Sustainable Agriculture Skill Panel Forum  
March 6, 2012  
Innovation & Sustainability

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Facilitators: Lilinoi Grace  
Recorders: Beverly Fraser and Jillian Yasutake

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 innovation and sustainability?
   b. What is the current state of labor and labor shortages affecting innovation and sustainability?
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)

I. Introductions: Why are we here?

- Figure out how OCET can identify workforce development trainings
- Do whatever I can do to support government to help industry get back on track to growing healthy food
- Repeated issues need to be dealt with, i.e. Coffee Borer Beatle (CBB)
- Employment – illegal pickers, shortage
- Survival of coffee industry
- Markets – fostering business, develop sustainable living
- To observe and learn and promote innovation and sustainability
- Sustain ourselves by growing our own food
- Learn and listen and determine true definition of sustainability
- To learn what we can do to work out better farmer-chef relations
- Find entities to collaborate with
- Looking to find ways that CTE can cooperate with workforce development
- Address the water issues
- To learn and support Hawaii Island sustainability
- Learn how to grow my family’s food
- Learn about sustainability and define it
Because workforce development is an important issue that will need to be addressed
Try to help big picture of agriculture in Hawaii
Help bridge young people entering into agriculture careers
To represent migrant workers and offer creative solutions
To hear issues specific to Hawaii Island and to support the effort
To learn more about how to do my job more sustainably and hear about others’ issues in agriculture
To learn what passes for sustainability
To get up to speed on what’s going on in the state and align efforts on my farm
To support the effort and promote sustainability
To represent DLIR and support the effort
To listen to problems specific to Hawaii Island and align support by HFBF
To support efforts by DLIR and promote more collaboration between counties
Learn how to scale up efforts at the schools
To promote eating local
To learn, observe, and take tips
To learn (2)

II. Setting the Context Discussion
What is the current state of communication between educational entities and the agricultural industry on innovation and sustainability?

- Extension agents are increasing on the island
- Disconnect between extension agents and ag
- Communication needs improvement
- Community Colleges are integrating more natural farming courses, but there is still lots to do
- There are a lot of agriculture scholarships but we can’t give them out, because students aren’t aware of them
- [We need] Short line cooks and executive chefs
- There needs to be better communication between the associations (e.g. Kona Coffee Farmers Association) and the Community Colleges
- There is a disparity between farming and how ag can be sustainable and economical
- Community Colleges should teach ag economics and business skills
- The University of Hawaii has lost its ag economists due to retirement
- Need to promote people to replace those educators that have been lost
- Focus is not on ag production; it’s on research
- Future Farmers of America (FFA) is dwindling; FFA instructors retire and the whole program goes with them
- No farmer makes money without value-added products
- No certified kitchen in Kona; need the money to make it happen
• We need certified kitchens to teach people certain skill related to health and safety (Department of Health regulations)
• DOH regulations are' not consistent
• We need a facility to feed people and teach skills
• Communication between education and industry is very reliant on extension agents; Strong extension agent = strong communication
• Need mobile certified kitchen and centers to serve as incubators
• Ag scholarships available through the Big Island Nurserymen’s Association, but they couldn’t be given away; partnered with UHCC to promote scholarships
• Need to connect agriculture and culinary arts programs; they go hand-in-hand
• Center for Eco-Literacy on the mainland; Ho’onaunau and other schools on Hawaii Island teach these concepts and promote healthy food production to students
• Kohala Center’s school garden programs
• There is production systems being taught at UH-Hilo
• An agriculture conservation corps (like Job Corps or Youth Corps) should be developed to promote ag education

**What is the current state of labor and labor shortages affecting innovation and sustainability?**

• There is a shortage of chefs and line cooks
• Chefs’ groups are trying to raise money to increase culinary arts in West Hawaii
• Kona Coffee farmers – finding legal farmhands
• A whole workforce needs to be built to support sustainability
• Legal and illegal migrant farmworkers that are currently used does not equal sustainability
• We don’t have enough local farmers
• Sustainable farming was practiced in the past, but it is not the mindset now
• Lack of middle-management and farm managers and the skills needed for those positions; going off-island to work
• The college is teaching farmers to work for Monsanto
• Not enough farmers and farm workers
• County code for farm labor housing (affordable)
• Rigid lease requirements
• Younger farmers
• On-island jobs; need farmer management
• Money is a big factor; State budget cuts for extension agents
• Students can’t find good paying jobs when they come out of Ag programs
• There is a way to get around the need for labor through innovative practices
• Immigrant laborers are increasing on Hawaii Island
• There are a lot of non-profits on island that employ people to develop programs, but it is all subject to grant funding
• There’s a huge untapped workforce with the existing unemployed population, but what is preventing unemployed/underemployed from working in farming?

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 an innovative and sustainable agriculture workforce?

