

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
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TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

MARCH 23, 2022
9:00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 325

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 92
URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO ASSIST COFFEE FARMERS IN
PURCHASING ORGANIC FERTILIZER TO PREVENT COFFEE LEAF RUST

Chairperson Hashem and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Concurrent Resolution 92 urging the Department of Agriculture ("Department") to assist coffee farmers in purchasing organic fertilizer to prevent coffee leaf rust. The Department offers the following comments.

The Department appreciates the intent of this resolution and agrees tree health plays a part in resistance of plants to coffee leaf rust, however, the science behind fertilizers and amendments to prevent coffee leaf rust is unfounded. The Department believes support for coffee growers impacted by coffee leaf rust should be grounded in proven science and should focus on registered and labeled fungicides and the long-term identification and importation through legal means of coffee leaf rust resistant varieties. The Department recognizes the cost of fertilizer can be prohibitive. The Department would like to note there are multiple bills promoting composting including subsidies, which if passed, coffee growers can take advantage of without decreasing monies allocated for coffee leaf rust control.



Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



House Committee on Agriculture

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: HCR92 / HR86

Wednesday, March 23rd, 2022 9 a.m. Conference Room 325

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso and Members of the Committee,

HAPA is in support of HCR92 / HR86 which urges the Department of Agriculture to assist coffee farmers in purchasing organic fertilizer to prevent coffee leaf rust.

Tree health is a vital component in fighting the infestation and spread of coffee leaf rust. According to the Kona Coffee Farmers Association, the cost of fertilizer for the maintenance of coffee tree health is at least equal to the cost of fungicides used to control coffee leaf rust on organic farms.

The state currently subsidizes the purchase of pesticides to treat coffee rust, but doesn't provide organic solutions.

Sustaining coffee tree health reduces reliance on pesticides and fungicides to mitigate the impact of coffee leaf rust.

Please support HCR92 / HR86. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', written in a cursive style.

Anne Frederick
Executive Director

HCR-92

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 10:26:41 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/23/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeri Di Pietro	Hawai'i SEED	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We support and urge the Department of Agriculture to assist the procurement of fertilizer for coffee growers to assist in the prevention of coffee leaf rust.

Mahalo,

Hawai'i SEED

HCR-92

Submitted on: 3/22/2022 9:39:36 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/23/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

My name is Nanea Lo. I come from Papakōlea, O‘ahu. I'm a Kanaka Maoli born and raised in the Hawaiian Kingdom. I'm writing in full support of HCR92.

Tree health is a vital component in fighting the infestation and spread of coffee leaf rust. According to the Kona Coffee Farmers Association, the cost of fertilizer for the maintenance of coffee tree health is at least equal to the cost of fungicides used to control coffee leaf rust on organic farms. The state currently subsidizes the purchase of pesticides to treat coffee rust, but doesn't provide organic solutions. Sustaining coffee tree health reduces reliance on pesticides and fungicides to mitigate the impact of coffee leaf rust.

Support HCR92.

me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo

HCR-92

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 4:09:49 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/23/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Barker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HCR92.

Thank you,

Melissa Barker

Kapaa, HI

HCR-92

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 4:26:33 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/23/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

HCR-92

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 4:35:45 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/23/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dennis O'Shea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We can do things naturally and stop poisoning ourselves.

Let's do this.

HCR-92

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 4:09:51 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/23/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rodger Hansen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Legislators: Please support this essential issue.

Mahalo,

Rodger Hansen, Registered Voter- Hakalau HI 96710

HCR-92

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 5:45:16 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/23/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Barry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As an organic farmer, I strongly support HCR 92. To support the health of coffee crops that are being weakened by rust, we need to do everything we can to support the soil microbes, nutrition and soil health of these threatened crops.

Chemical, fossil fuel based fertilizer sterilizes the soil and keeps the plants dependent on constant infusion of said chemical fertilizers. It's not sustainable and it increases the need for chemical pesticides which kill the pollinators and damages our ocean ecology.

Organic coffee beans command a higher price as well.

Don't Panic, Go Organic!

Mahalo for your support,

HCR-92

Submitted on: 3/21/2022 10:19:22 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/23/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas Brandt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support.