
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that it is necessary to
2 support beginning farmers in the State. The legislature
3 believes that a farmer apprentice mentoring program could
4 increase farming in the State, ensure the continued use of
5 well-developed farming methods, and provide for the cultivation
6 of new farming methods.

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

16 The legislature believes that the future of the State's
17 farming industry, food supply, and agriculture is reliant upon



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

9 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish the
10 farmer apprentice mentoring program, to be administered by the
11 department of agriculture.

12 SECTION 2. 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- Farmer apprentice mentoring program;
16 established. (a) There is established the farmer apprentice
17 mentoring program, to be administered by the department of
18 agriculture, that shall support farmer mentors to train
19 apprentices on methods for improving soil health by using whole
20 farm systems.

21 (b) The department of agriculture shall:



- 1 (1) Collaborate with; consult with; and provide funding
2 and information to qualified farmer mentorship
3 providers to fund apprenticeships for bona fide Hawaii
4 farmers;
- 5 (2) Implement strategies to increase the number of new
6 farmers in the State, with a focus on recruiting low-
7 income persons, disabled persons, and military
8 veterans;
- 9 (3) Assist qualified farmer mentorship providers seeking
10 federal and county funding to expand their training
11 and mentorship offerings;
- 12 (4) Evaluate and report to the legislature on the
13 effectiveness of the farmer apprentice mentoring
14 program;
- 15 (5) Subject to the availability of funding, allocate
16 funding to as many qualified farmer mentorship
17 providers as is practical to achieve the purposes of
18 the farmer apprentice mentoring program; and
- 19 (6) Retain records of all activities and costs related to
20 the implementation of the farmer apprentice mentoring
21 program.



1 (c) A farmer apprentice shall be eligible for training
2 under the farmer apprentice mentoring program for a maximum of
3 one year; provided that the farmer apprentice:

4 (1) Qualifies for Hawaii resident tuition or provides
5 proof that the farmer apprentice has been farming for
6 no more than five years; and

7 (2) Demonstrates an interest in pursuing a career in
8 Hawaii's agricultural industry.

9 (d) Subject to the availability of funding, the department
10 of agriculture may enter into contracts with qualified farmer
11 mentorship providers on a first-come, first-served basis, and in
12 accordance with section 103D-304, to effectuate the purposes of
13 this section; provided that:

14 (1) No farmer mentorship provider shall receive more than
15 \$ _____ per year in apprenticeship stipends;

16 (2) Funding shall cover \$ _____ per farmer apprentice per
17 year and constitute up to a maximum fifty per cent of
18 total farmer apprentice wages for that given year;

19 (3) The term of any apprenticeship contract shall not
20 exceed one year;



1 (4) A qualified farmer mentorship provider shall not
2 receive more than \$ in the aggregate during any
3 five-year period for services procured pursuant to
4 this section; and

5 (5) Any requests for proposals submitted by farmer
6 mentorship providers pursuant to this section shall
7 include:

8 (A) The types and quantities of training and
9 mentoring services offered, including hours of
10 hands-on instruction;

11 (B) The criteria for evaluating the success of the
12 farmer apprentice;

13 (C) The total estimated cost of the farmer mentorship
14 provider's services to the department of
15 agriculture;

16 (D) The qualifications of the farmer mentorship
17 provider;

18 (E) The proposed dates of training and mentoring; and

19 (F) A summary of any previous funding received
20 pursuant to this section.



1 (e) Farmer mentorship services procured pursuant to
2 subsection (d) may include the following topics:

3 (1) The proper methods of:

4 (A) Improving soil health by using whole farm
5 systems;

6 (B) Planting, tending, cultivating, and harvesting
7 various types of crops; and

8 (C) Raising livestock or poultry;

9 (2) Agricultural business operations, including workforce
10 issues, regulatory compliance, and general operations;
11 and

12 (3) Analysis of the agricultural industry and related
13 markets.

14 (f) A qualified farmer mentorship provider that provides
15 services pursuant to this section shall make available for
16 inspection and examination by the department of agriculture
17 during regular business hours all relevant training and
18 mentoring materials, sites, and facilities.

19 (g) The department of agriculture shall submit a report to
20 the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening



1 of each regular session. The report shall include, at a
2 minimum:

3 (1) The number of farmer apprentices enrolled in the
4 farmer apprentice mentoring program during the
5 preceding year;

6 (2) A listing of each qualified farmer mentorship
7 provider;

8 (3) An assessment of the ability of farmer mentorship
9 providers participating in the program to complete any
10 program objectives and work tasks identified by the
11 department of agriculture; and

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

15 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
17 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 to
18 establish and implement the farmer apprentice mentoring program
19 pursuant to section 2 of this Act, to provide mentoring to
20 farmer apprentices on a whole farm system approach to
21 agriculture.



1 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
2 agriculture for the purposes of this Act.

3 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

4 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2050.



Report Title:

HDOA; Farmer Apprentice Mentoring Program; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes a farmer apprentice mentoring program. Makes an appropriation to the Department of Agriculture to establish and implement the program. Effective 1/1/2050. (SD2)

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