

**Sustainable Agriculture Skill Panel Forum**  
**May 11, 2012**  
**Increasing Productivity**

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**Discussion Outline:**

- I. Introductions: Why are we here?
  - II. Setting the Context Discussion:
    - a. What is the current state of communication between educational entities and the agricultural industry on increasing productivity?
    - b. What is the current state of labor and labor shortages affecting the ability to increase productivity?
  - III. Preferred Vision in 10-20 Years: Best Case Scenario
  - IV. Develop Priorities
    - a. What are the opportunities or supporting forces that will move us closer to our best case scenario/vision?
    - b. What are the barriers or restraints that hold us back from moving closer to our best case scenario/vision?
  - V. Outline Actions for Priorities (time permitting)
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**I. Introductions: Why are we here?**

- Get more involved and understand the community
- Find roadmap to further agriculture
- Gain a better understanding of common needs and challenges
- Looking for ways to start community gardens to find ways for Lion's Club to fit
- To learn and see where the Correctional Facility can help inmates to reintegrate back into society
- To listen, learn and gain insight for DLIR's R&S office
- Learn ways to bring new farm equipment and technology to Kauai
- Important Ag Lands
- Identify structural challenges on Kauai (large scale)
- Support the initiative for workforce development
- To learn about the agricultural community on Kauai better
- Important Ag Lands and get to know agricultural community better; farm-to-table; marketing; Community-Based Economic Development
- To learn process to bring back to Maui; help support workforce development with agriculture's needs
- To connect with other local farmers on production; networking

- To provide a resource in research and development and look for solutions
- Interest in agricultural education and supporting agriculture production throughout the state
- Increase scale of agriculture production and learn how to support and contribute to this effort
- To learn about the process and identify training needs to make workforce development more effective statewide

## II. Setting the Context Discussion

### ***What is the current state of communication between educational entities and the agricultural industry on increasing productivity?***

- Disconnect in communication about what educational opportunities are available
- Future Farmers of America (FFA) in high schools and need to connect elementary and secondary education to other occupations in agriculture
- Hawaii DOE has no commitment or interest in agriculture; CTAHR needs to step it up; across the board, agricultural education is pathetic
- Need to introduce agriculture at a young age, and not just traditional ideas of agriculture, but also the high-tech side of agriculture
- Big lack of interest in agriculture
- Teaching K-12 and general public about the benefits of agriculture; FFA
- High school FFA is dwindling; DOE's Natural Resource Pathway, which includes agriculture, needs to be made available in high schools;
- CTAHR needs to offer online education in agriculture and encourage parents that agriculture is a good option for kids
- How do we make agriculture an attractive career?

### ***What is the current state of labor and labor shortages affecting the ability to increase productivity?***

- Need for mid-level workers (between harvester and management) on all islands; new graduates have high income expectations, but they need basic skills (work readiness) and some previous agriculture experience
- Need for laborers that know how to make dirt; Marshallese laborers are abundant
- Looking at economics, agriculture has thin margins and high risk, so it doesn't pay very well; we need to look at an agricultural co-op model to share the costs of equipment, water, etc.
- Need basic business management skills – farmers want to work for themselves; farmers need business skills to be successful
- Attendance, motivation, sober employees are all challenges; workers must be flexible with time and abilities

- Completion/graduate rate is low because students enter employment before finishing school
- Need for business skills
- Prisoner reentry and immigrants are filling lower-level jobs
- Trade may be a good incentive for laborers

**III. Preferred Vision in 10-20 Years: Best Case Scenario**

***10-20 years from now, from a workforce development perspective, what is the best case scenario for assuring abundant increases in productivity?***

- More collaboration between agriculture and other industries; other industries will change their mindsets and support agriculture
- Agricultural education in all K-12 schools
- Range of agriculture educated laborers (e.g., AA degree with some experience)
- More availability of distance learning while working
- A clear pathway for a local person to reach goals in agriculture
- More trust by the agriculture community to integrate ex-offenders
- Agriculture is the preferred industry for all levels; all laborers come from a local pool
- Better/more competitive pay scale and benefits package
- Agrotourism will be thriving
- Agrotourism ordinance on Kauai

