

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

JOSH GREEN  
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
Acting Chairperson  
Board of Agriculture

State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
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TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
WAYS AND MEANS

FEBRAURY 23, 2022

10:05 A.M.

CONFERENCE ROOM 211 & VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

SENATE BILL NO. 3197 SD 1  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 3197, SD1 which establishes a Beginning Farmer Training Program within the Department of Agriculture (“Department”) and makes an appropriation to the University of Hawaii. The Department appreciates the intent of this measure provided it does not impact the Department’s priorities listed in the Executive Budget and offers comments and concerns.

The Department supports efforts to improve the capacity of new and existing farms to succeed in their endeavors. However, the Department is not structured for nor has any resources for or practical experience with establishing and implementing a workforce developments such as the beginning farmer training program. Workforce development programs and resources already exist with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Workforce Development Division (“DLIR”) and the Community Colleges and College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources of the University of Hawaii system (“University of Hawaii”). Consequently, if this measure is enacted the



Department would need to rely on the expertise and support of the DLIR and the University of Hawaii.

The Department is concerned that while this measure mandates that it establishes and administers the Beginning Farmer Training Program, no funding is provided to the Department for such purposes.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR  
  
GLORIA CHANG  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
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ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND  
MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

**WRITTEN ONLY**  
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
ON  
SENATE BILL NO. 3197, S.D. 1

**February 23, 2022**  
**10:05 a.m.**  
**Room 211 and Videoconference**

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

Senate Bill No. 3197, S.D. 1, adds a new section to Chapter 141, HRS, that establishes a Beginning Farmer Training Program within the University of Hawai'i (UH) to teach farmers how to utilize a whole farm system approach to agriculture. This bill also appropriates \$2,000,000 in general funds in FY 23 for UH to effectuate the program.

B&F notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriations in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and

- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.



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Anabella Bruch  
Kauai

Aloha Chair DelaCruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the 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 Hawai'ian islands. **HFUU strongly supports SB3197 and provide comments and amendments** to fund a Beginning Farmer Training Program to teach and train farmers to utilize a whole farm system approach to agriculture.

The original SB3197 draft had HDOA Chair determining program curricula, SB397 SD1 copied in language from a late session version SB2709 (2020) that would establish a new program at UH West Oahu. In lieu of either of these versions, **HFUU would like the bill language amended to establish the program within HDOA** that aligns to the original intents of SB3197 and [SB2709 \(2020\)](#) following the language provided below:

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish the beginning farmer training program to be administered by the Department of Agriculture.

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- Farmer apprentice mentoring program.

(a) There is established in the department of agriculture a farmer apprentice mentoring program that shall support farmers to take on apprentices to teach about methods to improve soil health by using whole farm systems.

(b) The department of agriculture shall:

(1) Collaborate with; consult with; and provide funding, and information to qualified farm mentors to fund apprenticeship with bona fide Hawaii farmers;

(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 farm mentorship providers seeking federal and county funding to expand their training offerings;

(4) Evaluate the effectiveness of the farmer apprentice mentorship program;

(5) Subject to the availability of funding, allocate funding to as many farm apprentices 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 farm apprenticeship program.

(c) A beginning farm apprentice 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) Demonstrates an interest in pursuing a career in the State's agricultural industry.

(d) Subject to the availability of funding, the department of agriculture may enter into contracts with qualified farm mentors on a first come, first served basis and in accordance with section 103D-304 to effectuate the purpose of this section; provided that:

(1) No farm shall receive more than \$100,000 per year per in apprenticeship stipends;

(2) Funding will cover \$20,000 per apprentice per year and compose up to a maximum 50% of total farm apprentice wages for that given year;

(3) The term of any apprenticeship contract shall be no longer than one year;

(4) No qualified farm may receive more than \$300,000 in aggregate for services procured pursuant to this section during any five-year period;

(5) Any requests for proposals submitted pursuant to this section shall include

(A) Types and quantities of training services, including hours of hands-on instruction

(B) Criteria for evaluating the success of the farm apprentice;

(C) Total estimated costs

(D) Qualifications of the provider's trainers;

(E) Proposed dates of training; and

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

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

(1) The proper methods of:

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

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

(C) Raising livestock or poultry;

(D) Agricultural business operations, including workforce issues, regulatory compliance, and general operations; and

(E) Analysis of the agricultural industry and related markets.

