

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

JOSH GREEN
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

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

TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2020
9:00 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 312

SENATE BILL NO. 2723 SD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Creagan and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2723 SD1 that appropriates funds for the GoFarm Hawaii program and 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.

The Department supports this bill and comments that GoFarm Hawaii has been successful in providing more than 130 farmers a path leading from considering farming as a career and through a series of courses, prepared them to be a commercial farmer.

GoFarm Hawaii is a the only statewide program offering farmers the comprehensive training that includes: **AgCurious** – attracts the interested farmer; **AgXposure** – introduces the interested farmer to the aspects of farming; **AgSchool** – teaches the beginning farmer the spectrum of production topics and includes maintenance of a 1,000 square foot plot of food crops; **AgPro** – retains those beginning farmers that have decided to be a farmer and teaches business planning and practices small-scale commercial production; and **AgIncubator** – rewards the beginning farmer with a ¼ acre of land to start a business and transition off the site.



The appropriation would allow GoFarm Hawaii to meet the demand for the interested farmers as the demand for enrollment often exceeds availability. GoFarm Hawaii has earned the branding of their program as a comprehensive science-based training program for beginning farmers and is an example of past success being an indicator of future performance.

The Department supports the bill and asks that its passage not adversely impact priorities in the Executive Budget.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Agriculture
Wednesday, March 11, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

By
Nicholas Comerford, Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
And
Michael Bruno, PhD
Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

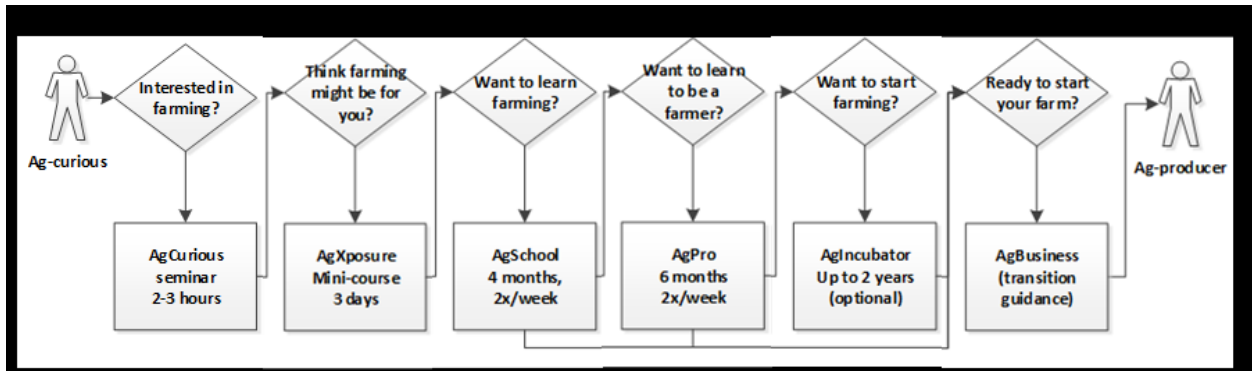
SB 2723 SD1 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2723 SD1 that seeks to fund the GoFarm Hawai'i program. The average age of a farmer in Hawai'i is about 60 years, thus, there is a need to train future farmers for Hawai'i, but where the future farmers will come from is unclear. The College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) trains students for 4-year degrees in Horticulture, Soil Science, Entomology, Plant Pathology and Animal Science. CTAHR students typically do not go into farming, per se; but are the scientists trained to support agriculture. Of course, they have the skills to farm if they wish, but most do not consider this their future.

The GoFarm Hawai'i program is a fully grant funded, non-degree granting program associated with CTAHR. It is a successful program and its success is based on how the program is organized. The program accepts anyone interested in developing the skills to farm and offers a series of sequential programs that allows participants to proceed through the programs based on their level of interest. Below is a diagram of the series of sequential programs offered by GoFarm Hawai'i, beginning with AgCurious and culminating with AgBusiness.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 2723 SD1 provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.



This bill does an excellent job of outlining the success of this program, which we will not reproduce here. The program has a high rate of success as measured by the number of participants that proceed to farm on their own land, or work on farms. GoFarm Hawai'i has also expanded its program to meet special needs. One example is working with prison inmates to train them to be Agricultural Technicians, with the hope of reducing recidivism.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 2723 provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.



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

March 11, 2020

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON SB 2723, SD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Room 312
9:00 AM

Aloha Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, 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 1,800 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.

The Hawaii Farm Bureau strongly supports SB 2723, SD1, which appropriates funds for the GoFarm Hawaii program. 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.

Hawaii's farmers and ranchers are aging. The average age exceeds 60 years old and if they were in other professions would be retired. Yet many of these farmers are those that provide to KTA, Safeway, Times, Costco, restaurants, and hotels and truly make a difference in reducing imports. Unfortunately for many, succession plans do not exist and as they retire, the lands go out of agricultural production. To maintain and expand production levels, it's clear that we need a new generation of farmers and ranchers equipped to assume the task of growing crops and livestock. There is an urgent need for interns or apprentices that are willing to not only work on these farms but take over their operations.

GoFarm Hawaii's farmer-training program has been training new farmers since 2012. They have grown to become one of the largest and most successful beginning farmer development programs in the Nation. The GoFarm Hawaii program is helping to address Hawaii's agriculture labor shortage by recruiting and training new farmers. This is critical to achieving Hawaii's goal of doubling food production.

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

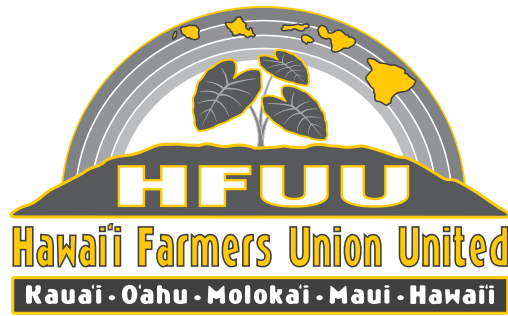
Vincent Mina
President HFUU-HFUF

Anny Bruch
Vice President &
Kaua'i Chapter Pres.

David Case
Secretary

Annie Alvarado
Treasurer

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MARCH 9th, 2020

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Testimony In Strong Support of SB 2723 SD1 - Relating to Farmer Training Bill

Aloha Chair Creagan and Members of the Committee:

Hawaii Farmers Union United and its members is requesting the Chair and members of the Committee to amend SB2723 to include language from SB2709 SD1. Amending the bill will support various organizations and groups that exist across the state seeking to accomplish training of the next generation of local food producers in Hawai'i, supporting and sustaining the growth of the agricultural industry and the long term use and protection of agricultural lands for agricultural use.

