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HFUU
POLICY STATEMENT
PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Hawai'i Farmers Union United, in the following policy statement, open our hearts and minds to the public, to the governing bodies of our State and to the business community in the Spirit of Aloha. We support and give our Aloha to our farmers, our watersheds, our native biodiversity and for the lives and health of people in our watershed communities.

We establish these policies as a reflection of the sustainable values and practices of the people of Hawai'i. We recognize that promoting sustainable, ecological, and regenerative agriculture will serve the best interests of the people of Hawai'i, our watershed ecosystems and all the inhabitants of Hawai'i Nei.

We strive to use the most sustainable and appropriate energy solutions available in our farming practices while prioritizing local food security, living-wage farming jobs, inter-generational farms, healthy watersheds and coral reef ecosystems and a thriving farm economy. We support the native Hawaiian people and their efforts to farm, return and restore traditional rights to land and water.

As farmers and farmer allies, we recognize that organic, contaminant free and nutrient-rich food is the best medicine, and essential for the health and wellbeing of our soils and watersheds. We support the associated practices and farmers in transition towards these practices. We proudly shoulder the ethical responsibility of watershed stewardship for the health of people and biological communities. We accept the ethical responsibility of teaching those who come after us to shoulder that responsibility in turn. We recognize that community-based decisions are, best when the consequences of those decisions directly

34 affect the communities where we live. We know sustainable family farming
35 creates economic, environmental and sociocultural benefits within our island
36 communities, stimulates a beneficial multiplier effect in the local economy and
37 strengthens food security.

38
39 Hawai'i Farmers Union United stands for fairness and cooperation as
40 cornerstones of how we live, farm and do business. The international
41 community of climate-change researchers and scientists are in agreement that
42 sustainable, ecological and regenerative farming systems are key to climate
43 change reversal. Our job is to enhance the quality of life and vitality through
44 agriculture as an expression of love for our children, families, neighbors and
45 friends, in the Spirit of Aloha 'Aina and Malama 'Aina.

46
47 We dedicate this policy to the celebration of life through agriculture with our
48 great reverence for its inherent value. (2016 Annual Convention)

49

50 **ARTICLE I – Support for Sustainable Agricultural Practices**

51 Hawai'i Farmers Union United is a solution-based, action-oriented collective of
52 members that protects the interests of our family farmers from any practice
53 that contaminates, commodifies or compromises their ability to farm and
54 market their products.

55 1. We support the 1990 USDA definition of sustainable agriculture: Public Law
56 101-624, Title XVI, Subtitle A, Section. Under that law, “the term sustainable
57 agriculture means an integrated system of plant and animal production
58 practices having a site-specific application that will, over the long term:

- 59 • satisfy human food and fiber needs;
60 • enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the
61 agricultural economy depends;
62 • make the most efficient use of nonrenewable resources and on-farm
63 resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and
64 controls;
65 • sustain the economic viability of farm operations; and
66 • enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole.”

67

68 2. We support the “Organic Foods Production Act of 1990”

69

70 3. We support the National Sustainable Agricultural Coalition (NSAC) and
71 their work that advocates for federal policy reform to advance the
72 sustainability of agriculture, food systems, natural resources, and rural
73 communities. (2016 HFUU Annual Convention)

74

75 **ARTICLE II – Soil, Air, Water and Watersheds**

76 HFUU promotes soil, air, water and watershed health because we understand
77 their relationship to food, fiber and fuel crops and to the health and vitality of
78 our communities.

