

2016 Amended and Adopted Policy Statement of the Hawai'i Farmers Union United (HFUU)

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

Hawai'i Farmers Union United stands for fairness and cooperation as cornerstones of how we live, farm and do business. The international community of climate-change researchers and scientists are in agreement that sustainable, ecological and regenerative farming systems are key to climate change reversal. Our job is to enhance the quality of life and vitality through

agriculture as an expression of love for our children, families, neighbors and friends, in the Spirit of Aloha ‘Āina and Malama ‘Āina.

We dedicate this policy to the celebration of life through agriculture with our great reverence for its inherent value.

ARTICLE I – Support for Sustainable Agricultural Practices

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

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

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

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

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

ARTICLE II – Soil, Air, Water and Watersheds

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

Specifically, HFUU supports the following policies:

1. Hawai‘i-based traditional and ecologically advanced concepts and practices of the ahupua‘a resource management systems and the watershed councils within the ahupua‘a.

2. Increased Funding for Regional Nutrient Cycling Centers.
3. Increased funding for scientific research, public education on sustainable, ecological, and regenerative agricultural systems and the production of clean renewable fiber, fuel and nutrient-rich food.
4. Adapting appropriate Food Safety regulations at the county and state level to recognize safe and sustainable farming practices
5. Promotion of integrated agriculture and aquaculture production systems that optimize recycling of organic wastes, nutrient recovery, protection of water quality, and quantity and aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems
6. Increased funding for applied research and environmental monitoring consistent with maintaining and enhancing healthy watershed communities.
7. We support the concept of Hawaiian self governance, and the right of Kanaka Maʻoli to gain free access to natural and cultural resources in their ahupuaʻa.
8. Freshwater is essential to all life and is Hawaiʻi's most important and scarce public trust resource, and must therefore be equitably allocated and rigorously protected. HFUU supports all current appurtenant water rights and their allocations and recognizes that these policies must be fulfilled on a watershed-by-watershed basis and must include the following water policies:
 - a. Watershed resource conservation and restoration.
 - b. Appurtenant water allocations must be met first, before other water allocations. Access for smallholder farmers and farmer cooperatives to water resources with long term Memorandum of Understanding MOU's from the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) and these water uses will be prioritized over other lesser non-agricultural uses that do not support local food production and food security.
 - c. Allowing filtered catchment water for washing produce and in value added processing of food
 - d. Reestablishment of community based watershed management with Aha councils to guide the comprehensive conservation and restoration of all natural and cultural resources.
 - e. A paradigm shift to place water use planning ahead of land use planning statewide to promote water and food security.
 - f. We believe that all fresh water resources, both ground and surface waters, and nearshore waters should be recognized and prioritized as public water trust resources to be held, conserved, managed, regulated, shared and enhanced for the greater public good, recognizing and supporting freshwater appurtenant water rights as a top priority.

Article III – Land Access for Farmers

1. We support the establishment of new zoning and building codes that support smallholder farmers' needs, including ordinances to permit the use of farm labor dwellings, composting toilets, grey water systems, water catchment and off-grid alternative energy systems on property zoned in the agricultural district.
2. We support the creation of an Agricultural Land Trust that holds land owned by or conveyed through a perpetual conservation easement, with the intent of keeping agricultural land affordable to farmers through the community land trusts model of housing development.
3. We support the right to have both water catchment and legal access to county water on the same parcel of land.
4. We support the maintenance and repair of private/public agricultural irrigation systems provided they have no negative environmental impacts, and all appurtenant water rights are met or restored.

Article IV – Food Security

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

1. Community Food Self Sufficiency
2. Increased funding and assistance for Family Farm Businesses
3. Funding for Farm to Table Marketing (e.g., Farmers' Markets, CSAs, Community Food Hubs)
4. Farm To School Programs
5. Increased funding and assistance for Agricultural Skills Education
6. Funding for Public Food Processing and Distribution Infrastructure
7. An increased budget for the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture programs that are in alignment with HFUU policies
8. Adoption and codification in county and state agency charters the Federal US Code Register's definition of sustainable agriculture
9. Propagation and production of traditional Hawaiian crops, particularly kalo production.
10. State policy changes to allow water use planning to precede land use planning, as food security is dependent upon water security.
11. The Union of Concerned Scientists National Food Policy Initiative" ref

<http://www.ucsusa.org/publications/catalyst/winter16-re-envisioning-a-broken-food-system>

12. Family farm tax reform, including the taxing of farm dwellings at a lower rate than urban dwellings.

Article V – Environmental Impact of Agriculture

We support

1. Sustainable agroforestry and ecological agricultural systems that protect eco-system integrity.
2. Microbiological applied research on how agricultural practices enhance soil
3. Toxicology studies of how agriculture practices impact soil air, water, ocean and human health and monitoring of contaminants there in our food and water.
4. Applied research in the production, processing and integration of nitrogen fixing trees and plants in integrative agro forestry food production systems.
5. Applied research into the production, provisions and integrations of organic animal feeds into farms in Hawai'i.