**IV. Develop Priorities**

<i>What are the <b>opportunities or supporting forces</b> that will move us closer to our best case scenario/vision?</i>	<i>What are the <b>barriers or restraints</b> that hold us back from moving closer to our best case scenario/vision?</i>
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**Priority 1: Education & Training (Cluster “E”)  
(14 votes)**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State’s history in agriculture and the ahupua’a as a management model</li> <li>• Kauai Community College’s new Agriculture programs, both credit and non-credit</li> <li>• Consumer education on value-added in local food</li> <li>• <u>Market is there, but we have a hard time meeting it</u></li> <li>• School Garden Networks</li> <li>• New Dean at CTAHR</li> <li>• Pathways in schools (Health Sciences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative perception of agriculture</li> <li>• Lack of education for consumers on grass-fed beef</li> <li>• Misconception of ugly fruits and veggies as bad versus packaged, pretty, waxy foods</li> <li>• Market is there, <u>but we have a hard time meeting it</u></li> <li>• Don’t have the labor force to meet the market demand</li> <li>• No agriculture in classroom and no commitment from DOE</li> </ul>
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<p>could be looked at as a part of agriculture)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some Charter schools have agriculture as basis for education (culture part of agriculture)</li> <li>• Would like to see high school level jobs in agriculture</li> <li>• Expansion of agriculture (mandatory) for K-12 kids to participate in school garden programs</li> <li>• DOA to act as an umbrella to integrate agricultural education across agencies and organizations</li> <li>• Students bring produce home = healthy eating at home</li> <li>• Industry participation to fill the gap of lack in instructors and programs</li> <li>• DOE to work with Colleges and University to build program and use resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTAHR Land Grant is not fulfilling its mandate (in Hawaii to replace sugar and pineapple)</li> <li>• Losing Extension Agents due to lack of funding</li> <li>• NCLB standards do not include agriculture</li> <li>• Natural Resources Pathway not in every school</li> <li>• Lack of high school internships</li> <li>• Lack of mentorships</li> <li>• FFA is lacking in Hawaii high schools and higher level of academics</li> <li>• No mechanism for communication line between industry and state agencies</li> <li>• Lack of qualified instructors at K-12 level and college</li> <li>• Credits transfer from community colleges to University</li> </ul>
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**Priority 2: Resources: Infrastructure, Human, Financial, Natural (Cluster “D”)  
(8 votes)**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnerships to overcome infrastructure in disrepair</li> <li>• Cooperatives</li> <li>• Commercial kitchens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land</li> <li>• Lack of slaughterhouses</li> <li>• Don’t have the labor force to meet the market demand</li> <li>• Competition for labor (e.g., Hotel, visitor industry; we need to be able to pay competitively)</li> <li>• Fix infrastructure (roads)</li> </ul>
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**Priority 3: Partnerships (Cluster “C”)  
(7 votes)\***

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current and growing support for agriculture by state and local agencies</li> <li>• Chefs are buying more locally-produced food</li> <li>• Cooperatives</li> <li>• Hotels want to be involved in growing food, but they don’t want to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need a “foot-in-door” to enter markets (large grocery stores)</li> <li>• Financial backing and incentives for agricultural employers to hire</li> </ul>
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<p>have to manage; this is an opportunity to train people to fill those jobs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As the visitor industry levels out, agriculture can increase</li> <li>• Develop a partnership program to cut insurance costs between the visitor and agriculture industries</li> </ul>	
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**Food/Energy Sustainability & Security (Cluster “A”)  
(7 votes)\***