79 **Specifically, HFUU supports the following policies:**

- 80 1. Hawai'i-based traditional and ecologically advanced concepts and practices
81 of the ahupua'a resource management systems and the watershed
82 councils within the ahupua'a.
- 83 2. Increased Funding for Regional Nutrient Cycling Centers.
- 84 3. Increased funding for scientific research, public education on sustainable,
85 ecological, and regenerative agricultural systems and the production of
86 clean renewable fiber, fuel and nutrient-rich food.
- 87 4. Adapting appropriate Food Safety regulations at the county and state level to
88 recognize safe and sustainable farming practices
- 89 5. Promotion of integrated agriculture and aquaculture production systems that
90 optimize recycling of organic wastes, nutrient recovery, protection of
91 water quality, and quantity and aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems
- 92 6. Increased funding for applied research and environmental monitoring
93 consistent with maintaining and enhancing healthy watershed
94 communities.
- 95 7. We support Hawaiian self-governance of Kanaka Ma'oli right to gain free
96 access to natural and cultural resources in their ahupua'a.
- 97 8. Freshwater is essential to all life and is Hawai'i's most important and scarce
98 public trust resource and must therefore be equitably allocated and
99 rigorously protected. HFUU supports all current appurtenant water
100 rights and their allocations and recognizes that these policies must be
101 fulfilled on a watershed-by-watershed basis and must include the
102 following water policies:
 - 103 a. Watershed resource conservation and restoration.
 - 104 b. Appurtenant water allocations must be met first, before other water
105 allocations. Access for smallholder farmers and farmer cooperatives to
106 water resources with long term Memorandum of Understanding MOU's
107 from the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) Board of
108 Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) and these water uses will be
109 prioritized over other lesser non-agricultural uses that do not support
110 local food production and food security.
 - 111 c. Allowing filtered catchment water for washing produce and in value added
112 processing of food
 - 113 d. Reestablishment of community-based watershed management with Aha
114 councils to guide the comprehensive conservation and restoration of all
115 natural and cultural resources.

- 116 e. A paradigm shift to place water use planning ahead of land use planning
117 statewide to promote water and food security.
- 118 f. We believe that all fresh water resources, both ground and surface waters,
119 and nearshore waters should be recognized and prioritized as public
120 water trust resources to be held, conserved, managed, regulated, shared
121 and enhanced for the greater public good, recognizing and supporting
122 freshwater appurtenant water rights as a top priority. (2016 Annual
123 Convention)

124

125 **Article III – Land Access for Farmers**

126. We support the establishment of new zoning and building codes that support
127 smallholder farmers’ needs, including ordinances to permit the use of farm
128 labor dwellings, composting toilets, grey water systems, water catchment and
129 off-grid alternative energy systems on property zoned in the agricultural
130 district.

132. We support the creation of an Agricultural Land Trust that holds land owned
132 by or conveyed through a perpetual conservation easement, with the intent
133 of keeping agricultural land affordable to farmers through the community
134 land trusts model of housing development.

135. We support the right to have both water catchment and legal access to county
136 water on the same parcel of land.

137. We support the maintenance and repair of private/public agricultural
138 irrigation systems provided they have no negative environmental impacts,
139 and all appurtenant water rights are met or restored. (2016 Annual
140 Convention)

141

142 **Article IV – Food Security**

143 Food and water security is a critical issue in the state of Hawai‘i due to the
144 importation of 85% of our food, which consists of approximately \$3.5 billion
145 of value in our markets that could be fulfilled by small family farmers. In order
146 to create a more food secure society in Hawai‘i, that is also food sovereign as
147 defined by Global Forum on Food Sovereignty at the World Food Summit, we
148 advocate and support the following measures:

- 149 1. Community Food Self Sufficiency
- 150 2. Increased funding and assistance for Family Farm Businesses
- 151 3. Funding for Farm to Table Marketing (e.g., Farmers’ Markets, CSAs,
152 Community Food Hubs)
- 153 4. Farm To School Programs
- 154 5. Increased funding and assistance for Agricultural Skills Education
- 155 6. Funding for Public Food Processing and Distribution Infrastructure
- 156 7. An increased budget for the Hawai‘i Department of Agriculture programs