Article VI – Education

HFUU supports funding and other measures to promote:

1. Public environmental education, focusing on increasing public awareness about the economic benefits and multiplier effect of local food production.
2. On-Farm Apprentice Mentoring projects to support the development of inter-generational, novice or transitional farmers under the mentorship of a skilled farmer.
3. Pre-K through 12 public, parochial and independent school educational programs with articulation into post-secondary.
4. Monthly Chapter membership meetings with educational presentations.
5. University and the college level P-20 working group, and continuing education programs, including intern programs related to sustainable farming systems.
6. The building of business, marketing and entrepreneurship farmer skills.
7. Development of an all training and demonstration program for all ages for Hawaiian “Farmer Corps” to educate new farmers and help put them on the land, combatting the rapidly aging farming population in Hawai'i.

Article VII – Labeling

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

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

Article VIII – Food Safety Certification for Smallholders and Family Farmers

1. We support the development of an appropriate food safety certification system, county and state, for family farmers, smallholder farmers, including aquaculture, aquaponics, and other animal husbandry practices.
2. We support the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture to uphold a third party certification system in alignment with the language in Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs). ref <http://manoa.hawaii.edu/ctahr/farmfoodsafety>
Organic farming is an integral and essential part of sustainable agriculture.
3. We support an affordable, efficient, and equitable food safety certification system that is socially equitable, environmentally sound and economical efficient.
4. We support a cost-sharing program through the department of agriculture for the benefit of small farmer compliance with food safety laws.

5. We support the development and implementation of mobile slaughter units for each island, and appropriate recycling of all waste including Large Animal Mortality Composting (LAMC).
6. We recognize that the traditional staple Hawaiian crop of kalo, because of its inherent biological composition, and its function in watershed nutrient recycling and sediment trapping, its function in providing excellent habitat for endangered Hawaiian water birds, and that it must be cooked before eaten, and be exempt from food safety certification laws.

Article IX –Agrotourism

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

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

Article X Communication

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

1. A state level communications committee that has one representative from each chapter. The chapters may form their own local or regional communications committees as well, to facilitate regular and clear communications amongst the islands and within counties. This is especially relevant when more than one chapter exists within a given county. The committee will meet at least quarterly.

Article XI Fundraising

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

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

Any online funding campaign will be approved by the executive state board before initiating and any fundraising campaign launched by the state organization be approved by the state level finance committee.

Article XII Pesticides

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

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

We educate about and advocate for sustainable and regenerative agriculture practices that enhance soil health, grow healthy nutritious food and minimize negative impacts. Through these practices many farmers have been able to reduce or eliminate pesticide use.

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

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

These policies include:

1. Support for mandatory restricted use and neonicotinoids pesticide disclosure;
2. Rigorous independent safety testing of pesticides;
3. Risk Benefit Studies of pesticides that strongly weigh toward human, animal and environmental safety;
4. Adequate local monitoring and enforcement of pesticide drift laws;
5. Environmental pesticide monitoring of food, soil, air, water, and pollinator health;
6. Creating and implementing a state pesticide review process to allow reevaluation of the safety of pesticides and combinations of pesticides, such as restricted use pesticides and Glyphosate'
7. Support for increased funding and resources to implement these policies.

Article XIII Restoration and Development of Local Food Systems

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

1. Supporting Federal, State and County and NGO's (not-for-profit organization) policies and programs that develop the local food system. Including farmers markets, and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA); using a variety of distribution pathways, farm sales, such as grocery stores, wholesalers and restaurants and institutional buyers such as schools, prisons and the military.
2. Removing regulatory barriers such as conflicting health and building department regulations.
3. The development of Cottage Food Industry laws and regulations in Hawai'i.

4. Support for sustainable, inter generational jobs, fair wages and safe working conditions for farm labor.
5. Prioritization of local food procurement from all Federal, State and local government agencies.
6. Municipal and Institutional composting and nutrient recycling.
7. Farmer and cropland protection from chemical drift, urban storm water runoff and associated pollutants, raw manure and other organic runoff, GMO genetic transfers (such as pollen contamination), invasive species, regional pest and disease outbreaks such as Coffee Borer Beetles.
8. Funding priorities that emphasize production, training and workforce development.
9. Expansion of Hawaii Food Producers Fund and similar approaches, which provides 0% interest crowd source funds to the local food system.

Me ka ha'aha'a

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