

---

---

# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

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

1           SECTION 1. Chapter 141, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
2 amended by adding a new section to part I to be appropriately  
3 designated and to read as follows:

4           "§141-    Healthy soils program; established. (a) The  
5 department of agriculture shall establish a healthy soils  
6 program. The healthy soils program shall:

7           (1) Create a statewide soil health assessment with a list  
8           of practices specific to the State and that are most  
9           effective in improving soil health and building soil  
10           carbon stocks;

11           (2) Provide farmers with education and technical  
12           assistance to implement farm management practices that  
13           contribute to healthy soils;

14           (3) Establish standards that apply to the healthy soils  
15           program and are based on the findings of the  
16           greenhouse gas sequestration task force established  
17           pursuant to section 225P-4 relating to minimum levels



1           of soil carbon and water content and required soil  
2           health practices;  
3       (4) Establish standards for soil health to include the  
4           importance of a holistic approach to land management  
5           that integrates cultural, biological, and mechanical  
6           practices, which cycle nutrients, promote ecological  
7           balance, and conserve biodiversity;  
8       (5) Establish standards that phase out the use of  
9           petrochemical synthetic fertilizers over a period of  
10          five to ten years; provided that during the  
11          petrochemical synthetic fertilizer phase-out period,  
12          the department of agriculture shall provide farmers  
13          with assistance in adopting a holistic approach to  
14          land management that integrates cultural, biological,  
15          and mechanical practices, which cycle nutrients,  
16          promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity;  
17          and  
18       (6) Subject to available funding, issue awards and other  
19          financial incentives to implement farm management  
20          practices that contribute to healthy soils.



1        (b) The long-term goals of the healthy soils program shall  
2 be to establish:

3        (1) Deadlines by which all awards issued by the department  
4 of agriculture shall meet the standards established  
5 pursuant to subsection (a) (3);

6        (2) Deadlines by which a plan for all state lands leased  
7 for agricultural use shall be required; and

8        (3) Programs incentivizing small farmers, ranchers, and  
9 landowners to take carbon negative actions on their  
10 respective lands.

11        (c) The department of agriculture shall submit a report  
12 detailing the status and progress of the healthy soils program  
13 and its recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to  
14 the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening  
15 of each regular session."

16        SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
17 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$500,000 or so much  
18 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and the  
19 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
20 2024-2025 for the establishment of the healthy soils program and



1 to issue awards and other financial incentives pursuant to the  
2 program.

3 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
4 of agriculture for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

6 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.



**Report Title:**

Department of Agriculture; Healthy Soils Program; Carbon Sequestration; Appropriation

**Description:**

Requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a Healthy Soils Program. Appropriates funds. (SD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