HFUU is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy, nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters organized as 13 Chapters in the four Hawai'i Counties. HFUU's Haleakala Chapter originated a farmer training program called the Farmer Apprentice Mentoring (FAM) program in 2015 serving Maui County. Among other farmer training programs such as Go Farm and the Kohala Center's beginning farmer and rancher programs, FAM offers education to assist in the commercialization of local grown food.

HFUU would like to amend SB2723 to include the following language from SB2709 SD1:

The legislature acknowledges that new and aspiring farmers face a myriad of challenges, including acquiring adequate production and business knowledge and skills and accessing the tools necessary to evaluate their resources and develop feasible farming and business plans. However, the State lacks qualified farming method teachers and funding for beginning farmer training. Further, although the United State's Department of Agriculture provides funding for beginning farmers, this funding is limited and unreliable.

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

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

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

§141- Beginning farmer training program; established. (a) There is established the beginning farmer training program to be administered by the University of Hawaii, West Oahu, sustainable community food systems in conjunction with qualified farmer training providers.

**Christian Zuckerman**  
Wai'anae, O'ahu

**Vincent Kimura**  
Waimanalo, O'ahu

**Brynn Foster**  
North Shore, O'ahu

**Kaipo Kekona**  
Lahaina, Maui

**Bobby Pahia**  
Kahalawai, Maui

**John Dobovan**  
Haleakala, Maui

**Matthew Van Paepghem**  
Hana, Maui

**Dash Kuhr**  
Kohala, Hawai'i

**Maureen Datta**  
Kona, Hawai'i

**Steve Lund**  
Puna, Hawai'i

**Drake Weinert**  
East Hawai'i

**Matt Drayer**  
Ka'u, Hawai'i



(b) The University of Hawaii shall:

- (1) Collaborate and consult with, and provide funding, information, and educational resources to qualified farmer training providers;
- (2) Implement strategies to increase the number of new farmers in the State, with a focus on recruiting low-income persons, disabled persons, and military veterans;
- (3) Assist qualified farmer training providers seeking federal and county funding to expand their training offerings;
- (4) Evaluate the effectiveness of the farmer training program;
- (5) Subject to the availability of funding, distribute funding to as many training programs as is practical to achieve the purpose of program; and
- (6) Retain records of all activities and costs related to the implementation of the beginning farmer training program.

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

- (1) Qualifies for Hawaii resident tuition or provides proof that the beginning farmer has been farming for no more than five years;
- (2) Maintains satisfactory academic progress; and
- (3) Demonstrates an interest in pursuing a career in the State's agricultural industry.

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

- (1) No contract shall be more than \$100,000 per year per provider;
- (2) The term of any contract shall be no longer than one year; and
- (3) No qualified farmer training provider may receive more than \$300,000 in aggregate for services procured pursuant to this section during any five-year period.

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

- (1) The proper methods of:
  - (A) Planting, tending, cultivating, and harvesting various types of crops; and
  - (B) Raising livestock or poultry;
- (2) Soil health;
- (3) Agricultural business operations, including workforce issues, regulatory compliance, and general operations; and
- (4) An industry analysis of the agricultural industry and related markets.

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

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

- (1) The number of beginning farmers enrolled in the beginning farmer training program during the preceding year;
- (2) A description of each qualified farming training provider;
- (3) An assessment of the ability of program participants to complete project objectives and



work tasks; and

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

(h) As used in this section:

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

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

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

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

Mahalo to the legislature for their support of agriculture and hopeful this legislation will pass this year partly because the supply of the grown produce is insufficient to meet the demand.

Thank you,

HAWAII FARMERS UNION UNITED

Vincent Mina, President





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March 9th, 2020

**Emily Emmons**

Executive Director, Ho`ōla Veteran Services  
37 Kaikuono St.  
Hilo, HI 96720

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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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President

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**Lito Arkangel**  
Board Member

**SUBJECT:** Support for SB2723 – GoFarm Hawaii Program (Date/Time of Hearing: 3/11/2020; 9:00am)

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and Members of the Committee,

Ho`ōla Veteran Services is pleased to submit testimony in full support of SB 2723, which will appropriate funds to the GoFarm Hawaii program.

Our organization has actively partnered with GoFarm Hawaii to provide agriculture training and business education for transitioning veterans interested in a career in agriculture production. For over two years, we've worked together to support veterans going through GFH program, and are looking forward to the expansion of programs to include Hawaii Island veterans.

The GoFarm Hawaii program is an essential part of expanding our local agricultural network. They are educating the next generation of farmers, providing needed support for existing farmers, and helping to develop the overall industry and food security for our future. We look forward to our continued partnership with GoFarm Hawaii and strongly encourage your support for this Bill.

Sincerely,

*Emily Emmons*

Executive Director  
Ho`ōla Veteran Services 501c3 d.b.a. Ho`ōla Farms

**Executive Director**  
Emily Emmons  
808-494-2613  
[emily@hoolafarms.org](mailto:emily@hoolafarms.org)



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March 9, 2020

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

**SUBJECT:** Support for SB2723 – GoFarm Hawaii Program  
(Date/Time of Hearing: 3/11/2020 at 9:00 a.m., Room 312)

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite and members of the committee,

On behalf of the North Shore Economic Vitality Partnership (EVP), I would like to extend our full support of SB2723, which will appropriate funds to the GoFarm Hawaii program.

The North Shore EVP was formed in 2015 as a result of a comprehensive, community-based economic analysis that identified the need for a regional food hub to fill serious gaps in the food supply chain of the region. Our non-profit organization worked with community leaders to develop realistic strategic plans focused on securing that critical infrastructure and providing new opportunities for business and creation of new jobs in agriculture in the region. Currently, our major projects include 1) statewide expansion of our GroupGAP (Good Agricultural Practices) farmer training program and 2) developing a food hub on the North Shore of Oahu.

In December 2019 two more farms were USDA Harmonized GAP certified through our GroupGAP program and in January our program passed its USDA External audit with flying colors. Our continued success is due in part to our collaborations across the state, including Go Farm.

During the past year we have participated in Go Farm seminars and workshops to bring on-farm food safety expertise to the trainees. We value the opportunity to get on front of new farmers, providing food safety training, and interacting with these aspiring farmers. GoFarm Hawaii graduates and clients have been members of our GroupGap program, showing their dedication to quality and food safety, looking to increase production and sales, and seeking access to larger markets that often require food safety certification.

GoFarm Hawaii is developing commercial farmers on the North Shore and across the state that are prepared to supply food for local communities. We look forward to these farmers actively contributing to sustainable agriculture in their communities. We will continue to work together in areas of mutual interest especially in areas where we can leverage each other's expertise in support of Hawai'i agriculture. The North Shore EVP strongly supports this measure that will ensure that the GoFarm Hawaii program continues its work to support local farmers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Sincerely,

Kevin Kelly  
President & CEO  
North Shore EVP



March 9, 2020

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and Members of the Committee ,

***RE: Support for SB2723 – GoFarm Hawaii Program (Date/Time of Hearing: 3/11/2020; 9:00am)***

On behalf of the The Kohala Center, I would like to extend our full support of SB 2723, which will appropriate funds to the GoFarm Hawai'i program.