- 157 that are in alignment with HFUU policies
- 158 8. Adoption and codification in county and state agency charters the Federal
- 159 US Code Register’s definition of sustainable agriculture
- 160 9. Propagation and production of traditional Hawaiian crops, particularly kalo
- 161 production.
- 162 10. State policy changes to allow water use planning to precede land use
- 163 planning, as food security is dependent upon water security.
- 164 11. “The Union of Concerned Scientists National Food Policy Initiative” ref
- 165 [http://www.ucsusa.org/publications/catalyst/winter16-re-envisioning-a-](http://www.ucsusa.org/publications/catalyst/winter16-re-envisioning-a-broken-food-system)
- 166 [broken-food-system](http://www.ucsusa.org/publications/catalyst/winter16-re-envisioning-a-broken-food-system)
- 167 12. Family farm tax reform, including the taxing of farm dwellings at a
- 168 lower rate than urban dwellings. (2016 Annual Convention)

169

170 **Article V – Environmental Impact of Agriculture**

171 We support

- 172 1. Sustainable agroforestry and ecological agricultural systems that protect eco-
- 173 system integrity.
- 174 2. Microbiological applied research on how agricultural practices enhance soil
- 175 health.
- 176 3. Toxicology studies of how agriculture practices impact soil air, water, ocean
- 177 and human health and monitoring of contaminants there in our food and
- 178 water.
- 179 4. Applied research in the production, processing and integration of nitrogen
- 180 fixing trees and plants in integrative agro forestry food production systems.
- 181 5. Applied research into the production, provisions and integrations of
- 182 organic animal feeds into farms in Hawai‘i. (2016 Annual Convention)

183

184 **Article VI – Education**

185 HFUU supports funding and other measures to promote:

- 186 1. Public environmental education, focusing on increasing public awareness
- 187 about the economic benefits and multiplier effect of local food
- 188 production.
- 189 2. On-Farm Mentoring projects to support the development of inter-
- 190 generational, novice or transitional farmers under the mentorship of a
- 191 skilled farmer.
- 192 3. Pre-K through 12 public, parochial and independent school educational
- 193 programs with articulation into post-secondary.
- 194 4. Monthly Chapter membership meetings with educational presentations.
- 195 5. University and the college level P-20 working group, and continuing
- 196 education programs, including intern programs related to sustainable
- 197 farming systems.

- 198 6. The building of business, marketing and entrepreneurship farmer skills.
199 7. Development of an all training and demonstration program for all ages for
200 Hawaiian “Farmer Corps” to educate new farmers and help put them on
201 the land, combatting the rapidly aging farming population in Hawai‘i.
202 (2016 Annual Convention)

203

204 **Article VII – Labeling**

205 We assert that each individual has the right to a transparent and ethical
206 framework for making decisions about food.

- 207 1. We support full implementation of mandatory country-of-origin labeling
208 (COOL), as well as regional origin labeling for agricultural, aquaculture
209 and wild-caught seafood products. Mandatory COOL is a valuable
210 marketing tool for producers, and it allows consumers to know where
211 their food is produced. U.S. and regional producers have the right to
212 distinguish their products from those of other countries and U.S.
213 products should not be categorized as a North American product.
- 214 2. Thorough and accurate food labels are an important tool that helps
215 consumers make informed decisions and allows producers to
216 differentiate their products. We support conspicuous, mandatory labeling
217 for food products throughout the processing chain to include all
218 ingredients, additives and processes such as:
- 219 • Artificial growth hormones
 - 220 • Products derived from cloned animals
 - 221 • The identity of the parent company
 - 222 • Genetically altered or engineered food products.
- 223 3. Certified organic labeling and enforcement of labeling laws to ensure the
224 integrity of organic food in Hawai‘i. (2016 Annual Convention)

225

226 **Article VIII – Food Safety Certification for Smallholders and Family** 227 **Farmers**

- 228 1. We support the development of an appropriate food safety certification
229 system, county and state, for family famers, smallholder farmers, including
230 aquaculture, aquaponics, and other animal husbandry practices.
- 231
- 232 3. We support the Hawai‘i Department of Agriculture to uphold a third-party
233 certification system in alignment with the language in Good Agricultural
234 Practices (GAPs). ref <http://manoa.hawaii.edu/ctahr/farmfoodsafety>
235 Organic farming is an integral and essential part of sustainable agriculture.