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People are worried about the future</li> <li>• By-products</li> <li>• Rising cost of oil and fuel</li> <li>• Small-scale individual sustainable farming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of profitability</li> <li>• Rising cost of oil and fuels, transportation</li> <li>• Feeds/inputs need to be imported</li> </ul>
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**Diversified Agriculture (Cluster “B”)  
(4 votes)**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate/year-round agricultural production</li> <li>• Unexplored potential crops to be value-added products</li> <li>• By-products</li> <li>• Presence of seed companies in the islands</li> <li>• Foreign market for grass-fed beef</li> </ul>	
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**Technology (Cluster “F”)  
(4 votes)**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology and new methods of farming</li> <li>• Improved pasture grasses</li> <li>• New methods in decreasing pesticides</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insects, disease, and invasive species</li> <li>• Control methods are lacking (biosecurity)</li> </ul>
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**Marketing (Cluster “G”)  
(4 votes)**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foreign market for grass-fed beef</li> <li>• “Local grown” marketing campaigns</li> <li>• Side-by-side taste tests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative perception of agriculture</li> <li>• Marketing local grown over mainland products</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer education on value-added in local food</li> <li>• Chefs are buying more locally-produced food</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of education for consumers on grass-fed beef</li> <li>• Misconception of ugly fruits &amp; veggies as bad versus packaged, pretty, waxy foods</li> <li>• Need a “foot-in-door” to enter markets (large grocery stores)</li> </ul>
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**Policy (Cluster “H”)  
(3 votes)**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land availability for ranchers to provide local beef</li> <li>• High cost of permits and lots of regulatory issues to work with</li> <li>• Lack of an inspector for fresh water clams in Kekaha</li> <li>• Land</li> <li>• State cutting back funding for agriculture</li> <li>• Financial backing and incentives for agricultural employers to hire</li> </ul>
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\*A tie-breaker vote between Cluster “C” and Cluster “A” resulted in “Partnerships” becoming Priority 3.

**V. Outline Actions for Priorities**

**Priority 1: Education & Training**

- Increase awareness of existing education programs (Kauai Community College programs)
- Identify who will take leadership in program awareness (e.g., Mayor’s Advisory Groups)
- Make an asset map
- Umbrella group with expertise to work with DOE to integrate agriculture programs in K-12
- Hold an Expo where technology can be demonstrated and tested
- Create and strengthen high school internship and college mentorship programs
- Ask to have Natural Resources Pathway be available in Kauai schools
- Develop Train-the-Trainer program for K-12 teachers
- Lobby to have agriculture prioritized in DOE

- Push more of an Education and Marketing element at the Farm Fair, and integrate cross-sector participation with an emphasis on agriculture and everyone's relationships to it
- Garden Fair or another event with local taste test
- Incorporate school gardens in Farm Fair with competition and incentives for kids (ride tickets, food bank)
- Workshops for business training, financial record keeping for existing producers
- Incorporate social media networking to increase awareness about Kauai's agriculture
- Expand Kauai Community College to a 4-year College, and have it participate in university research
- Get DOE to the table during agriculture discussions

**Priority 2: Resources: Infrastructure, Human, Financial, Natural**

- Agriculture educators and agricultural education programs in high schools
- Provide incentives (non-financial) to supplement pay
- Training – on-the-Job training incentive
- Training by CTAHR extension
- Develop training network that can work with Kauai Community College for credits
- Umbrella/leadership clearinghouse needs to be developed to hold all program information and link to partnerships, along with follow up
- Seek legislative support for on-the-ground agriculture training programs (CTAHR)
- Water infrastructure; legislation for improvements; how to address the dam and reservoir decommissioning issues
- Co-ops (KAA, EKWUC) to generate revenue by selling hydro-power
- Foster creation or the operation of community kitchens, slaughterhouse, TFDF, etc.
- Ag co-operative development to bring costs down to replace the function of old plantations

**Priority 3: Partnerships**

- Mentoring students; people with experience with new farmers
- Encourage high school media programs to focus on agriculture
- Commodity groups should form an association or co-op type of formation
- Marketing as a commodity group
- Establish direct activities with tourism industry for agrotourism
- K-12 and University increase communication to develop partnerships
- Need overarching direction to develop partnerships
- Increase marketing by state agencies to public
- Inmate job training/placement program development (and resources)
- Partner cross-commodity groups to address resource problem