Sustainable Agriculture Skill Panel Forum
June 7, 2012
Labor Issues

Chair: Corey Moriyama
Facilitator: Alexis Dascoulias
Recorders: Ruth Caldwell & William Pierpont

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 labor issues?
   b. What is the current state of labor and labor shortages affecting Maui’s agriculture industry?
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?

- Gain information about agriculture in schools to see a resurgence of agriculture in the education system
- Ensure students’ college and career readiness
- Support career paths
- Learn how to transition high school students into agricultural higher education
- Gain tools to advance current agriculture employee education
- Help aging workers pass knowledge down
- Help former farmers learn current methods to farm again
- To hear concerns and questions
- Find out how to help farm employers be/stay in compliance
- Build upon CTE Natural Resources pathway, including aquaponics, to help high school students transition to college and careers in agriculture
- Represent the local Workforce Investment Board
- Help students grow healthy foods to: bring families together, support health, and place students in local agriculture jobs
- Help youth see the value/benefit in agriculture jobs and connect them with employers
- Support local Workforce Investment Board and Alu Like participants finding agriculture jobs and help change their mindset
Support Agriculture Skill Panels with data and job outlooks
Support pipeline students entering agriculture industry, especially internships and post-grad support

II. Setting the Context Discussion

What is the current state of communication between educational entities and the agricultural industry on labor issues?

- Lack of infrastructure/unified direction between education and industry
- Technology trends must be kept current to keep strong relationships
- Job Fairs: infrastructure and attendance are a concern
- Lack of centralized information with easy access to information portals
- Lack of personal communication
- There is plenty of information, but poor logistics
- Difficult communicating the rewards and appeal of the agriculture industry
- Poor communication between educational efforts
- Lack of funding for education and resources to support agriculture programs
- Parents not participating in the process to bring education into families
- Communication between human resource departments and education is lost, especially for professional associations (like SHRM)
- Partnerships between large communication entities and higher education are lost
- Disconnect between education and agriculture industry
- Agriculture industry is transitioning with no surety of what agriculture in Hawaii is or how it will be defined
- Future Farmers of America is a bridge into the past. CTE is the current pathway.
- Lack of communication about how agriculture is a “lifestyle”

What is the current state of labor and labor shortages affecting Maui’s agriculture industry?

- Lack of defining options in agriculture
- Lack of work ethic
- Lack of information on agricultural opportunities
- Only 2% of an aging workforce are feeding 98% of the population
- Maui is in limbo between old plantation agriculture and upcoming agriculture like aquaculture
- Many youth aren’t getting Carl Perkins opportunities (like CTE pathways)
- Lack of investment in youth
- Many resources for youth aren’t going to special populations
- College once had CTE teaching certifications, but these no longer exist
- Prices of food increase because of shortages (like having to pay to bring in migrant workers)
• Negative perception of agriculture with the youth causes us to bring in workers
• Perception of agriculture by parents who are talking kids out of agricultural work
• Labor shortages because of folks not understanding “Agriculture is a lifestyle, not a job”
• Aging employees don’t get to take ownership and tell youth agriculture is attractive
• Education teaches reading, writing, etc., but it doesn’t usually expose youth to hands-on agriculture early
• Not all teachers teach kids the way they need to be taught
• Maui not eating what we grow; most is shipped out
• Education has no local advisory board to build paths to agriculture jobs beginning K-12, although CTE has a statewide Natural Resources Pathway Advisory Board
• Employers generally don’t need many specialists; they need new employees and youth who are willing to learn and work outdoors
• Specific cattle and coffee issues are causing labor shortages
• Lack of commitment to buy local to reduce shortages even when they are paying a premium for local
• Lack of support for small farmers to start up
• Agriculture is the least funded department in the college
• Takes lots of money to prepare the soil as we transition out of previous mono-crops
• Substance abuse issue on island
• High cost of living

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 a workforce to support Maui’s agriculture industry?

• Buy local, grow local, employ local, with 95% of food grown local and exporting high value crops
• Full employment
• Cultivating community value and connections
• Every school has an agriculture enterprise that feeds students
• Agricultural enrichment day or week in every school with a fun “mascot”
• Government supports education and agriculture
• Agriculture career path and farming is realistic and incentivized
• Procurement regulations for education and corrections facilities require only Hawaii grown food
• Effort to lower age demographics of farmers
• Hawaii grows our own animal feed for local livestock
• State incentivizes homesteading for small farms that are viable
• Agriculture industry-specific education programs
• Interdisciplinary agriculture curriculum for K-College
• Agricultural land is affordable and accessible with private land owners
• Students understand the multi-facets of agriculture
• 3-year demonstration farms encourage programs that are simultaneously self-sustaining and educational
• Resources and support available to create integrated, self-sustaining agriculture programs
• Agriculture takes a focus in education like Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). STEM becomes “STEAM”.
• Students consider agriculture as a career
• Honest analysis of land use and water
• Accountability
• Land zoning practices keep agricultural land as agricultural land
• Agriculture is “sexy”, appealing, and attractive