236

237

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- 239 4. We support an affordable, efficient, and equitable food safety certification
240 system that is socially equitable, environmentally sound and economical
241 efficient.
242
- 243 5. We support a cost-sharing program through the department of agriculture for
244 the benefit of small farmer compliance with food safety laws.
245
- 246 6. We support the development and implementation of mobile slaughter units
247 for each island, and appropriate recycling of all waste including Large Animal
248 Mortality Composting (LAMC).
249
- 250 7. We recognize that the traditional staple Hawaiian crop of kalo, because of its
251 inherent biological composition, and it's function in watershed nutrient
252 recycling and sediment trapping, its function in providing excellent habitat
253 for endangered Hawaiian water birds, and that it must be cooked before
254 eaten, and be exempt from food safety certification laws. (2016 Annual
255 Convention)
256

257 **Article IX –Agrotourism**

258 Agrotourism is critical revenue stream for many family farms and we support
259 expanding responsible agrotourism development via:

- 260 1. Inclusion of agrotourism as part of the definition of agriculture. We
261 encourage recognition of the role agrotourism plays in diversified, family
262 farms and communities.
- 263 2. Implementing a program to educate producers about liabilities associated
264 with agrotourism.
- 265 3. Educating our tourism industries to the many agrotourism opportunities
266 available, including Hawai'i Tourism Authority, each island's visitor
267 bureau and hotel concierge, for our residents and visitors.
- 268 4. Allow agrotourist to legally sample food and herbal products grown on
269 participating farms. (2016 Annual Convention)
270

271 **Article X Communication**

272 Inter-Island and Intra-Island communication is paramount to the functioning
273 of this organization. We support regular communication and other healthy
274 interaction between chapters, as well as between the State organization and the
275 individual chapters via:

- 276 1. A state level communications committee that has one representative from
277 each chapter. The chapters may form their own local or regional
278 communications committees as well, to facilitate regular and clear
279 communications amongst the islands and within counties. This is

280 especially relevant when more than one chapter exists within a given
281 county. The committee will meet at least quarterly. (2016 Annual
282 Convention)
283

284 **Article XI Fundraising**

285 Fundraising for the chapters or the state shall be under the supervision of the
286 State Treasurer and the State executive Committee. HFUU has one EIN, and
287 the State Chapter is ultimately responsible for accurate and timely revenue
288 reporting and accounting. Thus, we support:

- 289 1. A state level finance committee that has one representative from each
290 chapter. That member shall be the treasurer from the respective chapter.
- 291 2. The treasurers from a given county or chapter deciding the proper manner
292 of fundraising, whether it be for state or local purpose.
- 293 3. Local resolution of any disputes regarding the raising of funds. If local
294 chapters cannot agree on the issues at hand, the entire committee will
295 vote as a whole, with a majority vote required to resolve the issue.
- 296 4. Revenues raised being deposited into the HFUU State Bank account, or the
297 Hawai'i Farmers Union Foundation, a 501(c)(3), bank account, as
298 decided by the HFUU Finance Committee in a regular meeting.
- 299 5. Funds raised by a specific chapter for a specific purpose honor the wishes of
300 the donor as long as the purpose is in accordance with our mission and
301 preamble.
- 302 6. Chapter treasurers maintaining accurate and timely financial records.
- 303 7. Grant proposals will be communicated to and approved by the executive
304 state board prior to submission to grantor.

305 Any online funding campaign will be approved by the executive state board
306 before initiating and any fundraising campaign launched by the state
307 organization be approved by the state level finance committee. (2016 Annual
308 Convention)
309

310 **Article XII Pesticides**

311 HFUU supports Hawai'i Article 11 Section 7, as well as the creation,
312 implementation and enforcement of safety standards and buffer zones around
313 all water resources and aquatic eco systems, schools, hospitals and residential
314 areas to protect people and wildlife from exposure to pesticides.
315

316 We understand that pesticide use is a common component in food production
317 practices today.
318

319 We educate about and advocate for sustainable and Regenerative Agriculture
320 practices that enhance soil health, grows healthy nutritious food and minimizes

321 negative impacts. Through these practices many farmers have been able to
322 reduce or eliminate pesticide use.

