

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS**

**MARCH 15, 2023
9:30 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 325**

SENATE BILL NO.1486, SD2

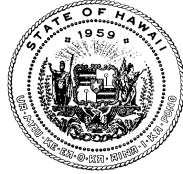
RELATING TO MEAT PROCESSING

Chairperson Gates and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 1486 SD2. The bill requires the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness; Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife; and Department of Health, Food Safety Branch, in consultation with the County of Maui Axis Deer Task Force, to develop and implement a plan to expand the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services by 7/1/2024. The bill also appropriates money. The Department supports the measure to promote the processing of meat in the state.

The Department would like to note that while it intends to pursue and fully comply with the provisions of this measure, implementing a plan by 7/1/2024 may be challenging due to the multiple agencies and regulations involved. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony in SUPPORT on SB1486 SD2
RELATING TO MEAT PROCESSING**

REPRESENTATIVE CEDRIC ASUEGA GATES, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE KIRSTIN KAHALOA, VICE CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

Hearing Date: 3/15/2023

Room Number: Rm 325

1 **Fiscal Implications:** This measure has impacts to the priorities identified in the Governor's
2 Executive Budget Request for the Department of Health's (Department) appropriations and
3 personnel priorities.]

4 **Department Testimony:** The Department supports this measure.

5 The Department Food Safety Branch supports the intent of this bill. The Department will
6 defer to the State Department of Agriculture or any other animal health jurisdiction to approve of
7 meat processing facility for axis deer or other game animals. Food donation programs to feed
8 the homeless, or food insecure community must follow the same food safety rules as any other
9 food establishment in the State. They are treated the same except that the Department typically
10 waives all fees associated for food permits and plan review fees if a homeless feeding operation
11 is involved.

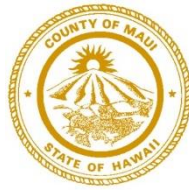
12 The Department is willing to assist in the development and implementation of the subject
13 plan that will adhere to existing regulatory controls under Hawaii Administrative Rules, Section
14 11-50-31 (g), which determine whether game animals may be offered for sale or service and
15 define what an "approved source" is for game animals.

16 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

17 **Offered Amendments:** None

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

KEKUHAUPIO R. AKANA
Acting Managing Director



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 SOUTH HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.mauicounty.gov

March 14, 2023

TO: Honorable Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair
Honorable Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture and Food

FROM: Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor
Rogerene K.M. Arce, Director of Agriculture

DATE: March 14, 2023

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF SB 1486, SD2, RELATING TO MEAT PROCESSING**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to develop and appropriate funds for the expansion of the State's meat processing and distribution capacity, including a donation program, to allow for meat sourced from axis deer and other wild game to be processed and donated for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services to under-resourced communities.

Our administration **SUPPORTS** this measure for the following reasons:

1. Axis deer is an invasive species that poses a continuing threat to Maui County, and despite a current ongoing effort to control the growing deer population, there are an estimate of 60,000 deer roaming Maui County. This measure would support a growing demand for locally grown beef and assist with mitigating the axis deer population in Maui County.
2. This measure would support the use of axis deer and other wild game to be distributed by non-profits for food distribution, which would support fighting hunger in Maui County.
3. Hawaii is dependent and limited by the capacity of the United States Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service to inspect the safety and labeling of locally sourced meat products. This measure will significantly help increase and promote economically viable agriculture, increase food production, and support food sustainability in Hawaii.

For the foregoing reasons, we offer our **SUPPORT** of this measure.

SB-1486-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 12:53:17 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/15/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Yoshito L'Hote	Aina Ho'okupu o Kilauea	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is vital to support this bill and get support to turn an invasive species into food for people.

this bill will not only increase the availability of premium meats to people in need but at the same time start to address the overabundance of all the wild game out there that has no predator to control, the population. Please pass this bill



HAWAII FOREST INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION (HFIA)

P. O. Box 66 ❖ 'O'ōkala, HI
96774 Phone: 808-933-9411
Email: hfia@hawaiiiforest.org
Website: www.hawaiiiforest.org

Date: 03/13/2023

TO: AGR Chair Gates, AGR Vice Chair Kahaloa and AGR Committee Members

FROM: The Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA)

SUBJECT: In Support of SB1486 SD2 Relating to Meat Processing

Dear Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Directors and members of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA), please support SB1486 SD2 Relating to Meat Processing.