The Kohala Center is an independent, community-based center for research, conservation, and education located on Hawai'i Island. By focusing on the needs of island residents and the research interests of our university and agency partners, we work on three core areas: energy self-reliance, food self-reliance, and ecosystem health.

Our organization has worked closely with both the GoFarm Hawai'i (GFH) beginning farmer training program and the AgBusiness Team since 2012. Their practical approach to teaching and supporting farmers have increased the number and viability of agricultural businesses throughout the State. The GFH program is the only business development program in the state dedicated to working with and elevating the success of Hawai'i's agricultural entrepreneurs; they are a critical component in Hawai'i's agricultural landscape, providing technical assistance in farmer training, business planning, marketing, production planning, succession planning, and more. GFH piloted its beginning farmer training program on Hawai'i Island at The Kohala Center's Demonstration Farm. We are committed to supporting the success and growth of this program on Hawai'i Island and across the state.

The Kohala Center strongly encourages the support of this valuable program.

Sincerely,

Nicole Milne, Ph.D.  
Vice President for Programs  
Director of Food and Agriculture Initiatives  
The Kohala Center



Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
Wednesday, March 11, 2020 — 9:00 a.m. — Room 312

**Ulupono Initiative supports SB 2723 SD 1, Relating to Agriculture.**

Dear Chair Creagan and Members of the Committee:

My name is Amy Hennessey, and I am the Senior Vice President of Communications & External Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-based impact investment firm that strives to improve our community's quality of life by creating more locally produced food; increasing affordable clean renewable energy and transportation options; and better managing waste and fresh water resources.

**Ulupono supports SB 2723 SD 1**, which appropriates funds for the GoFarm Hawai'i Program (GFH).

Since 2013, Ulupono has provided \$250,000 in grant funding to GFH for infrastructure and development of operations on Hawai'i Island, Maui, O'ahu, and Kaua'i. With funding from Ulupono and others, we are excited about the growth of the GFH training program.

According to the USDA-NASS Census of Agriculture, there are 7,300 estimated farms in Hawai'i, of which more than 75% earn less than \$25,000 per year. Additionally, of those farms that generate over \$25,000 per year, 65% have principal farm operators that are at least 55 years old. With the high costs of agricultural production here in Hawai'i and the average age of the local farmer climbing, it is of utmost importance for the State to invest in the next generation and to provide a financially viable future for those agricultural operations.

We appreciate that GFH has developed a broad spectrum of classes designed for those with an interest in agriculture. GFH offers the most comprehensive new farmer training program in Hawai'i, including classroom education, hands-on training, business planning, and incubation opportunities.

GFH has a well-received reputation with training the next generation of local producers in the State. Over the past 3 years, 58% of the 127 program graduates have either started their own agricultural businesses (60 graduates) or began working in (14 graduates) the agricultural industry. By training the future agricultural workforce, GFH is directly supporting the State's local food production goals and the creation of a more sustainable Hawai'i.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Amy Hennessey, APR  
Senior Vice President, Communications & External Affairs

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*



TESTIMONY OF THE KAHANA FOUNDATION  
IN REGARD TO SB2723 SD1 TO BE HEARD BY  
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
WEDNESDAY MARCH 11, 9:00AM ROOM 312

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Alexandra Kahn, and I am the Co-Founder & Director of Media at the Kahana Foundation. We are a Hawai'i-based environmental awareness organization working to improve our community's understanding and support for sustainable change.

Kahana Foundation **supports SB2723 SD1** which appropriates funds for the GoFarm Hawaii program. It requires GoFarm Hawai'i 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.

**As a State we have a goal to double local food production by 2030 and the only way to do this is to increase support and resources to the local agriculture community.**

The State Department of Agriculture estimates that 80-90% of food in Hawai'i is imported at a cost of approximately \$3 billion per year.<sup>1</sup> However, in a state that has ten of the fourteen climates in the world and more microclimates and soil profiles than anywhere in the world, we could and should be the agricultural capital of the world.<sup>2</sup> Through the Hawai'i Green Growth Aloha+ Challenge, the State established a number of 2030 resiliency goals which included: increase access to labor and land resources, provide enough land in farms to support local agriculture while allocating significant resources to support hirings, lower the costs and prices of local food, reduce local food waste, increase the directory of available and locally sourced food to meet the demand, and increase distribution efficiency, among others.<sup>3</sup> While these are all

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<sup>1</sup> [http://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/op/spb/INCREASED\\_FOOD\\_SECURITY\\_AND\\_FOOD\\_SELF\\_SUFFICIENCY\\_STRATEGY.pdf](http://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/op/spb/INCREASED_FOOD_SECURITY_AND_FOOD_SELF_SUFFICIENCY_STRATEGY.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hawaiibusiness.com/the-future-of-farming/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://aloha-challenge.hawaiigreengrowth.org/aloha-goals/local-food/>

necessary target goals, enhanced support for those programs working to achieve these goals is necessary.

According to the 2017 USDA NASS Census of Agriculture, 66% of farms in the State of Hawai'i are small, ranging between 1-9 acres.<sup>4</sup> As the average farming operation is small-scale with a low operating budget, financial support from the State by way of agricultural training programs is highly beneficial. This is where programs like GoFarm Hawai'i come in to the process. Their mission is to "enhance Hawaii's food security and economy by increasing the number of sustainable, local agricultural producers. We do this by offering those with an interest in agriculture a combination of knowledge, experience, and support designed to assist them in becoming viable production growers, and accomplish this in a manner that encourages sustainability."<sup>5</sup> GoFarm Hawai'i, while playing a major contributing role in Hawai'i's Aloha + Challenge goals, relies heavily on financial assistance in order to provide their program at a nominal fee, this assistance is what SB2723 can provide.