• Young people will be able to start businesses using local goods
• More local organizations that support sustainable agriculture
• More available farm land
• Farmers will make enough money to support a family
• School lunch programs will be open to local farmers; less control of school lunch programs by the military
• There will be a stronger local market
• There will be more community gardens
• Traditional ways of farming will be brought back
• Farmers will be able to market products at a good price to help support the farmers sustainability
• More local organizations that support sustainable ag that will have a stronger voice than HFBF
• More collaboration within agriculture and at the grassroots level to create change
• Understanding the full value of food
• Food awareness – understanding what GMO does to your body
• Competitive vs. cooperative
• True vote of government practices; Re: food is your money; Buy local
• Personal responsibility will be instilled at a young age so that it can transfer into adult life and work life
• The mindset of youth will be more focused on sustainability and personal responsibility than on making money
• Grow what we can
• People will live more simply and live within their means
• More connection between healthcare and agriculture
• Each school will have its own garden to feed students
• Better treatment of immigrant workers and better education of labor practices
• Farmers training farmers
• Hawaii Homegrown Food Network
• Stop Feds from subsidizing bad food and get them to support good food
• Community organizers to oversee
• Zero GMOs
IV. Develop Priorities

What are the opportunities or supporting forces that will move us closer to our best case scenario/vision? | What are the barriers or restraints that hold us back from moving closer to our best case scenario/vision?
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Priority 1: Bureaucracy & Legislation (A/F) (13 votes)
- Loosening government policies around procurement
- State Ag leases allowing for residential habitation
- Eliminate or reduce GET on all local grown produce
- Increase inspection fees on imported goods
- Economic incentives by eliminating GET based on sustainable footprint
- Bureaucracy
- Procurement
- Non-commitment by government
- Affordable housing
- Interests & values that are driving decisions are incompatible with our goals
- Lack of time (and money) to go to Oahu to give testimony

Priority 2: Education (G) (9 votes)
- Loan repayment programs for ag students and incentives for students in high-needs areas (rural)
- Pool scholarship money (between orgs or agencies) for better use
- Employment training programs specifically for Ag (like WDD’s Employment Training Fund)
- Work trade, barter, and internships
- WWOOFers
- Training programs for value-added products
- Scholarships currently available for ag students
- Inability for farmers to write business plans to obtain financing
- Retention of ag students

Priority 3: Non-GMOs & Other Sustainable Agriculture Practices (I) (8 votes)
- None
- GMOs and non-support by legislature of non-GMO legislation
- Pesticide use
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| Priority 4: Marketing (B)  
*(5 votes)*  
- Farmers markets  
- PR campaigns, like “Buy Local,” that focuses on a few key areas of sustainability  
- Lowered transportation costs for farmers through program partnerships with Young Bros. and other transportation companies and non-profits |  
- The current mindset of people  
- Lack of role models for how to succeed  
- Lack of promotion of small scale systems and farms  
- Jump from small scale to bigger marketplace |
| Priority 5: Community/Culture/Collaboration (C/D)  
*(4 votes)*  
- Creation of a total system that is supportive of sustainability  
- Meetings (like today) where there is more private-public communication and collaboration  
- Island-wide cooperative  
- Cooperative purchasing  
- Food forests |  
- Emotional attitude of what is going on in agriculture  
- Disconnect between Farm Bureau and reality of farmers |
| Priority 6: Financing & Funding (E)  
*(1 vote)*  
- Equitable distribution of grant funding  
- State ag loan programs |  
- Limited/lacking financing and funding  
- Lack of start-up funds  
- Plan for independence/sustainability beyond loans and grants when the money runs out |
What are the opportunities or supporting forces that will move us closer to our best case scenario/vision?

Priority 7: Alternative Energy (H)  
(1 vote)

- Development of green energy parks (like Ag parks) supporting a larger industrial park
- A variety of types of alternative energy

What are the barriers or restraints that hold us back from moving closer to our best case scenario/vision?

- Insert barriers identified for this cluster

V. Outline Actions for Priorities

Priority 1: Bureaucracy/Legislation

- Change State procurement code under the justification and current priorities of the State’s initiatives of food security and sustainability
- Allow farmers and farm workers to live on ag lease land and Kamehameha School/Bishop Estates lands
- Stop invasive species from coming on island through increased manpower (more ag inspectors)
- Create and impose an inspection fee on imported produce and products
- Eliminate GET on all locally grown produce
- Change building code to allow ag workers affordable housing
- Better enforcement (mandatory labeling) by Department of Agriculture
- Expand Department of Agriculture loan program
- Enhance Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism’s marketing of local products worldwide
- Increase outer islands’ citizens access to participate in legislative testimony

Priority 2: Education

- Repay ag students college loans when graduated
- Train farmers on business development skills
- Outreach training for marketing, branding, and value-added product development
- K-12 organic gardening
- Training for teachers to teach ag (ag-specific professional development)
- Culinary arts and lunch from the garden
- Pool scholarship funds

Priority 3: Non-GMOs and Other Sustainable Agriculture Practices

- Enforce pesticide “drift” laws
• Eliminate use of pesticides/herbicides on all public places, especially schools and parks
• No GMO food crops grown on island
• No GMO tests on island
• Educate community on effects of GMO through marketing campaign
• Make Hawaii Island (or the State) a “GMO Free Zone”
• Create legislation to ensure that sustainable practices are given substantial priority and funding to meet the State’s food security and sustainability initiatives
• Create a non-GMO seed bank on Hawaii Island
• Require GMO labeling for all imported products