

ACT 212

S.B. NO. 1588

A Bill for an Act Relating to Food Safety.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. In accordance with section 9 of article VII of the Hawaii State Constitution and sections 37-91 and 37-93, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined that the appropriations contained in H.B. No. 300, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, C.D. 1,¹ and this Act will cause the state general fund expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2023-2024 to be exceeded by \$1,064,767,367 or 11.0 per cent. This current declaration takes into account general fund appropriations authorized for fiscal year 2023-2024 in H.B. No. 300, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, C.D. 1,¹ and this Act only. The reasons for exceeding the general fund expenditure ceiling are that:

- (1) The appropriation made in this Act is necessary to serve the public interest; and
- (2) The appropriation made in this Act meets the needs addressed by this Act.

SECTION 2. The legislature finds that, according to the East-West Center's Pacific Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments Program, Hawaii is the most geographically isolated state in the country and imports approximately ninety-two per cent of its food. Each food product imported to Hawaii is a lost opportunity for building economic growth in the agricultural sector, increasing resiliency in the face of future supply chain disruptions, and attaining state goals for local food production, including benchmarks for Hawaii's farm-to-school program, food purchasing by state agencies, and food hubs.

The United States Department of Agriculture created the GroupGAP program in 2015 to assist small farms with attaining Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification. GroupGAP reduces the cost of food safety certification by spreading the training, technical assistance, and auditing costs between all farms in the group. Hawaii GroupGAP is the only comprehensive farm food safety training program in Hawaii that results in United States Department of Agriculture harmonized Good Agricultural Practices certification, the standard most closely aligned with the United States Food and Drug Administration's food safety guidelines.

In recognizing the need for more locally produced food, the legislature passed Act 136, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022, which required the department of agriculture to partner with the agricultural community to establish a food safety certification training program, and appropriated funds for the training program. However, the funds appropriated were directed in full to the University of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and human resources, which does not have a United States Department of Agriculture GroupGAP food safety training and certification program. The legislature finds that in order for a GroupGAP food safety training and certification program to be established, an additional appropriation must be made.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds for the establishment of a GroupGAP food safety training and certification program within the department of agriculture.

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 2023-2024 for the department of agriculture to establish and

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implement, under program identification number AGR192, general administration for agriculture, a GroupGAP food safety training and certification program.

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

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

(Approved July 5, 2023.)

Note

1. Act 164.