**GoFarm Hawai'i provides the education and assistance that is required to increase the number of local farmers and thus, local food.**

According to Scott Enright, the director of the State Department of Agriculture, the new generation of young Hawaiians wanting to delve into small-scale farming have no track record and are unable to loan the necessary money from banks in order to lease land and start their operations.<sup>6</sup> Additional and ongoing costs to farmers include water, fertilizers, and additional labor costs, among others. While our economy was once based upon agriculture, it has since been replaced by tourism. In fact, less than one percent of the tax-dollar funded state budget is allocated towards agriculture.<sup>7</sup>

Farming is difficult, and made more difficult by unpredictable weather patterns enhanced through climate change such as increasing heat, drought, and floods. Additionally, our hot humid climate is a breeding ground for pests and rodents, along with the diseases they bring. There is a lot of financial risk for a novice farmer, but GoFarm Hawai'i mitigates this risk by offering part

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Full\\_Report/Volume\\_1,\\_Chapter\\_2\\_County\\_Level/Hawaii/st15\\_2\\_0008\\_0008.pdf](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_2_County_Level/Hawaii/st15_2_0008_0008.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://gofarmhawaii.org>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/with-pineapple-and-sugar-production-gone-hawaii-weighs-its-agricultural-future/2017/12/17/c6e69236-e105-11e7-8679-a9728984779c\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/with-pineapple-and-sugar-production-gone-hawaii-weighs-its-agricultural-future/2017/12/17/c6e69236-e105-11e7-8679-a9728984779c_story.html)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.mauinews.com/news/local-news/2018/10/decoite-hawaii-farming-suffers-from-lack-of-state-support/>

of the program for free and the remainder for a nominal cost.<sup>8</sup> New farmers need a variety of assistance in addition to learning the ins and outs of farming. They also need to know how to operate a farming business and how to navigate the farming industry of Hawai'i. GoFarm Hawai'i offers a variety of programs in different levels of intensity across the islands, ranging from workshops, to four-month, six-month and even three year programs.<sup>9</sup>

**GoFarm Hawai'i needs additional support so that they can expand the support and resources they dedicate towards increasing our local farming population.**

Since its inception in 2012, there is living proof of the success of this program, seen by the 250 total participants learning everything from crop selection and farm equipment instruction, to pesticide information and business plan guidance.<sup>10</sup> The scope of GoFarm Hawai'i's program across four islands makes it one of the largest beginning-farmer training programs in the nation.<sup>11</sup> According to program director Janel Yamamoto, "In addition to growing thousands of pounds of food for the local market, our graduates are creating great value-added products, developing cooperative ways to market and distribute food, educating our island keiki about the importance of the local food supply and being leaders and active participants in the agricultural community."<sup>12</sup> GoFarm Hawai'i is fortunate to have Ulupuno as a significant contributor to their program, but in order to continue scaling and help Hawai'i achieve its 2030 increased resiliency goal, State support is needed.

We **support SB2723 SD1** and we urge this committee to **pass** this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Alex Kahn  
Kahana Foundation

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<sup>8</sup> <https://gofarmhawaii.org/calendar/windward-calendar/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.hawaii.edu/news/2017/12/15/gofarm-hawaii-receives-funding/>

<sup>10</sup> <http://ulupono.com/portfolios/gofarm-hawaii>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.hawaii.edu/news/2017/12/15/gofarm-hawaii-receives-funding/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.hawaii.edu/news/2017/12/15/gofarm-hawaii-receives-funding/>

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 5:50:43 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>          | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Suellen Barton      | Maui Farmers Union<br>United | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:



Mar 9, 2020

Committee on Agriculture

HEARING DATE:

Wednesday, 3/11 at 9:00am

PLACE:

Conference Room 312

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street



***Testimony in support of SB 2723 – GoFarm Hawaii Program***

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice-Chair DeCoite, and Committee Members,

Please recognize my strong support for SB 2723, which appropriates funds to the GoFarm Hawai'i program. Shortly after graduating from the program in 2015, I started a farm in Hale'iwa called Counter Culture Organic Farm on five acres of Kamehameha Schools agricultural land. Primarily due to the experience and connections gained through the GoFarm Hawai'i, I was able to secure that initial lease, a second Kamehameha Schools lease for an additional five acres in 2017, and a few months ago signed a 30 acre lease in Waialua to significantly expand our certified organic produce operation.

Counter Culture Organic Farm currently has about five acres in cultivation, selling \$120,000 in certified organic produce to local restaurants and households through Farm Link Hawai'i and the Kaka'ako Farmers Market. Our farm employs 3 full-time and 2 part-time people. Our impact on the food system and local economy will continue to grow as we expand into our new 30 acre lease in 2020.

I would not be where I am today without GoFarm Hawai'i. The program gave me the appropriate mix of theory, hands-on practice, and, most importantly, a connection to a strong network of resources to draw upon indefinitely. Since graduating, I've regularly communicated and partnered with GoFarm staff and other alumni to increase our impact on local agriculture.

The GoFarm Hawai'i program is a needed and valuable program for the state of Hawai'i. Their ongoing support, educational opportunities, and network continues to provide a valuable support system for my business.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my support for this Bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Barreca", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Robert Barreca

Owner

Counter Culture Organic Farm

[rob@counterculturehawaii.com](mailto:rob@counterculturehawaii.com)

(808) 224-1905

## AGRtestimony

---

**From:** Teresa Gardner <teresa\_gardner@me.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 10, 2020 6:16 AM  
**To:** AGRtestimony  
**Subject:** Support for SB2723 – GoFarm Hawaii Program (Date/Time of Hearing: 3/11/2020; 9:00am)

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice-Chair DeCoite, and Committee Members:

Please recognize my strong support for SB 2723, which appropriates funds to the GoFarm Hawaii program. Since graduating from the program, I started a small farm business and am currently growing on 1 ½ acres of land. I sell produce on a regular basis at the farmers' market, to local restaurants, and direct to 15 local families on a weekly basis. The program taught me production skills, provided business support, and a gave me a network that allows my business to continue growing. I am working on my business full-time, employ 2 people, and am looking to expand my production within 2 years.

The GoFarm Hawaii program is a needed and valuable program for the state of Hawaii. Their ongoing support, educational opportunities, and network continues to provide a valuable support system for my business.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my support of this Bill.

Sincerely,  
Teresa Gardner  
Art Farm 808  
Teresa\_gardner@me.com  
[AGRtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:AGRtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)

Sent with Aloha 🌺

House Committee on Agriculture

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Date: March 11, 2020

Room: State Capitol Room 312

**TESTIMONY**

Submitted by the undersigned organizations

To: Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and Members of the Committee

**RE: In Support of SB2723, Relating to GoFarm Hawai'i**

The undersigned organizations are writing to **SUPPORT SB2723**, which proposes to appropriate funds out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii for the GoFarm Hawai'i program to provide agricultural workforce development and support services in business consulting, technical assistance, and beginner farmer training.

Since 2013, GoFarm Hawai'i has trained 330 aspiring farmers at five training sites on four islands. The program has five key activities: 1) Support agribusiness development statewide; 2) Educate agribusinesses and create industry tools; 3) Develop new farmers for Hawai'i; 4) Incubate program graduates; and 5) Train agricultural workers.