Since 1989 HFIA has worked towards actualizing healthy and productive forests across the state of Hawaii. We believe that properly managing and utilizing game resources from forested lands plays a role in revitalizing Hawai'i's Forests.

Expanding the opportunities to process wild game meat, such as that of Maui axis deer, poses an opportunity to repair our ungulate burdened lands, all while feeding Hawaii's families and those in need.

Please support SB1486 SD2 to support Hawai'i's lands, Hawai'i's hunters, Hawai'i's retailers and Hawai'i's people.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Guy Cellier, Acting President

Hawaii Forest Industry Association

Established in 1989, HFIA's is a nonprofit organization founded by people committed to sustainable forest management. HFIA's mission is to promote healthy and productive forests and a sustainable forest industry through management, education, planning, information exchange, and advocacy. HFIA has over 130 members including woodworkers, landowners, sawyers, foundations, foresters, growers, educators, environmentalists, architects, millers, ranchers, and others interested in HFIA's mission and goals.

HFIA Board of Directors

Officers: Acting President/Vice-President Guy Cellier, Secretary Peter D. Simmons, Treasurer Wade Lee
Directors: Thomas Calhoun, Jeremy Campbell, Aaron Hammer, Nickolas Koch, Tai Lake, Michael Sowards, Irene Sprecher, Michael Tam, Jorma Winkler, Ron Wolfe, Aileen Yeh



MAUI COUNTY FARM BUREAU

PO Box 148, Kula, HI 96790
mauicountyfarmbureau.org

TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

March 15, 2023
9:30 AM
Conference Room 325

SB 1486 SD2

RELATING TO MEAT PROCESSING

Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee:

Maui County Farm Bureau (MCFB) appreciates this opportunity to testify on this important issue. MCFB is a general agriculture advocacy organization representing farm and ranch families and organizations on the island of Maui.

MCFB STRONGLY SUPPORTS SB1486 SD2, which requires the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness; Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife; and Department of Health, Food Safety Branch, in consultation with the County of Maui Axis Deer Task Force, to develop and implement a plan to expand the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services.

Everyone recognizes that we have an axis deer overpopulation problem. In defense, fences are being erected to protect property. However, this does not address the need to reduce populations. Concurrently, there is a public desire to utilize the animals for beneficial use. Other states have developed programs such as "Farmers & Hunters Feeding the Hungry" <https://feedingthehungry.org/> that work and can be utilized as templates for a program for Hawaii.

These programs address the gap between the hunter and distribution to the needy. The process will require coordination as well as development of sustainable funding mechanisms. This proposal seeks to develop such a working group. A side benefit from this effort will be addressing the need for additional meat processing capacity in Hawaii, especially for multi species needs of our smaller farmers and ranchers. Cattle past their prime processing time loses value. Currently ranchers often suffer significant loss waiting for processing opportunity. Maui has a hog processing plant that will cease when the current operator retires due to conditions of the land use permit. Expansion of processing capacity will help address this problem.

Covid demonstrated the need for smaller plants. Federal funding is available for CIP needs while programs such as Feeding the Hungry provide templates for long term operation. Hawaii needs a long term strategy to manage feral wildlife populations. This is a step in that direction. MCFB respectfully requests your strong support of this measure and assistance in identifying workable strategies.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our opinion on this matter. Please contact Warren Watanabe at 8082819718 if there are any questions.



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 15, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

TESTIMONY ON SB 1486, SD2
RELATING TO MEAT DONATIONS

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice-Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 1486, SD2, which requires the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness; Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife; and Department of Health, Food Safety Branch, in consultation with the County of Maui Axis Deer Task Force, to develop and implement a plan to expand the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services by 7/1/2024.

