



Policy of the Hawai'i Farmers Union United
Enacted by Delegates to the Annual Convention
Maui Food Innovation Center at the UH Maui College
October 6, 2024
Hawai'i Farmers Union United's
Mission and Vision Statements

Our mission is to...

Advocate for the sovereign rights of family farmers, ranchers, and fishers to create regenerative and sustainable agricultural communities that benefit the people of Hawai'i through education, cooperation and legislation.

Our vision is...

A Hawai'i in which farm families and their communities are respected, valued, and have achieved economic prosperity and social justice that restores regenerative, sustainable agriculture and food security.

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Preamble

We, the members of the Hawai‘i Farmers Union United, establish these policies in order to articulate the fundamental principles of an agricultural system to produce healthy food, natural fiber, la‘au lapa‘au and renewable energy essential to our islands’ sustainability. We support the protection and perpetuation of a healthy and thriving kai, ‘āina, and wai which is the source of Aloha ‘Āina. HFUU will lead the way in advocating for regenerative agricultural practices. We extend our Aloha to our farmers as we join to advocate for regenerative agriculture through the practices of Aloha ‘Āina values.

1. Sustainable Agricultural Practices

We support:

1. The 1990 USDA definition of sustainable agriculture: Public Law 101-624, Title XVI, Subtitle A, Section. Under that law, “the term sustainable agriculture means an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that will, over the long term:
 - Satisfy human food and fiber needs;
 - Enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agricultural economy depends;
 - Make the most efficient use of nonrenewable resources and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls;
 - Sustain the economic viability of farm operations; and
 - Enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole.”
2. The Organic Foods Production Act of 1990, which among other things provides for organic food production certification;
3. The National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) and their work that advocates for federal policy reform to advance the sustainability of agriculture, food systems, natural resources, and rural communities;
4. National Agricultural Library's (NAL) Thesaurus and Glossary of agricultural terms as guidance for terms used in HFUU policy statement.
5. The 2012 State of Hawai‘i Department of Agriculture Increased Food Security and Food Self-Sufficiency Strategy;
6. Regenerative agriculture as a major component of sustainable agriculture;
7. Natural farming methods as an integral and essential component of sustainable and ecological agriculture; and
8. The social and economic benefits of local production of food, fiber, and energy to meet local needs.

2. Regenerative Agriculture

Regenerative agriculture is a system of farming and ranching principles and practices that increase biodiversity, enriches the soil, purifies watersheds, and all while increasing in-farm fertility, which may help producers save money by reducing input expenses. Regenerative practices may include but are not limited to no tillage to minimal tillage, diverse cover crops, multiple crop rotations,

agroforestry, silvopasture, composting, Hawaiian Indigenous natural agriculture and Korean natural farming, all of which should be augmented by holistic grazing guidelines.

We support:

1. Incentives for regenerative farming and ranching practices that sequester more carbon, improve soil health and productivity, slow erosion and build up topsoil, and increase water filtration;
2. Development of new markets for farmers and ranchers who are currently practicing regenerative farming and ranching or who are transitioning to regenerative practices;
3. Applied research on soil health in regenerative food production systems and Korean natural farming livestock systems;
4. Any and all efforts aimed to furthering the practice of Regenerative Agriculture to include educational, legislative, policy, and advocacy efforts; and
5. Efforts that incentivize these practices, be they administered through governmental, private agency or the marketplace, including tax credits for producers, so that the financial burden of implementing them is not borne solely by family farmers, but by all whom they benefit;
6. Increasing funding for HRS § 141-16- the Compost Reimbursement Program;
7. Increasing funding for Act 312 (SLH 2022) - the Cover Crop Reimbursement Pilot Program;
8. Policy to incentivize organic and regenerative farming across the state including subsidies for transition, funding and resources for education, and tax credits for producers; and
9. The development of an agricultural workforce around soil health testing and planning.

3. Local Food Economy

A. Benefits of Local Food Economies: HFUU supports all initiatives aimed at localizing our food system. The local food system is defined as food that originates and is consumed in Hawai‘i and includes direct to consumer, farm-to-table types of economic activities, such as farmers markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), sales on the farm, to food hubs as well as traditional distribution pathways such as sales to grocery store, wholesaler, restaurant and

institutional buyers selling to groups including schools, prisons and the military. This includes encouraging the development of food hubs, and other benefits such as:

1. Providing resilient responses to natural and manmade disasters;
2. Enhancing local markets for the products that many family farms produce;
3. The ability for farmers to capture a larger share of the retail food dollar;
4. Opportunities to employ and engage more residents, in more regions, in the pursuit of agriculture;
5. Keeping consumer dollars circulating in each respective region, and to the family farms therein;
6. Purchasing directly from family farmers and food hubs as these dollars multiply in the community with increased beneficial economic, social, and environmental impacts;
7. Connecting consumers with the food they eat and the farmers who produce it;
8. Reducing transportation costs;
9. Providing fresher, healthier food products, with a reduced need for transportation, long-term storage, processing or treatment;
10. Food security: encouraging more food production and improving distribution;
11. Allowing for more profitable and sustainable methods of agriculture to be employed; and
12. Educating interns and apprentices through hands-on immersion and mentoring by local farmers. This, in turn, results in improved farm viability, a larger pool of skilled agricultural labor, and more beginning farmers.