GoFarm Hawaii graduates engage throughout Hawai'i's food system as trained producers, informed consumers, and passionate advocates. This growing critical mass of producers will provide not just the agricultural produce, but also the know-how and collaboration for building the systems for processing, manufacturing, specialization, technology, aggregation, scaling, and other efficiencies in support of a robust agricultural industry in Hawai'i.

Farmers and food production activities are the essential building blocks in transforming and sustaining the local food system in Hawai'i. It is of tremendous importance to everyone who eats in the State—government employees as well as private citizens, working adults, school children, the house-less, the military, the visitor industry, the incarcerated and more. A successful GoFarm program contributes to the larger work of our organizations, and we wholeheartedly support this bill and urge the Committee to **PASS SB2723**.

Hawai'i State Future Farmers  
of America (FFA)

Kōkua Hawai'i Foundation

Waimānalo Market Co-op

Hawai'i Farm to School Hui  
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

Kamehameha Schools

Ulupono Initiative

House Committee on Agriculture

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Date: March 11, 2020

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Kōkua Hawai'i Foundation

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Hawai'i Farm to School Hui  
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

Kamehameha Schools

Ulupono Initiative



## AGRtestimony

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**From:** Chris Kaiakapu <chriskaiakapu@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 10, 2020 11:29 AM  
**To:** AGRtestimony  
**Subject:** SB2723. 3/11/2020 9:00AM

Support for SB2723 – GoFarm Hawaii Program; 3/11/2020; 9:00am

Aloha Committee on Agriculture,

As a current Full-time Farmer on Kaua'i and an alumni of the GoFarm Hawaii Beginning Farmer Training Program, I strongly support this bill, which appropriates funds to the GoFarm Hawaii program.

As a student of the GoFarm Hawaii program, I learned the production and business skills necessary to operate a successful commercial farm. After graduating, I partnered with a fellow Native Hawaiian farmer and began working for Kuamo'o farm. We utilize a commercial Aquaponics operation, microgreens, in-ground vegetables, as well as kalo and other native food crops to sustain our livelihood and enrich our community with affordable, sustainable, locally grown food. We are currently based in Kalaheo, selling produce and value-added products to restaurants, catering companies, and direct to local families via a CSA program. I currently work full-time to maintain the operation in Kalaheo while helping to expand and develop our new property on 5 acres in the Hanapepe Valley. On this new property we are expanding our aquaponics operation, clearing zones for in-ground row crops, and restoring Lo'i Kalo that has been neglected for years. We work with schools and youth programs to bring education and hands-on experiences to instill the values of agriculture and conservation in our keiki.

Farming is the cornerstone of Hawaii's roots in self-sufficiency. Our culture, new and old, and indeed our identity, whether Kanaka or Hawaii resident, is intertwined with the unique crops and methods found in Hawaii agriculture. In today's society Farmers are undervalued and need support to learn, grow, and thrive. The GoFarm Hawaii program has given me and hundreds of others the skills, network, and support needed to start farming and pursue a career in agriculture. The program is an essential tool for strengthening the agriculture industry in Hawaii, which is in turn essential for keeping our economy diversified and resilient. Please support this valuable program that develops and nurtures farmers for the State of Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Christopher Lono Ka'iakapu  
B.S. Environmental Science  
Farmer  
Kuamo'o Farm, Hanapepe, Kaua'i

**LATE**

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 4:40:50 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>                                   | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Harriet Witt        | Hawaii Farmers Union<br>United - Haleakala<br>Chapter | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

We need this if we hope to move beyond our dangerous dependence on the mainland for food that could be grown here if only people knew how to grow it.

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 10:30:03 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>       | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Regina Gregory      | EcoTipping Points Project | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

March 9, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Support for SB 2723 SD1 – GoFarm Hawaii Program  
(Date/Time of Hearing: 3/11/2020; 9:00am)

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice-Chair DeCoite, and Committee Members:

I am grateful that the State is working to provide more land with long-term leases for small commercial farmers. I believe it is also important for the State to help fund the training for people who wish to farm those lands.

That is why I am writing in support of SB 2723 SD1, which appropriates funds to the GoFarm Hawai'i program. As a 2020 graduate of GoFarm's AgSchool (along with my 27-year-old son Tom), we learned hands-on, agriculture production and marketing skills and also how to build a network that will support our future in the agricultural industry.

I am a retired State of Hawai'i employee and can not afford to return to the university to get another degree in agriculture. The GoFarm program provided Tom and I with an affordable and practical education that has given us more confidence to farm his grandfather's land.

During the program, we had a weekly, evening class about farming subjects with guest speakers, while during the day we managed (seed, weed, harvest) a plot of land, marketed and sold our vegetables, developed a future crop plan, and examined the financial viability of specific crops and our business.

We have been accepted into and plan to complete the next, six-month phase of GoFarm called AgPro. Afterwards my son and I will start a farm on his grandfather's land and will continue using the support services and network that the program offers.

The GoFarm Hawaii program is a needed and valuable program for the State of Hawai'i that remains too dependent on imported food. Right now, GoFarm's costs are mostly funded by and dependent on federal government grants that are competitive and require reapplication.

GoFarm's ongoing support, educational opportunities, and network are essential to develop more small, family farm businesses, which will provide more food security for our community. Food security for Hawai'i is more likely with GoFarm's training programs and support services. Please pass SB 2723 SD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my support of this Bill.

Sincerely,

Jay Hartwell  
GoFarm AgSchool Graduate (Windward O'ahu Cohort 10)  
hartwell808@gmail.com  
808-373-4891

Personal Testimony Presented Before  
the House Committee on Agriculture  
Representative Richard Creagan, Chair  
Representative Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair  
Wednesday, March 11, 2020, 9:00 AM

By Charles Kinoshita

Support for SB 2723 SD1, Relating to Agriculture

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture:

My name is Charles Kinoshita. I retired from the University of Hawaii, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, two month ago, and I'm submitting testimony as a private citizen in support of SB 2723 SD1, which calls for appropriation of funds to support the GoFarm Hawaii (GFH) Program.

Decades ago, prior to joining the University of Hawaii, I was an engineer for, and part of the management team of, the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association (HSPA) Experiment Station. When I first joined HSPA, sugarcane was being cultivated on four Hawaiian islands, covering more than 200,000 acres, and yielding roughly one million tons of sugar per year. Today, no cane is grown in Hawaii for the manufacture of refined sugar.

While commercial sugarcane has disappeared from our landscape, the majority of the lands that once supported cane, now fallow, still are zoned agricultural and have great potential for diversified crops. These lands can be brought back into commercial agriculture to create the green landscape that is important to the health of our environment and our visitor industry, and support our local economy and food security, if new farmers are able to cultivate those lands skillfully and profitably. Given the economic and food crisis that we face today, it is particularly important that Hawaii takes immediate, significant measures to become more self-reliant in food production. In order to increase the number of farmers in Hawaii's diversified agriculture and ensure their success, we need to provide aspiring farmers with the knowledge and skill sets to grow crops better and to operate their agribusinesses more profitably.