323

324 We support a cautious approach to pesticide use that utilizes Integrated Pest
325 Management guidelines to minimize usage.

326

327 We support rigorous pesticide safety policies at all levels of government that
328 protect human health, downwind farms and communities and the environment.

329

330 These policies include:

331 1. Support for mandatory restricted use and neonicotinoids pesticide disclosure;

332 2. Rigorous independent safety testing of pesticides;

333 3. Risk Benefit Studies of pesticides that strongly weigh toward human, animal
334 and environmental safety;

335 4. Adequate local monitoring and enforcement of pesticide drift laws;

336 5. Environmental pesticide monitoring of food, soil, air, water, and pollinator
337 health;

338 6. Creating and implementing a state pesticide review process to allow
339 reevaluation of the safety of pesticides and combinations of pesticides, such as
340 restricted use pesticides and Glyphosate'

341 7. Support for increased funding and resources to implement these policies.

342 (2016 Annual Convention)

343

344 **Article XIII Restoration and Development of Local Food Systems**

345 The local food system is defined as food that ~~is~~ originates and is consumed in
346 Hawai'i and includes direct to consumer, farm-to-table types of economic
347 activities, such as farmers markets and Community Supported Agriculture
348 (CSA), farm sales as well as traditional distribution pathways such as grocery
349 store, wholesaler, restaurant and institutional buyers selling to groups including
350 schools, prisons and the military. HFUU supports the development of the local
351 food systems in the following ways:

352

353 1. Supporting Federal, State and County and NGO's (not-for-profit

354 organization) policies and programs that develop the local food system.

355 Including farmers markets, and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA);

356 using a variety of distribution pathways, farm sales, such as grocery stores,

357 wholesalers and restaurants and institutional buyers such as schools, prisons

358 and the military.

359

- 360 2. Removing regulatory barriers such as conflicting health and building
361 department regulations.
362
- 363 3. The development of Cottage Food Industry laws and regulations in Hawai'i.
364
- 365 4. Support for sustainable, inter-generational jobs, fair wages and safe working
366 conditions for farm labor.
367
- 368 5. Prioritization of local food procurement from all Federal, State and local
369 government agencies.
370
- 371 6. Municipal and Institutional composting and nutrient recycling.
372
- 373 7. Farmer and cropland protection from chemical drift, urban storm water
374 runoff and associated pollutants, raw manure and other organic runoff,
375 GMO genetic transfers (such as pollen contamination), invasive species,
376 regional pest and disease outbreaks such as Coffee Borer Beetles.
377
- 378 8. Funding priorities that emphasize production, training and workforce
379 development.
380
- 381 8. Expansion of Hawaii Food Producers Fund and similar approaches, which
382 provides 0% interest crowd source funds to the local food system. (2016
383 Annual Convention)
384

385 **ARTICLE XIV: Membership a Strategic Priority**

386 As reported at page 14 of the 2018 Survey, 52 to 70% of HFUU members
387 believe that: “Numbers matter and drive my desire to be of member of
388 HFUU”. It is therefore HFUU Policy that:

- 389 1. The State Division and its Chapters shall each make membership
390 recruitment a strategic priority by diligently pursuing programs and
391 benefits of value to their members.
- 392 2. The Communications Division shall assist and advise the State Division
393 and its Chapters to develop social media and informational programs to
394 recruit and retain members. (2018 Annual Convention)
395

396 **ARTICLE XV: Strategic Planning a Strategic Priority**

397 As reported at page 14 of the 2018 Survey, 61 to 79% of HFUU Members
398 believe that: “HFUU funds can and should be used for Chapter presidents
399 and HFUU leadership to physically come together twice a year.”