Across the State, various invasive species are creating havoc in agriculture as well as the ecosystems in which they exist. Maui County's Axis Deer population is a good example of nature getting out of control with populations exploding due to abundant forage following rainfall events. They continue to destroy crops and pasture lands by devouring any living vegetation as they continue to spread. Feral pigs damage crops by consuming them or by their rooting and trampling of crops. They will eat almost any crop. Feral pigs damage pasture grasses, killing desired plant species and often encouraging the growth of undesired weed species. They can also devastate orchards by consuming fruit, citrus, and nuts and their rooting can severely damage, or even kill saplings, shrubs, and vines directly or by facilitating the spread of soil-based fungal diseases. Feral pigs can also break irrigation lines, rip or tear nets, drying racks, and other agricultural structures and equipment.

These and other feral populations can pose a danger, especially as populations grow and their health is put into jeopardy due to inadequate food. Diseases that they normally tolerate will become serious debilitating illnesses that could put our domestic livestock

industry in jeopardy. Such fears are not unreasonable, as incidences such as bovine tuberculosis spread from feral pigs have been documented in Molokai.

Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers are working to provide Hawai'i with an increased level of self-sufficiency, but will not be able to do so if their products are consumed or damaged by feral animals. Axis Deer, feral pigs, and other invasive species can cause major damage to property, agriculture (crops and livestock), Hawai'i's native species and ecosystems, and Hawai'i's cultural and historic resources. They can also threaten the health of people, wildlife, pets, and other domestic animals. As Hawai'i's feral animal populations continue to expand, these damages, costs, and risks will only keep rising

Current state law specifically prohibits the inclusion of meats as a donation. Wild game can be a significant source of protein for Hawai'i's residents in need. Wild game can provide a beneficial outlet for meat harvested from invasive species and provide a tool for long-term sustainable invasive management for Axis Deer and Feral Pigs.

Several states have amended their Good Samaritan laws to use them as a tool for invasive white-tail deer management programs. Wild game meat donated under this provision does not need to undergo antemortem inspection requirements as long as stated conditions are met. Conditions for donations can be specified to allow the donation of this important protein source for our neighbors in need. Utah is the most recent state that passed such a measure and can be used as a model for Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair

Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

SB1486 SD2

RELATING TO MEAT PROCESSING

Wednesday, March 15, 2023, 9:30 AM
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Chair Gates, Vice Chairs Kahaloa, and Members of the Committees,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB1486 SD2** which requires the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness; Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife; and Department of Health, Food Safety Branch, in consultation with the County of Maui Axis Deer Task Force, to develop and implement a plan to expand the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services by 7/1/2024.

Expanding access to processing and allowing for the donation of wild game to under-resourced communities allows us to feed these communities high quality sources of protein, while also creating an outlet for efforts to remove invasive species such as deer, goat, and pigs from the environment. Unmanaged ungulates damage our ecosystems and cause detriment to farming and ranching operations. Expanding access to meat processing will help us to meet both environmental and social needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director





Officers

Kaipo Kekona
State President

Anabella Bruch
Vice-President

Maureen Datta
Secretary

Reba Lopez
Treasurer

Chapter Presidents

Madeline Ross
Kohala, Hawai'i

Odysseus Yacalis
East Hawai'i

Puna, Hawai'i

Andrea Drayer
Ka'u, Hawai'i

Chantal Chung
Kona, Hawai'i

Fawn Helekahi-Burns
Hana, Maui

Reba Lopez
Haleakala, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros
Mauna Kahalawai,
Maui

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

Rufina Kaauwai
Molokai

Negus Manna
Lāna'i

Brynn Foster
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Ted Radovich
Waimanalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Ray Maki
Kauai

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

The Hawaii Farmers Union United (HFUU) is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFUU supports SB1486.**

We recognize the dire need for options to reduce reliance upon conventional protein sources, particularly in light of the climate emergency. Expanding and diversifying access to locally-sourced protein through initiatives like SB1486 are essential in order to build a more agriculturally-resilient and resource-secure food system.

