
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO BEGINNING FARMER TRAINING.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that it is necessary to
2 support beginning farmers in the State by partnering with
3 nonprofit organizations to provide training opportunities to
4 these farmers. The legislature further finds that applicable
5 nonprofit organizations, especially those in rural areas, lack
6 sufficient resources to expand existing training programs. The
7 legislature believes that a beginning farmer training program
8 could increase farming in the State, ensure the continued use of
9 well-developed farming methods, and provide for the cultivation
10 of new farming methods.

11 The legislature acknowledges that new and aspiring farmers
12 face a myriad of challenges, including acquiring adequate
13 production and business knowledge and skills and accessing the
14 tools necessary to evaluate their resources and develop feasible
15 farming and business plans. However, the State lacks qualified
16 farming method teachers and funding for beginning farmer
17 training. Further, although the United State's Department of



1 Agriculture provides funding for beginning farmers, this funding
2 is limited and unreliable.

3 The legislature believes that the future of the State's
4 farming industry, food supply, and agriculture is reliant upon
5 increasing and diversifying the number of new farmers in the
6 State; introducing regenerative farming methods into the State;
7 enhancing the long-term viability of farm businesses; utilizing
8 and building upon existing beginning farmer training methods;
9 providing opportunities for potential farmers who are socially
10 or financially disadvantaged; and increasing support for
11 beginning farmers who already own or manage a farm, and have
12 farmed for five years or less.

13 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish the
14 beginning farmer training program to be administered by the
15 University of Hawaii, west Oahu, sustainable community food
16 systems.

17 SECTION 2. Chapter 141, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
18 amended by adding a new section to part I, to be appropriately
19 designated and to read as follows:

20 "§141- Beginning farmer training program; established.

21 (a) There is established the beginning farmer training program



1 to be administered by the University of Hawaii, west Oahu,
2 sustainable community food systems in conjunction with qualified
3 farmer training providers.

4 (b) The University of Hawaii shall:

- 5 (1) Collaborate and consult with, and provide funding,
6 information, and educational resources to qualified
7 farmer training providers;
- 8 (2) Implement strategies to increase the number of new
9 farmers in the State, with a focus on recruiting low-
10 income persons, disabled persons, and military
11 veterans;
- 12 (3) Assist qualified farmer training providers seeking
13 federal and county funding to expand their training
14 offerings;
- 15 (4) Evaluate the effectiveness of the farmer training
16 program;
- 17 (5) Subject to the availability of funding, distribute
18 funding to as many training programs as is practical
19 to achieve the purpose of program; and



1 (6) Retain records of all activities and costs related to
2 the implementation of the beginning farmer training
3 program.

4 (c) A beginning farmer shall be eligible for training for
5 a maximum of one year; provided that the beginning farmer:

6 (1) Qualifies for Hawaii resident tuition or provides
7 proof that the beginning farmer has been farming for
8 no more than five years;

9 (2) Maintains satisfactory academic progress; and

10 (3) Demonstrates an interest in pursuing a career in the
11 State's agricultural industry.

12 (d) Subject to the availability of funding, the University
13 of Hawaii may enter into contracts with qualified farmer
14 training providers on a first come, first served basis to
15 effectuate the purpose of this section; provided that:

16 (1) No contract shall be more than \$100,000 per year per
17 provider;

18 (2) The term of any contract shall be no longer than one
19 year; and



1 (3) No qualified farmer training provider may receive more
2 than \$300,000 in aggregate for services procured
3 pursuant to this section during any five-year period.

4 (e) Training services procured pursuant to subsection (d)
5 may include the following topics:

6 (1) The proper methods of:

7 (A) Planting, tending, cultivating, and harvesting
8 various types of crops; and

9 (B) Raising livestock or poultry;

10 (2) Soil health;

11 (3) Agricultural business operations, including workforce
12 issues, regulatory compliance, and general operations;
13 and

14 (4) An industry analysis of the agricultural industry and
15 related markets.

16 (f) A qualified farmer training provider providing
17 services pursuant to this section shall make available for
18 inspection and examination by the University of Hawaii during
19 regular business hours all related training materials, sites,
20 and facilities.



1 (g) The University of Hawaii, west Oahu, sustainable
2 community food systems shall submit a report to the legislature
3 no later than twenty days prior to each regular session. The
4 report shall include at a minimum:

5 (1) The number of beginning farmers enrolled in the
6 beginning farmer training program during the preceding
7 year;

8 (2) A description of each qualified farming training
9 provider;

10 (3) An assessment of the ability of program participants
11 to complete project objectives and work tasks; and

12 (4) An evaluation of the results achieved by the program,
13 to be written, to the extent possible, in measurable
14 and quantifiable terms.

15 (h) As used in this section:

16 "Beginning farmer" means a person who has been farming for
17 no more than five years and is eighteen years of age or older.

18 "Qualified farmer training provider" means a nonprofit
19 organization with more than two years of experience offering
20 farmer training programs and that is engaged in the growth,
21 cultivation, or raising of crops, livestock, poultry, poultry



1 products, or dairy products; provided that this term shall not
2 include facilities primarily engaged in processing agricultural
3 products."

4 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
5 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$2,000,000 or so much
6 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 to
7 establish and implement the beginning farmer development
8 program, including payment of administration costs, staff
9 salaries, and expenses for contracting with outside entities.

10 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the University of
11 Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

12 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

13 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2020;
14 provided that section 2 of this Act shall be repealed on
15 June 30, 2025.



S.B. NO. 2709
S.D. 1

Report Title:

University of Hawaii; Beginning Farmer Training Program;
Appropriation

Description:

Establishes a 5-year beginning farmer training program to be administered by the University of Hawaii West Oahu Sustainable Community Food Systems. Makes an appropriation. (SD1)

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