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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

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

1 PART I

2 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the GoFarm Hawaii  
3 program is critical to growing, creating, and commercializing  
4 local farms that are capable of meeting Hawaii's food  
5 sustainability goals. Currently, approximately eighty-five per  
6 cent of the State's food is imported. This leaves the State  
7 vulnerable to shipping disruptions and natural disasters. The  
8 Hawaii emergency management agency estimates that, in the event  
9 of port closures, food supplies would be exhausted in five to  
10 seven days.

11 The food import industry also represents billions of  
12 dollars each year that are leaving the State's economy. In  
13 2014, local consumers spent approximately \$4,100,000,000 on  
14 food. Approximately eighty-five per cent, or \$3,500,000,000, of  
15 this was spent on imported foods. In contrast, only twelve per  
16 cent of farms in the State make more than \$50,000 annually, and  
17 only seven per cent reach more than \$100,000 in annual sales.



1           The GoFarm Hawaii program was developed by the University  
2 of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and human resources to  
3 assist local farmers in growing and commercializing their  
4 production. In 2019, the program provided business consulting,  
5 training, and technical assistance to more than three hundred  
6 seventy-five existing and aspiring farmers. GoFarm Hawaii also  
7 helped more than sixty farmers apply for loans, leases, and  
8 grants and to develop business plans and value-added products.

9           GoFarm Hawaii has also established beginning farmer  
10 training programs to assist new commercial farmers: two  
11 programs on the island of Oahu and one each on the islands of  
12 Maui, Kauai, and Hawaii. The certificate-based program includes  
13 education and mentoring in agricultural production and business.  
14 In the last three years, more than one hundred thirty students  
15 have graduated from the beginning farmer training program. Of  
16 these, almost fifty per cent started new farm businesses and  
17 fourteen per cent found employment with existing operations in  
18 the agricultural industry. The courses have been highly  
19 successful, and the demand for enrollment often exceeds  
20 availability. In 2019, seventy-two aspiring farmers applied for  
21 twenty-four Oahu-based openings.



1           The legislature further finds that funding for the GoFarm  
2 Hawaii program comes exclusively from government and private  
3 grants. To manage the program at existing levels, operating  
4 costs for fiscal year 2020-2021 are estimated at \$1,400,000,  
5 with \$400,000 of that amount anticipated to be received from  
6 private grants.

7           Accordingly, the purpose of this part is to:

- 8           (1) Appropriate funds for the GoFarm Hawaii program to  
9                 provide business consulting, technical assistance, and  
10                beginning farmer training on at least four islands;  
11                and
- 12           (2) Require the GoFarm Hawaii program to provide the  
13                chairperson of the board of agriculture with reports  
14                on the program's annual goals, outputs, and outcomes.

15           SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$                 or so  
17 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for  
18 the GoFarm Hawaii program to provide business consulting,  
19 technical assistance, and beginning farmer training on at least  
20 four islands.





1 State; introducing regenerative farming methods into the State;  
2 enhancing the long-term viability of farm businesses; utilizing  
3 and building upon existing beginning farmer training methods;  
4 providing opportunities for potential farmers who are socially  
5 or financially disadvantaged; and increasing support for  
6 beginning farmers who already own or manage a farm, and have  
7 farmed for five years or less.

8 Accordingly, the purpose of this part is to establish the  
9 beginning farmer training program to be administered by the  
10 University of Hawaii West Oahu sustainable community food  
11 systems program.

12 SECTION 5. Chapter 141, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
13 amended by adding a new section to part I to be appropriately  
14 designated and to read as follows:

15 "§141- Beginning farmer training program; established.

16 (a) There is established the beginning farmer training program  
17 to be administered by the University of Hawaii West Oahu  
18 sustainable community food systems program in conjunction with  
19 qualified farmer training providers.