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

(g) The department of agriculture 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 farmer apprenticeship program during the preceding year;

(2) A listing of each qualified farm mentorship 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.

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,000,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for the farmer apprentice mentoring program to provide mentoring on a whole farm system approach to agriculture.

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

SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2022.

INTRODUCED BY: \_\_\_\_\_



**Report Title:**

Farmer Apprentice Mentoring Program; Whole Farm System; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes a Farmer Apprentice Mentoring Program to teach and train farmers to utilize a whole farm system approach to agriculture. Makes an appropriation to the Department of Agriculture to provide mentoring on a whole farm system approach to agriculture.

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HFUU's Farm Apprentice Mentoring (FAM) program to train beginning farmers was first piloted 2015-2016 in Maui and responds to three major priorities for the State's food security needs including growing more farmers, increasing the supply of Hawaii's skilled agricultural workforce and contributing to increased local food production on small family farms through a hands-on farm immersion component. SB3197 would expand on the FAM program success on Maui and provide beginning farmer training across the islands.

As a division of the National Farmers Union (NFU), HFUU advocates at a national level for educating interns and apprentices on farms, as these educational opportunities result in improved farm viability, a larger pool of skilled agricultural labor, and more beginning farmers. In 2019, NFU established an on-farm labor priority urging Congress to take action to attract U.S. citizens to jobs as agricultural workers and acknowledge the importance of educating interns and apprentices on farms as a pathway to increased availability of skilled agricultural labor. SB3197 notes 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 and introducing regenerative farming methods, statewide.

Increasing the number of farmers who grow food is a key facet of the HFUU statewide strategic plan, and a critical component of meeting State goals for increasing food security and agricultural self-sufficiency. For these reasons we ask you to support SB3197.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Vincent Mina President HFUU/HFUF



**SB-3197-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2022 4:20:51 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2022 10:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Deborah Umiamaka	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**I strongly support SB3197.**

**Sincerely, Deborah Umiamaka.**

**SB-3197-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2022 6:56:46 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2022 10:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Barbara Barry	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support SB 3197 SD1.

Mahalo,

**SB-3197-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2022 7:44:07 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2022 10:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Elizabeth Hansen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a registered voter in Hakalau HI 96710, and a small farmer, I support this bill.

Mahalo.

**SB-3197-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2022 7:51:16 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2022 10:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Shannon Lush	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This will help by increasing the number of farmers who grow food.

**SB-3197-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 12:24:27 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2022 10:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Janet L Pappas	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear WAM members,

I strongly support SB3197 SD1 to establish a Beginning Farmer Training Program at the UH-West Oahu campus. Hawaii has committed to doubling its local food production but has so far made little progress toward that goal. Farmers require support if they are going to "make it" in Hawaii. There are numerous factors making farming difficult in Hawaii, financing and training being two of them. Receiving quality training could make a big difference in a farmer's long-term success.

Please support this bill. With increasing costs for food production and transport, local food production is becoming a critical need in our state.

Sincerely,

Jan Pappas

Aiea, Hawaii 96701

**SB-3197-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 1:18:08 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2022 10:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Nancy & Zeb Jones	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Honorable Senate Ways & Means Committee Members:

We submit this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of SB3197, SD1, to establish a farmer training program under the purview of the University of Hawaii West Oahu Sustainable Community Food Systems in conjunction with qualified farmer training providers. The language of this bill – as mended in this SD 1 – also highlights specific topic areas and allows program applicants to apply for funding. This revised draft also appropriates \$2,000,000 in funding, but lists an effective date of January 1, 2050 to “encourage further discussion.” We ideally would like to see such a program funded AND implemented some time within no later than one (1) to two (2) years maximum, that is by 2024, to avoid further jeopardizing Hawai`i’s food security.