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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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Priority 1: The “image” (I) (8 votes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Need to recapture old values while moving forward from a romanticized past</td>
<td>• Values in non-agriculture community</td>
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<td>• Find champions for agriculture movement/create a brand like KTA</td>
<td>• Lack of support at home to go into agriculture careers</td>
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<td>• Outreach the public</td>
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<td>• Increase public/farmer interaction</td>
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<td>• Create a local USDA “Know your farmer, know your food” program</td>
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<td>• Take advantage of historical/cultural assets</td>
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<td>• Partner with organizations like Boys &amp; Girls Club</td>
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<td>• Have media competition for youth promoting agriculture with corporate sponsorships and air them on TV (great for senior projects)</td>
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<td>• Have community gardens connected to parks and community farms</td>
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<tr>
<td>What are the <strong>opportunities or supporting forces</strong> that will move us closer to our best case scenario/vision?</td>
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<td>Priority 2: Shared Vision (V) (6 votes)</td>
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<td>• Find current systems that work to model agriculture industry after</td>
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<td>• Work together with all neighbor islands</td>
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<td>• Create more opportunities for discussions/forums like this</td>
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<td>• Difficult to put aside individual differences to agree on a big picture</td>
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<td>• Like herding cats</td>
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<td>• Lack of total buy-in</td>
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<td>• Special interest groups</td>
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<td>• General lack of understanding the necessity of agriculture in Hawaii for food security</td>
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<td>Priority 3: Politicians/Politics (P) (6 votes)</td>
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<td>• Create a wider leeway to help new land lessees get on their feet</td>
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<td>• Should get rid of incentivizing farmers not growing crops. These funds should instead be spent on helping new farmers get started.</td>
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<td>• Lip service: politicians say they support agriculture and that it’s a priority, but they don’t show it with policy decisions or funding</td>
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<td>• Bureaucratic roadblocks</td>
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<td>• Land, water, resources, zoning, and funding</td>
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<td>• High cost of doing business in Hawaii</td>
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<td>• Food safety issues restraining local agriculture from providing food for the visitor industry like hotels and cruise ships</td>
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<td>• Lack of available resources</td>
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<td>• A general need to be on the offensive with politicians</td>
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<td>• It takes time to change. Discussions like this have happened before, but often nothing came from it and there’s a lack of politician feedback from discussions like these.</td>
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</table>
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?

Priority 4: Education and Training Opportunities (E) (3 votes)

- Develop mentor programs that value the mentors and their expertise
- Get corporate sponsorships for annual “cooper-tition” events
- Local schools or school boards open to opportunities like school farms
- “AG” becomes a certification for high school teachers
- Fund content area experts to partner with teachers (mirror this from the construction industry)
- Educate the Board of Education so they believe in agriculture as a priority so their policy decisions will have impact on agriculture industry
- Utilize agricultural experts to teach agriculture in culturally appropriate ways

- Lack of trained workforce
- Lack of agricultural knowledge
- Agriculture educators are not usually educated in agriculture
- Lack of hands-on experience opportunities and internships
- Lack of employer education to communicate resources and labor programs (like the Volunteer Internship Program with DLIR)

Priority 5: Status Quo (S) (3 votes)

- Take action on decisions from meetings like this
- Takes time/effort to change
- Discussions like this happened before but nothing changed

V. Outline Actions for Priorities

Priority 1: The “Image”: Recapture past values while moving forward from the romanticized past.

- Use media to sell agriculture; create a local brand (ex.g., No Ka’oi)
- Create an agricultural business incubator with UH for agriculture-related business and marketing skills
- Recapture old values by encouraging mentorships/internships, and provide more support for mentors and guidance and resources, and match mentors with interns
• Encourage and share resources about the Small Business Administration’s program SCORE to help experienced, retired agriculture workers to mentor beginning farmers
• Participate in the small business development network
• Actively support and help develop meaningful K-12 agriculture programs
• Support agriculture images of future leaders in Hawaii
• Make agriculture in Hawaii a priority

Priority 2: Create a Shared Vision: Put aside individual differences for the sake of the “Big Picture.”
• Identify agriculture champions to push agriculture and a shared vision forward
• Teach 21st century agriculture soft skills in schools including: communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity
• Put aside individual differences
• Partner to identify, create, and support win-win scenarios
• Encourage accountability
• Overcome barriers of distance to come together as a state instead of by county
• Share best agriculture practices

Priority 3: Politics/Politicians: Show support of agriculture through policy decisions.
• Identify legislative agriculture advocates/champions
• Clarify legislative process
• Share grassroots success stories with legislators and others