20 (b) The University of Hawaii shall:



- 1        (1) Collaborate and consult with, and provide funding,
- 2                information, and educational resources to, qualified
- 3                farmer training providers;
- 4        (2) Implement strategies to increase the number of new
- 5                farmers in the State, with a focus on recruiting low-
- 6                income persons, disabled persons, and military
- 7                veterans;
- 8        (3) Assist qualified farmer training providers seeking
- 9                federal and county funding to expand their training
- 10               offerings;
- 11        (4) Evaluate the effectiveness of the beginning farmer
- 12               training program;
- 13        (5) Subject to the availability of funding, distribute
- 14               funding to as many training programs as is practical
- 15               to achieve the purpose of the beginning farmer
- 16               training program; and
- 17        (6) Retain records of all activities and costs related to
- 18               the implementation of the beginning farmer training
- 19               program.
- 20        (c) A beginning farmer shall be eligible for training for
- 21               a maximum of one year; provided that the beginning farmer:



- 1        (1) Qualifies for Hawaii resident tuition or provides
- 2            proof that the beginning farmer has been farming for
- 3            no more than five years;
- 4        (2) Maintains satisfactory academic progress; and
- 5        (3) Demonstrates an interest in pursuing a career in the
- 6            State's agricultural industry.
- 7        (d) Subject to the availability of funding, the University
- 8 of Hawaii may enter into contracts with qualified farmer
- 9 training providers on a first come, first served basis to
- 10 effectuate the purpose of this section; provided that:
- 11        (1) No contract shall be more than \$100,000 per year per
- 12            provider;
- 13        (2) The term of any contract shall be no longer than one
- 14            year; and
- 15        (3) No qualified farmer training provider may receive more
- 16            than \$300,000 in aggregate for services procured
- 17            pursuant to this section during any five-year period.
- 18        (e) Training services procured pursuant to subsection (d)
- 19 may include the following topics:
- 20        (1) The proper methods of:



- 1           (A) Planting, tending, cultivating, and harvesting
- 2           various types of crops; and
- 3           (B) Raising livestock or poultry;
- 4        (2) Soil health;
- 5        (3) Agricultural business operations, including workforce
- 6        issues, regulatory compliance, and general operations;
- 7        and
- 8        (4) An industry analysis of the agricultural industry and
- 9        related markets.
- 10       (f) A qualified farmer training provider providing
- 11 services pursuant to this section shall make available for
- 12 inspection and examination by the University of Hawaii during
- 13 regular business hours all related training materials, sites,
- 14 and facilities.
- 15       (g) The University of Hawaii West Oahu sustainable
- 16 community food systems program shall submit a report to the
- 17 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
- 18 each regular session. The report shall include at a minimum:
- 19       (1) The number of beginning farmers enrolled in the
- 20       beginning farmer training program during the preceding
- 21       year;





- 1        (2) A description of each qualified farming training
- 2            provider;
- 3        (3) An assessment of the ability of program participants
- 4            to complete project objectives and work tasks; and
- 5        (4) An evaluation of the results achieved by the program,
- 6            to be written, to the extent possible, in measurable
- 7            and quantifiable terms.

8        (h) As used in this section:

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

11           "Qualified farmer training provider" means a nonprofit  
12 organization with more than two years of experience offering  
13 farmer training programs and that is engaged in the growth,  
14 cultivation, or raising of crops, livestock, poultry, poultry  
15 products, or dairy products; provided that this term shall not  
16 include facilities primarily engaged in processing agricultural  
17 products."

18           SECTION 6. There is appropriated out of the general  
19 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$2,000,000 or so much  
20 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 to  
21 establish and implement the beginning farmer training program,



1 including payment of administration costs, staff salaries, and  
2 expenses for contracting with outside entities.

3 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the University of  
4 Hawaii for the purposes of this part.

5 PART III

6 SECTION 7. New statutory material is underscored.

7 SECTION 8. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2150;  
8 provided that section 5 of this Act shall be repealed on  
9 June 30, 2025.



**Report Title:**

GoFarm Hawaii; Food Sustainability; University of Hawaii;  
Beginning Farmer Training Program; Appropriations

**Description:**

Requires GoFarm Hawaii to provide the chairperson of the board of agriculture with an annual report of the program's goals and a semi-annual report outlining program outputs and outcomes. Establishes a five-year beginning farmer training program to be administered by the University of Hawaii West Oahu sustainable community food systems program. Appropriates funds for the GoFarm Hawaii program and the beginning farmer training program. Effective 7/1/2150. Repeals the beginning farmer training program on 6/30/2025. (HD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