- 400 1. One of these meetings should be held in the Spring for at least three

- 401 days to permit enough time for true strategic planning.
- 402 2. The other meeting should be the Annual Fall Convention focused on
- 403 policy review and development.
- 404 3. Strategic planning should focus on and prioritize policies adopted at
- 405 the Annual Conventions
- 406 4. The Spring strategic planning session should be professionally
- 407 facilitated at HFUU cost.
- 408 5. Chapters shall raise and use their funds to enable their leadership to
- 409 attend the Spring and Fall meetings.
- 410 6. The HFUU State Division shall pay for the Spring and Fall meeting
- 411 sites and a professional facilitator for the Spring meeting.
- 412 7. allocation of other costs such as for food and lodging shall be
- 413 determined on a case by case basis. (2018 Annual Convention)
- 414

415 **ARTICLE XVI: Communication a Member Priority**

416 As reported at page 14 of the 2018 Survey, 78 to 96% of HFUU Members

417 value HFUU’s Newsletters, Notices and Legislative Updates.

- 418 1. The Communications Division is to be commended for developing
- 419 these forms of membership communications and urged to further refine
- 420 them.
- 421 2. Funds should continue to be allocated to these functions.
- 422 3. Chapters should regularly report their activities, plans and meetings for
- 423 inclusion in the HFUU newsletter or their own Chapter newsletters
- 424 published through the HFUU website.
- 425 4. The Communications Division should continue to explore the use of
- 426 social media to extend the reach of HFUU’s communications. (2018
- 427 Annual Convention)
- 428

429 **ARTICLE XVII: Regenerative Agriculture a Central Strategic Priority**

430 As reported at pages 14 and 15 of the 2018 Survey HFUU Members strongly

431 support regenerative agriculture as HFUU’s strategic priority. As reported

432 on page 14, 60 to 78% of members value that the HFUU President is the

433 Chair of the National Farmers Union Regenerative Agriculture Local Food

434 (“RALF”) Committee. At page 15, 71% to 90% of HFUU agree or strongly

435 agree that:

- 436 1. “Regenerative agriculture-- cover cropping along with other
- 437 regenerative soil health practices should be a strategic objective for
- 438 HFUU.” This includes more training and outreach “about farming
- 439 and gardening techniques.”
- 440 2. The same percentages agree that farmers should be taxed less than
- 441 others to enable them to make a living. (2018 Annual Convention)

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ARTICLE XVIII: Labor Retention and Marketing as a Strategic Priority for HFUU farmers

As reported at page 3 of the 2018 Survey, labor retention and marketing are the main challenges HFUU farmers are facing in the field. Between 258 and 476 HFUU members need additional labor help in order to sell additional produce or product; additional labor (skilled, full-time and part-time) is especially needed to assist with marketing and sales. As reported at page 17 of the 2018 Survey, 4 to 26% of membership need food hub and marketing assistance. As reported on page 19, 15 to 33% of members would currently like marketing assistance.

1. The State Division and the Legislative Committee shall develop or support suitable bills, programs, and/or projects for the Hawaii State Legislature on behalf of members to ease these challenges.
2. The State Division shall solicit the membership for solutions and pursue funding to help ease these challenges for members. (2018 Annual Convention)

ARTICLE XIX: Living on Farms a Strategic Priority for HFUU farmers

As reported at page 16 of the 2018 Survey, 13 to 35% of HFUU Members believe that *Living on Farms* should be a strategic priority partly because farming is very hands on and requires an intense time commitment; farmers can attract and help train true farm workers; and it helps with on-farm security and protection from stealing. The challenge has to do on the one hand, with state and county zoning to enable farmers and workers to be productive and funding, on the other hand, to afford additional housing for labor.

1. The State Division and the Legislative Committee shall develop or support suitable bills, programs, and/or projects for the respective counties and the Hawaii State Legislature on behalf of members to ease these challenges.
2. The State Division shall solicit the membership for solutions and pursue funding to help ease the challenge of funding farm dwelling housing for members. (2018 Annual Convention).

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