Sustainable Agriculture Skill Panel Forum  
May 11, 2012  
Increasing Productivity

Chair: Roy Yamakawa  
Facilitator: Sara Bowen  
Recorder: 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 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)

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are the opportunities or supporting forces that will move us closer to our best case scenario/vision?</th>
<th>What are the barriers or restraints that hold us back from moving closer to our best case scenario/vision?</th>
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| **Priority 1: Education & Training (Cluster “E”)**  
(14 votes) |  |
| - State’s history in agriculture and the ahupua’a as a management model  
- Kauai Community College’s new Agriculture programs, both credit and non-credit  
- Consumer education on value-added in local food  
- Market is there, but we have a hard time meeting it  
- School Garden Networks  
- New Dean at CTAHR  
- Pathways in schools (Health Sciences) | - Negative perception of agriculture  
- Lack of education for consumers on grass-fed beef  
- Misconception of ugly fruits and veggies as bad versus packaged, pretty, waxy foods  
- Market is there, but we have a hard time meeting it  
- Don’t have the labor force to meet the market demand  
- No agriculture in classroom and no commitment from DOE |
could be looked at as a part of agriculture)
- Some Charter schools have agriculture as basis for education (culture part of agriculture)
- Would like to see high school level jobs in agriculture
- Expansion of agriculture (mandatory) for K-12 kids to participate in school garden programs
- DOA to act as an umbrella to integrate agricultural education across agencies and organizations
- Students bring produce home = healthy eating at home
- Industry participation to fill the gap of lack in instructors and programs
- DOE to work with Colleges and University to build program and use resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority 2: Resources: Infrastructure, Human, Financial, Natural (Cluster “D”)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(8 votes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Partnerships to overcome infrastructure in disrepair</td>
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<td>• Cooperatives</td>
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<td>• Commercial kitchens</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Land</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of slaughterhouses</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Don’t have the labor force to meet the market demand</td>
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<td>• Competition for labor (e.g., Hotel, visitor industry; we need to be able to pay competitively</td>
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<td>• Fix infrastructure (roads)</td>
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<th>Priority 3: Partnerships (Cluster “C”)</th>
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<tr>
<td>(7 votes)*</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Current and growing support for agriculture by state and local agencies</td>
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<td>• Chefs are buying more locally-produced food</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Cooperatives</td>
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<td>• Hotels want to be involved in growing food, but they don’t want to</td>
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<td>• Need a “foot-in-door” to enter markets (large grocery stores)</td>
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<td>• Financial backing and incentives for agricultural employers to hire</td>
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have to manage; this is an opportunity to train people to fill those jobs
• As the visitor industry levels out, agriculture can increase
• Develop a partnership program to cut insurance costs between the visitor and agriculture industries

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<th>Food/Energy Sustainability &amp; Security (Cluster “A”) (7 votes)*</th>
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<td>• People are worried about the future</td>
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<td>• By-products</td>
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<td>• Rising cost of oil and fuel</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Small-scale individual sustainable farming</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lack of profitability</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Rising cost of oil and fuels, transportation</td>
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<td>• Feeds/inputs need to be imported</td>
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<th>Diversified Agriculture (Cluster “B”) (4 votes)</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Climate/year-round agricultural production</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Unexplored potential crops to be value-added products</td>
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<td>• By-products</td>
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<td>• Presence of seed companies in the islands</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Foreign market for grass-fed beef</td>
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<td>• Foreign market for grass-fed beef</td>
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<th>Technology (Cluster “F”) (4 votes)</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Technology and new methods of farming</td>
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<td>• Improved pasture grasses</td>
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<td>• New methods in decreasing pesticides</td>
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<td>• Insects, disease, and invasive species</td>
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<td>• Control methods are lacking (biosecurity)</td>
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<th>Marketing (Cluster “G”) (4 votes)</th>
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<td>• Foreign market for grass-fed beef</td>
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<td>• “Local grown” marketing campaigns</td>
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<td>• Side-by-side taste tests</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Negative perception of agriculture</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Marketing local grown over mainland products</td>
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Consumer education on value-added in local food
Chefs are buying more locally-produced food

Lack of education for consumers on grass-fed beef
Misconception of ugly fruits & veggies as bad versus packaged, pretty, waxy foods
Need a “foot-in-door” to enter markets (large grocery stores)

Policy (Cluster “H”)
(3 votes)

Land availability for ranchers to provide local beef
High cost of permits and lots of regulatory issues to work with
Lack of an inspector for fresh water clams in Kekaha
Land
State cutting back funding for agriculture
Financial backing and incentives for agricultural employers to hire

*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