

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
Governor

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
Lt. Governor



State of Hawai'i  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
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**SHARON HURD**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**DEAN M. MATSUKAWA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

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

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

**WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 12, 2025**  
**9:30 a.m.**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM 325**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 48**  
**RELATING TO COFFEE LABELING**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify about this important measure that clarifies the labeling and advertising requirements for coffee that is grown and processed in the State. Defines regional origin. Department of agriculture supports this measure.

This measure clarifies wording from the original language in Section 486-120.6, Hawaii Revised Statutes to change the language from Hawaii-grown and Hawaii processed coffee; labeling or advertising requirements, to Hawaii-grown and processed coffee; labeling or advertising requirements. We would just like to mention that we want to keep clarification that this is only referring to geographic region coffee that is both grown and processed in Hawaii. Also, that the definition of "regional origin" only applies to a coffee growing region of the world that is outside the State of Hawaii.

Since funds were not appropriated for increased labeling inspections with ACT 198 in 2024. DOA respectfully requests that funds be added to this bill to support one FTE Measurement Standards Inspector V SR-19 \$65,000 who will support and restore enforcement capability for all labeling regulations for Hawaii products such as coffee,



macadamia nuts and mamaki tea. The inspector will inspect and enforce the new laws and existing ones. Note: this single position has been requested on bills relating to mamaki tea and macadamia nuts.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify about this measure.

**HB-48**

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 1:56:24 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2025 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By  | Organization                            | Testifier Position | Testify                   |
|---------------|---|--------------------|---------------------------|
| RICHARD COHEN | State Of Hawaii Dept. of<br>Agriculture | Support            | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Written Testimony submitted we stand on the written testimony.

I am available from the Measurement Standards branch for questions.



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February 12, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

**TESTIMONY ON HB 48**  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference  
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Kahaloe, Vice-Chair Kusch, 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 48**, which clarifies the labeling and advertising requirements for coffee that is grown and processed in Hawai'i. Ensuring accurate labeling for Hawai'i-grown coffee is critical to protecting local farmers, maintaining the integrity of the state's premium coffee brands, and providing consumers with transparent information about the origin of their coffee.

Hawai'i-grown coffee is globally recognized for its high quality and unique flavor profiles, making it one of the most valuable crops in the state. According to the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture, the estimated production value of Hawai'i-grown coffee for the 2023-2024 season was \$48.2 million, ranking it among the top agricultural commodities in the state. However, misleading labeling practices have continued to pose a challenge, allowing coffee blends with only a small percentage of Hawai'i-grown beans to be marketed in ways that confuse consumers and devalue local coffee.

HB 48 strengthens existing labeling laws by clearly distinguishing between **geographic origin** and **regional origin**, ensuring that coffee labeled with a Hawai'i geographic reference genuinely originates from the state. This distinction is essential to protecting the reputation of Hawai'i coffee, preventing deceptive marketing, and maintaining consumer trust. Farmers and processors who invest in producing high-quality, 100% Hawai'i-grown coffee should not have to compete with misleadingly labeled products that contain primarily foreign-grown beans.

Hawai'i's coffee industry is already facing significant challenges, including rising production costs, labor shortages, and threats from invasive pests such as coffee berry borer and coffee leaf rust. Ensuring that only authentic Hawai'i-grown coffee is marketed as such will help preserve the industry's value, support local farmers, and reinforce consumer confidence in Hawai'i coffee products.

We urge the committee to pass HB 48 to protect the integrity of Hawai'i-grown coffee and ensure fair and transparent labeling for consumers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



# Food+ Policy Internship 2025

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

February 10, 2025

Subject: HB48 *Consumer Protection; Coffee Labeling; Hawai'i-Grown and Processed Coffee; Geographic Origins; Regional Origins*

Aloha Chair Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Agriculture and Food Systems Committee,

Hawaii Food+ Policy is in support of HB48 so as to clarify distinctions for Hawai'i grown and processed coffee. In creating these clarifications it will avoid confusion and loopholes for coffee that is grown out of state but processed within Hawai'i. Hawaii Food+ Policy aims to support bills that uplift our local farmers and their value added products. Through the passing of HB48 the state would be protecting the integrity of our regional coffee brands and businesses.

Our intern, India Buchanan, has some concerns regarding an increase in prices of Hawai'i grown coffee for our local coffee market. She has job experience working in a local coffee shop, and her employers have expressed concern in higher prices to buy coffee meaning higher prices for their customers as well. It is important that the state protect the quality of Hawai'i made coffee, and the integrity of our local coffee producers, but we want to ensure we aren't adding unnecessary additional food costs to our local buyers.

It is important that the state make distinctions between "geographical" and "regional" coffee products in Hawai'i, so that our local businesses are getting fair market prices for their products. For these reasons is why we ask the Agriculture and Food Systems Committee to support in passing HB48, we thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,  
The Hawaii Food+ Policy Team

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**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 2025, the cohort of interns are undergrads 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.