because it confirms that a farm is committed to the highest standard of produce safety and freshness. GAP Certification is also an important first step towards full compliance with the Food Service Modernization Act (FSMA). This bill will help make Hawaii farms and Hawaii agriculture more viable, and help to decrease our reliance on imported food. We encourage you to vote yes on this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



67-332 Kaiea Pl.
Waialua, HI 96791-9501
808-383-4481
www.NSEVP.org

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair and Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Tuesday February 12, 2019, 10:00 am, Conference Room 211

SB519-Relating to Food Safety

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the committee:

My name is Kevin Kelly and I am the President of North Shore EVP, a regional economic development organization located on the North Shore of Oahu. Our organization strongly supports the establishment a food safety certification training program that will provide direct assistance to small and medium sized farms in obtaining their USDA GAP certification.

In response to our community's desire to build a food hub to assist small farms on the North Shore of Oahu, we initiated a USDA GroupGAP program that allows farmers to work together and share the expense of obtaining good agricultural practices training and subsequent certification. In 2018 we became the 15th GroupGAP group in the United States and the only such program in Hawaii.

GAP certification is, in practice, a requirement for small farms that want to comply with the Food Safety & Modernization Act (FSMA) and scale their operations to meet the increasing demand for locally grown fresh produce. When FSMA comes into effect for all farms in January 2020, GAP certification will serve as tangible evidence to produce buyers that a producer is in compliance (or very close to being in compliance) with federal law.

Our work is paying off. It is estimated that there are approximately 50 certified farms in Hawaii. Of the ten farms in our first cohort, 2 have received their certification, one is responding to minor auditor findings and will be re-audited, and one other farm will be audited next month. If these four farms are successful we will have increased the number of certified farms by almost 10%! A second cohort of 9 farms is currently in training.

With your support of this measure, North Shore EVP would look forward to working with the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) to apply what we have learned training farmers on Oahu to help farms statewide with the challenges of compliance with FSMA.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Sincerely,

Kevin M. Kelly, President



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Melissa Z. Rhoden
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Testimony Submitted to
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair and Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Tuesday February 12, 2019, 10:00 am, Conference Room 211

SB519-Relating to Food Safety

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the committee:

Oahu RC&D is pleased to submit testimony in support of SB519, which will provide funds to establish a food safety certification training program for Hawaii's farmers.

Oahu RC&D supports local agriculture by working one-on-one with farmers to adopt best practices to manage environmental and business resources. We have seen first-hand the importance of providing hands-on training to farmers and ranchers, and believe the proposed bill will increase the probability of a farm attaining USDA GAP certification, one of the most common certifications required by many produce buyers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important bill. If you have any questions, please contact Oahu RC&D at 808-622-9026.

Sincerely,

Jean Brokish
Executive Director



67-332 Kaiea Pl.
Waialua, HI 96791-9501
808-383-4481
www.NSEVP.org

Date: 02/11/2019

Testimony Presented Before the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair and Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Tuesday February 12, 2019, 10:00 am, Conference Room 211

SB519-Relating to Food Safety

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the committee:

My name is Lisa Rhoden, I am the food safety director for North Shore Economic Vitality Partnership. I have been working with farmers in Hawaii for over 10 years, from providing advice on conservation measures to buying produce for a local Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) business. During the last decade I have seen the benefits that third-party food safety certification can bring to a farm business and I believe it is a measure that all farms can and should attain. Not only does it ensure that the farm is implementing and follows safe practices for food production and handling, it also sets that farm up to be more competitive in the marketplace, no matter the size of the farm. Hawaii's farms, especially those that are small, need every advantage they can get.

North Shore EVP has implemented a training program to help farmers through the USDA Group GAP process. We've met farmers that are already following many of these "best practices" but they still need help with required record keeping and other documentation. We realize that there are also many successful farms in our state that are owned by farmers who do not speak English as a first language; they need additional assistance including interpreted documents and translators. And there are farms that have interest in food safety but simply need to know where to go for education and on the ground assistance because they cannot do it on their own. With a clearly designated training program, these farms can successfully become food safety certified and grow their businesses.

Therefore, I strongly support a food safety certification training program. Hands-on training and assistance from qualified personnel will increase the probability of a farm attaining USDA GAP certification, one of the most common certifications required by many produce buyers. This will help to strengthen our local economy, keeps local land in agriculture, and preserves the small farm tradition in our state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important bill.

Sincerely,

Lisa Z. Rhoden
Food Safety Director
North Shore Economic Vitality Partnership

[Type here]



67-332 Kaiea Pl.
Waialua, HI 96791-9501
808-383-4481
www.NSEVP.org

Date: 02/11/2019

SB-519-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2019 9:40:39 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/12/2019 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joni Kamiya	Individual	Support	No

Comments:



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

February 12, 2019

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 519, SD1
RELATING TO FOOD SAFETY

Room 211
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,900 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

HFB supports SB 519, SD1, which requires the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources to partner with the agriculture community to establish a food safety certification training program to provide assistance to small and medium-sized farms to obtain a United States Department of Agriculture Good Agricultural Practices certificate or an equivalent.