GoFarm Hawaii has assembled infrastructure and professionals to grow new farmers on all four islands that previously grew commercial sugarcane. GFH, which offers training in both crop production and business management quite likely is the largest and most successful new farmer training program in the nation. In the last three years, more than 100 trainees graduated from the GFH training program, approximately 60% of the graduates started farm businesses or are supporting other agribusinesses in Hawaii, and 18 farm businesses were incubated on our own program lands. Complementary to the highly successful new farmer training program, the GoFarm Hawaii AgBusiness consulting arm provides one-on-one support to new and existing farmers statewide, and in 2019 helped more than 60 farmers apply for loans, leases and grants, and develop business plans and value-added products.

Let's be clear... to achieve such high levels of success and positive impacts is costly. GFH has been highly successful in competing for contracts and grants at the national, state, and local levels, and has garnered strong support from generous and committed partners in the private sector, government agencies, and philanthropic organizations, but additional funding, as called for in SB 2723 SD1, is needed to continue this successful farmer-training and agribusiness-support program and ensure GFH some level of stability.

In closing, I'd like to point-out that I believe so strongly in GFH that, in retirement, I have volunteered to be an uncompensated part of the GFH team so that I may make my own small contribution to the future success of agriculture in Hawaii. I ask you to support SB 2723 SD1 and help GoFarm Hawaii train and provide consulting services to our state's future successful farmers and agripreneurs.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my views.

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 1:13:51 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jari S.K. Sugano    | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

Chair Creagan, Vice Chair Decoitte and members of the House Agriculture committee

I strongly support SB2723. The GoFarm Hawaii program is a program of UH CTAHR that is backed by science based practices and built on a solid agribusiness foundation. The program is statewide, yet grant funded. It requires long term funding to support Governor Ige's goal of food sustainability. GoFarm Hawaii has the ability to increase the number of new and beginning farmers in Hawaii. Not many programs can do this.

Aloha, Jari Sugano



**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 2:28:35 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Susan Collins       | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

SUBJECT: Support for SB2723 – GoFarm Hawaii Program (Date/Time of Hearing: 3/11/2020; 9:00am)

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice-Chair DeCoite, and Committee Members:

Please recognize my strong support for SB 2723, which appropriates funds to the GoFarm Hawaii program. Since graduating from the program, I started a small farm business and am currently growing on 5 acres of land. I have an active and healthy apiary. I teach classes on beekeeping from home, sell honey, and sell beekeeping equipment to others. The program taught me production skills, provided business support, and gave me a network that allows my business to continue growing. I am working on my business part-time, and am looking to expand my production within 2 years.

The GoFarm Hawaii program is a needed and valuable program for the state of Hawaii. Their ongoing support, educational opportunities, and network continues to provide a valuable support system for my business.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my support for this Bill.

Sincerely,

Susan Collins

Bird and Bee Hawaii

birdandbeehawaii@gmail.com

808-936-6019



**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 4:59:48 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Nora Rodli          | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

My name is Nora Rodli, and I am presenting testimony in strong support of SB2723, which appropriates funds for the GoFarm Hawai'i farmer training program. Although I am the Statewide Coordinator for GoFarm Hawai'i, I am presenting testimony here as a private citizen. If we are to meet increased food production goals in the state, there are multiple sectors in need of attention and support. In order to meet these goals and to be more resilient in our economy and food system, we need diversity in the scale of our farms, the types of crops produced and the types of businesses that utilize local agricultural products. If we would like to see more farmers taking on this charge, then we need to offer a variety of educational opportunities that not only teach agronomic and business content and practice but also create a network of opportunities for individuals to begin and build their skillset, network, markets, and confidence so that they can **sustainably scale** and make an impact in local agriculture. Supporting a hands-on farmer training program is an example of investment that will improve our chances of meeting our increased food production goals.

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 5:22:14 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>    | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Melissa Malahoff-Kamei | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

SUBJECT: SUPPORT for SB2723 – GoFarm Hawaii Program  
(Date/Time of Hearing: 3/11/2020; 9:00am)

Aloha,

As an alumni of the GoFarm Hawaii Beginning Farmer Training Program, I would like to extend my strong support for this bill to appropriate funds to the GoFarm Hawaii program.

As a recently-graduated student of the GoFarm Hawaii program, I learned the production and business skills necessary to operate a successful commercial farm. Since graduating from GoFarm's AgSchool program, my husband and I have personally invested to acquire a modest amount of land to start farming on.

As a beginning farmer I will be relying heavily on continued advice and guidance from my GoFarm Hawaii coaches to become successful and independent in selling my produce and value-added products at the local farmers' markets, restaurants, and direct to local families. I quit my job in marketing 3 years ago to stay home with my children and currently farming will be the focus for my future business endeavors, and the way I will be able to contribute to my family's household income.

Farmers - particularly beginning farmers - need support to learn, grow, and thrive. The GoFarm Hawaii program has given me the skills, network, and support needed to start my farm business and pursue a career in agriculture. Please support this valuable program that develops and nurtures farmers for the State of Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Melissa Malahoff-Kamei  
Owner/Operator  
M-K Farm

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 5:23:35 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Havilah Mills       | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

Amending the bill will support various organizations and groups that exist across the state seeking to accomplish training of the next generation of local food producers in Hawai'i, supporting and sustaining the growth of the agricultural industry and the long term use and protection of agricultural lands for agricultural use.

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 6:38:49 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Dennis F Lokmer     | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 7:33:37 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ken Stover          | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 7:51:04 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Karen Winslow       | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:



**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 9:31:54 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Raphiell Nolin      | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/9/2020 10:42:55 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jay Bost            | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

March 9, 2020

SUBJECT: Support for SB2723 – GoFarm Hawaii Program (Date/Time of Hearing: 3/11/2020; 9:00am)

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice-Chair DeCoite, and Committee Members:

I am writing in strong support of SB2723 to provide funding to GoFarm Hawai'i. I am submitting testimony as an individual, but have been working with GoFarm Hawai'i for the past 6 years in the position of Farm Coach on the island on Oahu. The GoFarm Hawai'i program has grown and developed into the most viable and effective new farming program in the State because of the dedication of its staff, its strong science-based curriculum and its emphasis on hand-on farming skills and practical entrepreneurship, and its close interaction with CTAHR and other agricultural professionals. I can say with confidence that the GoFarm Hawai'i program is at the most refined point in its history and is presently training and incubating new farmers who are making and will make impacts in contributing to the growth of the diversified agricultural sector in Hawai'i. Funding provided by this bill will help continue the development of sites on Kauai and Hawai'i and support the well-established sites on Oahu and Maui. It will also aid GoFarm Hawai'i in helping successful new growers scale up to increase their impact. As we see when we hold our Alumni Conferences, the GoFarm Hawai'i program has already created a large network of new farm business, agricultural educators in the DOE school system, and farm systems innovators (such as the growing distribution business FarmLink Hawaii which is helping small and medium growers get their products to market). The momentum of the network that GoFarm Hawai'i has directly contributed in forming, along with the alliances GoFarm Hawai'i has built with other agricultural organizations around the State is already strong and increases in strength each year. I have no doubt that the State is making a sound investment in GoFarm Hawai'i as an integral part of the goal of increasing food security in the State by building sustainable businesses farming in ecologically beneficial manners. The investments already made by the State, as well as the USDA, are paying off in a new generation of market gardeners and small to medium

sized farmers and orchardists. For the momentum to continue, GoFarm Hawai'i requests the support of the House. Thank you,

Jay Bost

[jbost@hawaii.edu](mailto:jbost@hawaii.edu)

918-606-4400

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 7:39:26 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ted Radovich        | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support of this bill. GoFarm Hawaii (GFH) is the premier beginning farmer training program in Hawai'i. As a extension specialist in sustainable and organic agriculture at the University of Hawaii, it is my personal testimony that I have seen tremendous impact from this program. This bill provides funding for GFH that will stabilize the program and ensure that it will continue to develop the new farmers we need for Hawaii's agriculture industry.

Mahalo,

Ted Radovich

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 8:47:41 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| A Kathleen Lee      | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

Aloha AG Comm of the Senate,

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish the beginning farmer training program to be administered by the University of Hawaii, west Oahu, sustainable community food systems. SECTION 2. Chapter 141, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to part I, to be appropriately designated and to read as follows: §141- Beginning farmer training program; established. (a) There is established the beginning farmer training program to be administered by the University of Hawaii, West Oahu, sustainable community food systems in conjunction with qualified farmer training providers. (b) The University of Hawaii shall: (1) Collaborate and consult with, and provide funding, information, and educational resources to qualified farmer training providers; (2) Implement strategies to increase the number of new farmers in the State, with a focus on recruiting low-income persons, disabled persons, and military veterans; (3) Assist qualified farmer training providers seeking federal and county funding to expand their training offerings; (4) Evaluate the effectiveness of the farmer training program; (5) Subject to the availability of funding, distribute funding to as many training programs as is practical to achieve the purpose of program; and (6) Retain records of all activities and costs related to the implementation of the beginning farmer training program. (c) A beginning farmer shall be eligible for training for a maximum of one year; provided that the beginning farmer: (1) Qualifies for Hawaii resident tuition or provides proof that the beginning farmer has been farming for no more than five years; (2) Maintains satisfactory academic progress; and (3) Demonstrates an interest in pursuing a career in the State’s agricultural industry. (d) Subject to the availability of funding, the University of Hawaii may enter into contracts with qualified farmer training providers on a first come, first served basis to effectuate the purpose of this section; provided that: (1) No contract shall be more than \$100,000 per year per provider; (2) The term of any contract shall be no longer than one year; and (3) No qualified farmer training provider may receive more than \$300,000 in aggregate for services procured pursuant to this section during any five-year period. (e) Training services procured pursuant to subsection (d) may include the following topics: (1) The proper methods of: (A) Planting, tending, cultivating, and harvesting various types of crops; and (B) Raising livestock or poultry; (2) Soil health; (3) Agricultural business operations, including workforce issues, regulatory compliance, and general operations; and (4) An industry analysis of the agricultural industry and related markets. (f) A qualified farmer training provider providing services pursuant to this section shall make

available for inspection and examination by the University of Hawaii during regular business hours all related training materials, sites, and facilities. (g) The University of Hawaii, west Oahu, sustainable community food systems shall submit a report to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to each regular session. The report shall include at a minimum: (1) The number of beginning farmers enrolled in the beginning farmer training program during the preceding year; (2) A description of each qualified farming training provider; (3) An assessment of the ability of program participants to complete project objectives!

Mahalo for doing this for all of us,

April Lee

Small Farmer

Hawi, HI

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 8:48:41 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Steven Forman       | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 8:48:42 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Amy Brinker         | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:



**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 8:57:47 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Cindy Evans         | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

Sustain growth in ag training by supporting amendment to expand to other farmer trading programs

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 9:16:30 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| James McCay         | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

Personal Testimony  
Submitted to the House Committee on Agriculture  
Rep. Richard P. Creagan, Chair  
Rep. Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair  
Wednesday, March 11, 2020, 9:00 am  
By Janel Yamamoto  
Support for SB 2723, Relating to Agriculture

Dear Chair Creagan and Vice Chair DeCoite, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Janel Yamamoto and I am the current Director of GoFarm Hawai'i. I am submitting testimony as a private citizen in strong support of SB 2723, which calls for appropriation of funds to support the GoFarm Hawai'i Program.

Of the 7,328 farms in Hawai'i, 78% earn less than \$25,000 per year. With high costs for land, labor, and inputs, for the majority of farmers, this level of sales is insufficient to significantly impact household income. Furthermore, 71% of the principal farm operators are at least 55 years old. In order to increase food production and prepare the next generation of farmers, support is needed to develop financially viable farming operations. New farmers focused on commercial production must be developed and existing farms must increase yield and profitability. GoFarm Hawai'i, a University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (UH CTAHR) program, was established with these goals in mind.

GoFarm Hawai'i (previously named the Agribusiness Incubator Program) has been providing business consulting services to farmers throughout the state since 2003. In 2011, in response to the lack of new farmer development, a group made up of farmers, major landowners, University of Hawai'i (UH) personnel, and leaders of other agricultural training programs (both academic and otherwise) was formed. The group performed a survey of farmer training programs, both in Hawai'i and across the nation. In 2012, thirteen of the members toured the Northeast U.S. to meet with and survey successful farmer training programs, both University-affiliated and private. Based on this knowledge, the group developed an innovative, phased model and curriculum that addressed the objective of developing new, commercial farmers for Hawai'i while avoiding the gaps identified by other programs.

The GoFarm Hawai'i beginning farmer training program offered its first class in 2012 and currently has five training site locations across four islands. The program incorporates production, business, incubation, networking, and ongoing support. During the training, students are responsible for full crop cycles on their own plots and gain experience with marketing and sales goals. In advanced phases, commercial-scale production practices are introduced and business planning is required. At most locations, graduates have the ability to incubate their business on land managed by the program. In addition, the program offers agriculture-focused business education and consulting to students after graduation, to farmers throughout the state, and to other training programs. Since forming, GoFarm Hawai'i has constantly modified its curriculum to ensure that it remains relevant, is of value, and incorporates the components

needed to develop sustainable new farmers. Feedback from farmers, graduates, education/industry professionals, and other training programs are regularly used to update the program and its curriculum.

