



DIRECT FROM DONOVAN ...

SEN. DONOVAN DELA CRUZ

Farmable Land, Agriculture On The Rise In Central Oahu

In my continuing efforts to preserve agricultural land, my colleagues have joined me in supporting the acquisition of available parcels in Central Oahu owned by Dole Food Company and Castle & Cooke. When the pending purchases are complete, these lands — along with other parcels that already have been acquired — will increase farmable acreage in the Whitmore Project to more than 2,800 acres. Substantial investments already have been made to revitalize agriculture in

Central Oahu.

One of the parcels my colleagues and I are pushing to purchase is a 92-acre piece of land on Kipapa Ridge. The land sits on a plateau and is considered to have good soil quality for farming. Dole Food Company used this ridge, as well as land in Mililani Mauka and Mililani, to grow pineapple. As pineapple production downsized, the company (through Castle & Cooke) has begun to develop housing on the former plantation land.

It has been more than 35 years since the ridge has had any agricultural activity.

Central Oahu residents

agricultural lands that are not in production can be developed into farms. According to a Statewide Agricultural Land Use

151,830 acres last year. The state should add these lands to its inventory to prevent development on prime agricultural lands for perpetuity.

Transitioning former pineapple land for diversified agriculture is achievable. Sugarland Farms, a tenant of the Whitmore Project, recently harvested approximately 2.7 million pounds of watermelon and 750,000 pounds of bell pepper on a portion of the Galbraith Estate acquired in 2012 by Agribusiness Development Corporation.

The Kipapa Ridge land would be added to this current inventory of farmable agricultural land.

As we continue to expand the Whitmore Project in Central Oahu, I look forward to the return of agriculture in the Mililani region.

Contact state Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz, D-District 22 (Mililani Mauka-Waipio Acres-Wheeler-Wahiawa-Whitmore Village) at 586-6090 or email sendelacruz@capitol.hawaii.gov.

“When the pending purchases are complete, these lands ... will increase farmable acreage in the Whitmore Project to more than 2,800 acres.”

have raised concerns over current residential developments that will increase commuter traf-

Baseline report, the total crop acreage for crop production has dropped from 350,830 acres in 1980 to

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