The development and implementation of a plan to expand the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services will advance the goals of sustainability and food security for Hawaii. Given the current circumstances, it is urgent that we act now to develop reliable, resilient, and secure sources of food. Furthermore, it will help to create job and training opportunities in rural communities and create economic opportunities in areas that have been disproportionately hard hit by the pandemic.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF



Food+ Policy Internship 2023

food@purplemaia.org

March 14, 2023

To: Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

Subject: **SB 1486**, Relating to Meat Processing

Food+ Policy strongly supports SB1486, which would expand the state's meat processing and distribution capacity and promote the donation of invasive wild game to communities in Hawai'i with a need for healthy, locally sourced food.

The activities contemplated by this bill would represent a win-win-win for our food system.

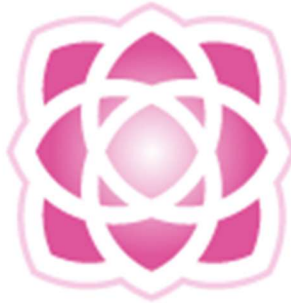
- 1) Investing in our meat processing infrastructure helps local meat producers / harvesters and increases our disaster preparedness - Win
- 2) Creating channels of demand for meat from invasive animals helps incentivize the harvesting of these animals, which supports the health of our native forests and ecosystems - Win
- 3) Distributing healthy wild meat that is nutrient-dense and free from the antibiotics and hormones used in industrial meat production to folks who are food insecure will support the health of our communities in Hawai'i - Win

We urge you to pass and fully fund HB1486.

Mahalo,
Kelsey Amos & the Food+ Policy Team
#fixourfoodsystem

The Food+ Policy internship develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2023, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students from throughout the UH System. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 312
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 2023 AT 9:30 A.M.

To The Honorable Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair
The Honorable Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
Members of the committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

SUPPORT FOR SB1486 SD2 RELATING TO MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION

The Maui Chamber of Commerce would like to testify in **support for SB1486 SD2** which requires the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness; Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife; and Department of Health, Food Safety Branch, in consultation with the County of Maui Axis Deer Task Force, to develop and implement a plan to expand the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services by 7/1/2024

The Chamber would like to point out that axis deer, an invasive species that poses a continuing threat to Hawaii's environment, could provide significant quantities of meat as a protein source for nonprofit food distribution services, such as the State's network of food banks and Feed My Sheep, Inc. of Maui County. However, there is a gap between the hunters and the retailers and nonprofit services because the meat requires processing prior to distribution. For meat donation, other states such as Wisconsin and Michigan offer models that Hawaii can assess to develop processes for plan implementation and program funding, including licensing fees and other funding sources managed by wildlife agencies or nonprofits.

This bill will be one of a few major tools in controlling the over-population of Axis deer on all islands.

For these reasons, we **support SB1486 SD2**.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.

SB-1486-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 5:41:55 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/15/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brad Seymour	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I think this would provide a greater opportunity to for the state of hawaii to work on its food security through diversity.

SB-1486-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/14/2023 6:02:51 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/15/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of SD2. Thank you.

SB-1486-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/14/2023 8:36:20 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/15/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carolyn Auwelo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1486 and finding ways to make it easier to donate meat harvested from wild animals to local communities. Hawaii has a severe problem with overpopulation of wildlife in areas and the ability to donate responsibly harvested meat without a USDA inspection will help the harvested meat not be wasted, something the community has expressed is important to them. This is a strategic part of solutions that have been identified repeatedly since the very first axis deer task force in the early 2000s.

Thank you for your support.

aloha,

carolyn

SB-1486-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/14/2023 9:00:33 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/15/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristin Mack Almasin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill because the ability to donate axis deer meat is one more important tool that would allow us to continue to chip away at this extremely difficult and complex deer issue.