The following demonstrates results of the GoFarm Hawai‘i (GFH) program:

| Since 2012 (commencement of training program) |       |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------|
| AgCurious Attendees                           | 1,725 |
| AgXposure Participants                        | 551   |
| AgSchool Graduates                            | 349   |
| AgPro Graduates                               | 141   |
| AgIncubator Participants                      | 59    |
| Field Trip Visits to GoFarm Hawai‘i Sites     | 1,670 |

The following is based on AgSchool and AgPro exit surveys over the past 3 years (2017-2019):

63 Trainees are working for themselves/started a business (45% of 140<sup>1</sup> Graduates)

24 Trainees are working for others in agriculture (17% of 140 Graduates)

**TOTAL: 87 Working in Agriculture Industry (62% of Graduates)**

An additional 14% intend to use the knowledge to start farms in the future.

|                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>AgSchool</b><br/>185 Enrolled<br/>16 Current<br/><b>161</b> Graduated</p> | <p><b>Of 161:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AgPro<sup>2</sup> – <b>84</b> (52%)</li> <li>• Started a Farm – <b>23</b> (14%)</li> <li>• Working in Ag – <b>15</b> (9%)</li> <li>• Plan to start a farm in the future – <b>12</b> (7%)</li> </ul> | <p><b>AgPro</b><br/>84 Enrolled<br/>21 Current<br/><b>59</b> Graduated</p> | <p><b>Of 59:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Started a Farm on GFH land (AgIncubator) – <b>18</b> (31%)</li> <li>• Started a Farm off GFH land – <b>22</b> (37%)</li> <li>• Working in Ag – <b>9</b> (15%)</li> <li>• Plan to start a farm in the future – <b>7</b> (12%)</li> </ul> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The success rate for those who complete AgPro is **83%** (49 of 59 graduates farm/work in ag).

| Beginning Farmer Training Program Demographics for 2019                                     |                                                                                 |                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
|                                                                                             | In Hawai‘i <sup>3</sup>                                                         | In GFH Program |
| Percentage of NH/Pacific Islander New Farmer Producers in the State                         | 8%                                                                              | 19%            |
| Percentage of Minority (non-White) New Farmer <sup>3</sup> Producers in State               | 43%                                                                             | 66%            |
| Percentage of Women New Farmer Producers in State                                           | 43%                                                                             | 38%            |
| Preparedness for commercial farming level increase based on student evaluations (Scale 1-5) | 100% improved: AgSchool from 1.6 to 3.4<br>100% improved: AgPro from 2.3 to 4.2 |                |

Notes:

<sup>1</sup>AgSchool graduates minus students currently enrolled in AgPro (161-21).

<sup>2</sup>AgPro was not available to 44 of the AgSchool graduates as the Phase was not offered at the time.

<sup>3</sup>All State percentages based on 2017 USDA-NASS Census of Agriculture. Category combines Native Hawai‘ians and Pacific Islander (GoFarm Hawai‘i tracks this as separate categories). New farmers are those farming 10 years or less.

**AgIncubator Results**

|                                                                       |                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 2019 Revenue Average of All Incubators/Average Plot Size              | \$20,904/ ¼ acre   |
| State of Hawai‘i Average Farm Revenues/Average Farm Size <sup>1</sup> | \$76,938/155 acres |

Notes:

<sup>1</sup>Based on 2017 USDA-NASS Census of Agriculture.

**AgTechnician Training Results (training at Waiawa Correctional Facility)**

|                                                                   |                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cohorts Completed (started in 2019)                               | 1                                                                              |
| Number Graduated                                                  | 8                                                                              |
| Number of Surveys Completed                                       | 7                                                                              |
| Number planning to enter farming/ag                               | 7 (100%)                                                                       |
| Native Hawai‘ian Demographic in GFH Program                       | 63%                                                                            |
| Knowledge level increase based on student evaluations (Scale 1-5) | 100% improved knowledge level<br>Average skill level increased from 2.3 to 4.7 |

Notes:

We are unable to do longitudinal tracking as the Correctional Facility does not provide inmate personal information after release. However, graduates were provided program contact information for possible future enrollment/support.

**2019 AgBusiness Team Results**

| Consulting Program Demographics for 2019                                           |                         |                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
|                                                                                    | In Hawai‘i <sup>1</sup> | In GFH Program |
| Percentage of Native Hawai‘ians/Pacific Islander New Farmer Producers in the State | 9%                      | 24%            |
| Percentage of Minority (non-White) New Farmer Producers in State                   | 48%                     | 60%            |
| Percentage of Women New Farmer Producers in State                                  | 41%                     | 58%            |
| Number Served with 1:1 Consulting                                                  | 80                      |                |
| Business Plans Developed                                                           | 30                      |                |
| Number in Training Workshops/Classes                                               | 693                     |                |

Notes:

<sup>1</sup>Based on 2017 USDA-NASS Census of Agriculture. Category combines Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islander (GoFarm Hawai‘i tracks this as separate categories).

As reflected above, the GoFarm Hawai‘i program has shown success in developing and supporting farmers in the state and there continues to be demand for the program. I kindly ask for your support of SB2723 so the program can continue its work to develop financially viable farming operations in order to support the state’s goal of increasing local food production.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 10:14:04 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Lauren Finley-Jacob | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

I support SB2723 SD1 and echo the recommendations proposed by HFUU to to include language from SB2709 SD1.

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 4:36:30 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

**LATE**

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jennifer Rodwell    | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 5:58:37 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

**LATE**

| <b>Submitted By</b>   | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jacqueline S. Ambrose | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:



**LATE**

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 7:41:55 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Lana Brodziak       | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

I suport this bill and the Go Farm program. I feel it is importanat to pass this legislation. Mahalo for your consideration.

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 8:04:07 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

**LATE**

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Donna Maltz         | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

We desperately need new farms to provide food security for our Islands. The recent Cornonvirise is just a sampling of what is yet to come. If we do not have trained farmers, we starve.

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 8:06:00 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

**LATE**

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ariel Douvris       | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

**LATE**

**SB-2723-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 11:05:52 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/11/2020 9:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Shannon             | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

Go Farm provides a genuine opportunity to those interested in pursuing farming as a career. The Go Farm program provides tools and resources to individuals who are serious about growing food locally. The program is statewide and exposes students and future farmers to the reality of farming on a commercial level with a curriculum that not only requires working in the field to learn about soil health and irrigation, but also exposes students to what it takes to run a business. As a Go Farm graduate, I strongly support SB 2723 and kindly request its passage.