For these reasons, we urge your honorable committee to please pass SB3197, SD1 out of your committee. Mahalo again for this opportunity to present this testimony supporting SB3197, SD1.

Warm aloha,

*Nancy & Zeb Jones*

Hydroponics Alternatives LLC

**SB-3197-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 8:30:59 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2022 10:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Dennis F Lokmer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I urge strong support for this bill.





## Food+ Policy Internship 2022

[food@purplemaia.org](mailto:food@purplemaia.org)

February 22, 2022

To: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Subject: Testimony in **SUPPORT** of **SB3197**, Appropriation for University of Hawaii Beginning Farmer Training Program

Aloha mai kākou,

I am writing on behalf of Hawai'i Food+ Policy to express our support for SB3197, relating to Agriculture. This measure would require the Department of Agriculture to establish the Beginning Farmer Training Program to be administered by the University of Hawaii, West Oahu, Sustainable Community Food Systems.

Training new farmers to acquire proficiency, in both the production and business aspects of a farming operation, will equip them to effectively evaluate their available resources and develop attainable farming and business plans. Success through this program will help encourage aspiring young farmers to pursue farming as a career choice when they see its potential as a viable source of income. It also ensures the continuity of Hawaii's agriculture through the new generations of farmers who will find workable and innovative economic opportunities from the outcome of this training.

Hawaii's agricultural economy concentrates too much in export trading where, for residents, "food security has been largely provided through the working of the markets" (Akatsuka et al., 2016). Adding new farmers to the existing number of farmers in Hawaii will help bring us closer to the Hawaii sustainable development goal of doubling local food production by 2030 (Aloha+ Challenge, 2022). However, improving food security is not just limited to the doubling of food supply. It also requires actions that enhance economic opportunities combined with meaningful political participation that gives people increased access to healthy food (Akatsuka et al., 2016).

Given this wonderful opportunity to participate in this political legislature and improve Hawaii's food security, we of the Food+ Policy Program urge that you pass SB3197 into law.

Mahalo,

Erwin & the Food+ Interns  
#fixourfoodsystem

References Cited:

Aloha+ Challenge. (2022). Local Food. *Aloha+ Goals*. Retrieved from: <http://aloha-challenge.hawaiigreengrowth.org/aloha-goals/local-food/>

Akatsuka, Azizi, S., Galimba, M., Kame‘eleihiwa, L. K., Kawelo, H., Kent, G., Kimura, A. H., Kimura, A. H., Ku, R. J.-S., Lowry, K., Milne, N., Mironesco, M., Mostafanezhad, M., Okimoto, D., Robb, C., Schrager, B., Suryanata, K., Suryanata, K., & Yano, C. R. (2016). *Food and Power in Hawai‘i: Visions of Food Democracy*. University of Hawaii Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780824858612>

**SB-3197-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 9:41:02 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2022 10:05:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Amy Brinker	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support

**SB-3197-SD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 9:50:03 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/23/2022 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Marian Huff	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

**I strongly support SB 3197 SD1, with amendments proposed by the Hawaii Farmers Union United.** This bill establishes the Beginning Farmer Training program to be administered by the Department of Agriculture.

I was first made aware of this program as a pilot project on the island of Maui with outreach to Molokai and Lana'i and watched it closely as it developed. I also attended several of the graduation ceremonies. I was impressed by the caliber of kumu that were on the mentoring team since some of these individuals had also interacted with school garden coordinators and helped us show our students how to remediate their garden soils with methods that are regenerative. I was also impressed with the bonds that were formed between the kumu and the apprentices to assure that their future journey into agriculture would be successful in increasing local food production and in passing along their mana'o to our haumana.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony,

Marian Huff