

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

Chair: Una Greenway

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 Beetle (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

<i>What are the opportunities or supporting forces that will move us closer to our best case scenario/vision?</i>	<i>What are the barriers or restraints that hold us back from moving closer to our best case scenario/vision?</i>
--	--

Priority 1: Bureaucracy & Legislation (A/F)
(13 votes)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GMOs and non-support by legislature of non-GMO legislation • Pesticide use
--	---

<i>What are the opportunities or supporting forces that will move us closer to our best case scenario/vision?</i>	<i>What are the barriers or restraints that hold us back from moving closer to our best case scenario/vision?</i>
--	--

Priority 4: Marketing (B)
(5 votes)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional attitude of what is going on in agriculture • Disconnect between Farm Bureau and reality of farmers
--	--

Priority 6: Financing & Funding (E)
(1 vote)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equitable distribution of grant funding • State ag loan programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited/lacking financing and funding • Lack of start-up funds • Plan for independence/sustainability beyond loans and grants when the money runs out
---	---

<i>What are the opportunities or supporting forces that will move us closer to our best case scenario/vision?</i>	<i>What are the barriers or restraints that hold us back from moving closer to our best case scenario/vision?</i>
--	--

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of green energy parks (like Ag parks) supporting a larger industrial park • A variety of types of alternative energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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