HFB appreciates the support by the legislature in our past efforts to help Hawaii's farmers achieve compliance with the FDA Food Safety and Modernization Act. As the actual rule has been rolled out by FDA the immensity of the task is becoming evident.

Foodborne illnesses can be serious and we should seek ways to reduce the risk. This bill will provide that assistance to our farmers for the costs they will incur to become food safety compliant.

The many criteria associated with FSMA to be compliant should not be an impediment for safe food. Hawaii cannot afford to further lose farmers as we strive to increase local food production. We want to incentivize our farmers' ability to continue their operations and provide Hawaii with abundant safe food.

Hawaii Farm Bureau appreciates any effort which will assist farmers with expenses to become compliant with the Food Safety Modernization Act.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important subject.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

LATE

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.

By
Nicholas Comerford
Dean, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
And
Michael Bruno
Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Vice Chancellor for Research
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 519 SD1 – RELATING TO FOOD SAFETY

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 519 SD1. This testimony is in large part the same submitted for the original bill with the exception that it recognizes the need of the North Shore of O'ahu community for training and support in becoming certified for Good Agricultural Practices (GAP).

GAP Certification is important, in fact crucial, for assuring both food safety and farm success. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM), College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) strongly supports increasing the GAP training that is already offered by Cooperative Extension. By providing safe and high-quality food to the public, Hawai'i agriculture will increase public confidence in Hawai'i products and serve as a model to other associated and supporting businesses resulting in a consistent contribution to the economy in Hawai'i.

There are communities in the state that are supportive of this bill and that are in need of support. The North Shore of O'ahu is one that has an intense interest in this bill and the need for GAP certification. This bill establishes funding whereby such communities, in collaboration with CTAHR, can get the help that is needed. This includes train the trainer approaches as well as direct training and support.

The current activities by CTAHR in this area for GAP training and support, in preparation for certification and that apply to this bill include:

- The Website: **CTAHR Farm Food Safety: Good Agricultural Practices (Science-based education for Hawai'i growers & handlers)**

(<http://manoa.hawaii.edu/ctahr/farmfoodsafety/>) This website is a resource of training and includes:

Tools and Resources

(http://manoa.hawaii.edu/ctahr/farmfoodsafety/tools_and_resources/) such as

Publications and videos, as well as helpful links

Step-by-step process guidelines

Dealing with the audit process

Outreach materials

- The website: **Consumer Food Safety** (<https://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/foodsafety-ces/>)
- 10 extension agents involved in food safety education.
- A Produce Safety Rule Train-the-Trainer held on O‘ahu, expanded the training capacity to 38 people.
- 125 consultations and trainings by extension agents that were provided to the Hawai‘i Department of Education teachers, faculty, growers, health educators, event coordinators, and Master Gardeners working with farms, school and community gardens, and animal exhibits.
- The CTAHR Farm Food Safety Facebook page and Instagram social media presence that was launched in August 2016.

Even with this level of activity CTAHR has not been able to keep up with the demand. UHM/CTAHR is ready to collaborate with all interested parties.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testify in strong support of SB 519 SD1 provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Budget.



LATE

Email: communications@ulupono.com

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS
Tuesday, February 12, 2019 — 10:00 a.m. — Room 211

Ulupono Initiative Supports SB 519 SD 1, Relating to Food Safety

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Murray Clay and I am Managing Partner of Ulupono Initiative, a Hawai'i-based impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life for the people of Hawai'i by working toward solutions that create more locally produced food; increase affordable, clean, renewable energy; and better manage waste and fresh water resources. Ulupono believes that self-sufficiency is essential to our future prosperity and will help shape a future where economic progress and mission-focused impact can work hand in hand.

Ulupono supports SB 519 SD 1, which provides funding for the University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources to partner with the agricultural community to establish a food safety certification program for obtaining Good Agricultural Practices certification, because it aligns with our goal to increase local food production.

One of the greatest challenges facing agricultural enterprises over the next few years is getting into compliance with new federal food safety regulations. These new rules are expected to protect public health by providing more information about food production. However, the new regulations are expected to be significantly more strict, which requires more time and cost for compliance. It is a challenge for our farmers and ranchers to navigate the nuances of the law, track new data requirements, and implement best practices for food safety. Without support, farmers and ranchers, particularly smaller scale operations, may be in violation of the law or be forced to shut down, which will jeopardize the future of local agriculture in Hawai'i.

As Hawai'i's local food issues become increasingly complex and challenging, organizations need additional resources and support to address and overcome them. We appreciate this committee's efforts to look at policies that support local food production.

We believe that through collaboration, we can help produce more local food and support an economically robust homegrown agriculture industry, which strengthens our community with fresh, healthy food. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Murray Clay
Managing Partner

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i