

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEXTER KISHIDA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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January 3, 2024

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi,
President and Members of the Senate
Thirty-Second State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Scott K. Saiki,
Speaker and Members of the House of
Representatives
Thirty-Second State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Saiki, and Members of the Legislature:

For your information and consideration, I am transmitting a copy of the Report on Farmer Apprentice Mentoring Program as required by Act 304, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022. In accordance with Section 93-16, Hawaii Revised Statutes, I am also informing you that the report may be viewed electronically at <https://hdoa.hawaii.gov/meetings-reports/legislative-reports/>.

Sincerely,

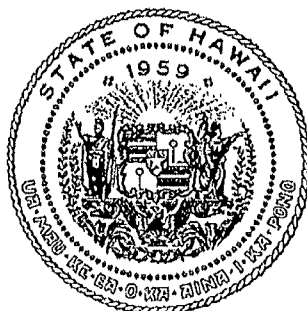
Sharon Hurd
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

Enclosures



**REPORT TO THE THIRTY-SECOND
LEGISLATURE 2024 REGULAR SESSION
STATE OF HAWAII**

**IN RESPONSE TO ACT 304, SESSION LAWS OF HAWAII 2022
REQUIRING THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE TO REPORT ANNUALLY ON THE
PROGRAM'S OPERATION AND RELATED PERFORMANCE MEASURES.**



Prepared by:

**THE STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI**

DECEMBER 2023

FARMER APPRENTICE MENTORING PROGRAM

Annual Report to Legislature for Fiscal Year 2024

Background

In the Thirty-first State Legislature, Regular Session of 2022, Act 304 was passed which amended Chapter 141 HRS to add a new section to part I, which requires the Department of Agriculture to establish the Farmer Apprentice Mentoring Program (FAMP) and to submit an annual report to the legislature on the program's operation and related performance measures. The following information is to be reported:

1. Farmer Apprentice Enrollment.
2. Listing of Known Qualified Mentorship Provider.
3. Assessment on Ability of Mentorship Providers.
4. Evaluation of Program Results Achieved.

Executive Summary

This report covers the period January 3, 2023 to November 30, 2023. The request to release the \$300,000 appropriation from Act 304 FAMP was submitted to the Governor in early March 2023. The request was approved for \$270,000, with a 10% restriction. Subsequently, an agency-to-agency procurement was initiated with the Leeward Community College (LCC) with scope of work proposal completed in early May. A formal contract was then issued in late May, with an expiration date of January 31, 2025. Since the contract issuance, the LCC has initiated the project and submitted its first report.

Report for Contract Number 71594 (Leeward Community College)

This report fulfills the first of four scheduled pre-scheduled progress report deadlines established to facilitate sound project development and responsible fiscal management. As the FAMP contract's first progress report, this covers the period commencing with the contract's and November 30, 2023.

Within the reporting period covered herein, the following activities were undertaken:

- Fiscal Account Development.
- Personnel Recruitment.
- Networking with Local Agriculture Industry Advocates.
- New Farmer Training Research (e.g., programs in Hawai'i, agricultural apprenticeship programs, and agricultural mentorship programs).

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The following summarizes progress achieved via the above listed activities, followed by descriptive details.

Fiscal Account Development

The Contractor is fully committed to responsible and transparent fiscal management, and proceeding according to plan.

- A total budget of \$269,500 was approved for this project (Contract No. 71594, 2023).
- The Contractor has established an account number from which to process the project's expenditures.
- To date, the project has not yet expended any funds. The first anticipated expenditures from the project's budget will be transacted upon the Project Coordinator's hire. The Contractor will invoice HDOA once the new hire's salary and fringe benefits are ready to be expended.

Personnel Recruitment

A position description designed specifically for this project was drafted and was classified as an Academic Support Specialist. The newly created position was recruited for in strict adherence to University of Hawai'i and State of Hawai'i human resources policies and procedures. Upon their hire, the Academic Support Specialist will conduct outreach to and meetings with Hawai'i's veteran farmers, new farmer training providers, agricultural industry professionals. The purpose of these meetings is to nurture collaborative relationships with the aforementioned stakeholders, to collect data, and to solicit insights about strategies needed to achieve the project's goals and objectives. The specific timeline is as follows:

- **September 13, 2023:** Academic Support Specialist position recruitment launched.
- **October 18, 2023:** Academic Support Specialist position recruitment closed.
- **November 7, 2023:** Application materials of five applicants were reviewed and ranked by a screening committee comprised of faculty closely associated with Leeward's Sustainable Agriculture degree program. Two applicants met the position's Minimum Qualifications.
- **November 28 and 30, 2023:** The screening committee interviewed the two aforementioned candidates for the position. Candidates' qualifications and interview responses were evaluated. The committee ended their applicant screening process by making hiring recommendations to the contract's Principal Investigator.

Networking with Local Agriculture Industry Advocates

To increase the Contractor's understanding of and reach within the realm of agricultural advocates, producers, and researchers, the Academic Support Specialist's supervisor (Dr. Aulii Silva) attended local conferences where many experts in these fields presented innovative research, emerging technologies, and promising strategies. The Contractor's staff attended a newly established network of local agriculture industry advocates as follows:

- **September 26 - 27, 2023:** THRIVE Agri-tech Conference: Developing Sustainable Food, Agriculture And Aquaculture Solutions For The Asia Pacific Region. An annual gathering of leading experts on sustainable agriculture and aquaculture practices along with global corporate leaders on industry trends and innovation.
- **November 3, 2023:** Climate Resilient Food Innovation Network: (CLiRFIN). After securing a two-year planning grant by the National Science Foundation's new Engines directorate, co-Principal Investigator, Dr. Erik Franklin and his team will lead a network of collaborators across the Hawaiian and Pacific islands who will "assess, plan, and coordinate the development of the Engine to facilitate the science, translation, commercialization, and scaling of products, methods and technologies for climate resilient food systems in agriculture, fisheries, and aquaculture." The LCC team has since joined the CLiRFIN's Workforce Development Committee.

New Farmer Training Providers in Hawai'i Research

Since the start of this contract, the Contractor has conducted research on the programmatic designs and learning outcomes offered by Hawai'i's farmer training providers listed below. The purpose of this research was to determine the extent to which farmer training programs in Hawai'i are aligned with or divergent from best practices in farmer apprentice mentorship programs. A preliminary outcome derived from this research was an emerging list of characteristics that distinguish farmer apprenticeship versus mentorship programs. Research on Hawai'i's new farmer training programs will continue and will be expanded throughout the course of this contract.

- GoFarms Hawai'i.
- UH System Campuses (UH West O'ahu, UH Hilo, UH Mānoa (CTAHR), Leeward Community College, and Maui College).
- Department of Education's Agricultural Academies (Leilehua, Waipahu, and Wai'anae High Schools).
- The Kohala Center (Ōhāhā and Hana Mahi'ai).
- MA'O Organic Farms.
- Kahumana Farms.
- Department of Corrections (Waiawa, Women's, and Kulani Correctional Facilities).
- Living Earth Farms (Maui).

- Pennsylvania Diversified Vegetable Apprenticeship.
- Troops to Tractors Apprenticeship (Pennsylvania).
- Rogue Valley (Oregon) Apprenticeship.