B. Food Hubs: The members of HFUU operate several community-based food hubs including cooperatives - defined by the USDA as “a centrally located facility with a business management structure facilitating the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, and/or marketing of locally/regionally produced food products.” We support:

1. Extending government funding that prioritizes the role of food hubs to provide locally grown food for food banks, nonprofits and other efforts in response to community needs for food distributions;

2. Prioritize food hubs in the implementation of locally produced foods within “Food as Medicine” programming;
3. The establishment of a multi-stakeholder task force under the Governor's office to advance institutional food procurement with key partners including food hubs, family farmers and the organizations that represent them;
4. Increasing regional sourcing of local food through food hubs, cooperatives and family farmers;
5. Procurement criteria that promotes benefits to family farmers from purchases of locally produced foods by public institutions;
6. A mechanism to ensure timely payments in government contracts;
7. Expanding resources to develop our islands’ food systems value chain infrastructure from local food production to consumption via storage, processing and distribution;
8. Transitioning the Food Hub Pilot Program, Act 313 (SLH 2022), to a permanent funded program under the Hawaii Department of Agriculture;
9. A participatory evaluation approach to ensure family farmers, food hubs, and advocacy networks are included in measuring the success of Act 313 (SLH 2022) and other acts intended to support family farmers;
10. County level funding to grow food hubs;
11. Family farmers having access to food safety qualified facilities that offer aggregation, washing, minimal processing, packaging, cold storage, and other value- added facilities, including meat processing;
12. Technical assistance and coordination services to encourage the long-term viability of and collaborations among food hubs;
13. Encouraging other industries to collaborate with food hubs to expand food systems services;
14. Access to appropriate and affordable inter-island transportation and distribution facilities that maintain the integrity of the cold-chain from local food production to consumption; and
15. The approval of food hubs to participate in WIC as a farmers markets programs.

C. Food Security: Hawai‘i State Legislature in the regular session 2012 reported: “As the most geographically isolated state in the country, Hawai‘i imports approximately ninety-two percent of its food, according to the United States

Department of Agriculture. Currently, Hawai‘i has a supply of fresh produce for no more than ten days. Ninety percent of the beef, sixty-seven percent of the fresh vegetables, sixty-five percent of the fresh fruits, and eighty percent of all milk purchased in the State are imported. The legislature further finds that Hawai‘i’s reliance on out-of-state sources of food places residents directly at risk of food shortages in the event of natural disasters, economic disruption, and other external factors beyond the State’s control.” In 2012, people spent approximately \$6 billion on food purchases in Hawai‘i, with roughly half spent by visitors, which could be fulfilled by local family farmers, that would benefit our local economy via the “multiplier effect”. We support:

1. Increased funding and technical assistance for family farmers;
2. Updating the Hawai‘i State Planning Act and County General Plans to set a specific target of 50% of food consumed is grown within the state by 2030;
3. State funds to promote direct-to-consumer markets, including farmer’s markets, CSA, food-hubs, value-added processing, and on-farm retail sales;
4. Farmers’ Markets Manager positions to be funded by the Hawai‘i State Department of Health;
5. Value-added processing through access to Certified Kitchens and processing facilities for family farmers in rural areas;
6. Adopting appropriate regulations by the Hawai‘i Department of Health regarding wastewater systems and capacities for certified kitchen facilities in rural communities without sewage systems;
7. Allowing family farmers access to processing facilities and certified kitchens affiliated with educational institutions such as school kitchen for commercial use during off-hours;
8. State action to attract Hawai‘i residents to jobs as agricultural workers, to acknowledge the importance of educating interns and apprentices on farms as a pathway to increased availability of skilled agricultural labor;
9. Community food security that is defined as a situation in which all residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that optimizes community self-reliance and social and environmental justice;
10. Perpetuate, promote, and increase use of traditional Hawaiian farming systems, such as the use of loko i‘a, kalo, irrigated lo‘i, mala, and production of traditional Hawaiian crops, such as kalo, ‘uala, ‘ulu and niu;

11. Planning that recognizes food security as dependent upon water security;
12. Taxing of farm dwellings at a lower rate than urban dwellings; and
13. State funding to supplement Federal NRCS and USDA programs that are currently underutilized due to high cost associated with geographic isolation.

4. Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

We recognize that the average age of a U.S. farmer continues to increase, and a majority of the nation's farmland is changing hands due to the aging farmer population. The ability of the next generation of family farmers to continue to produce food and fiber is critical to the economy, health, and security of our nation and local communities. In order to address this critical concern, the necessary programs must be in place and funded in order to meet the unique needs and barriers facing beginning farmers and ranchers, with special emphasis on returning military veterans, and ensure that they can enter and sustain farming and/or ranching as a viable livelihood.

We support:

1. The USDA's Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program;
2. The loan category within Farm Service Agency that directs operating loans to provide flexible capital through operating microloans for beginning farmers and ranchers;
3. Reducing collateral requirements to secure Farm Service Agency Direct and operating microloans for beginning farmers and ranchers;
4. Maintaining the loan set-aside within the direct and guaranteed FSA loan program for beginning farmers and ranchers;
5. Increasing the Farm Ownership Down Payment loan program limit;
6. Increasing the direct Farm Ownership loan program limit;
7. Incentives and tax credits to landowners to lease or sell to beginning farmers or ranchers;
8. Encourage match making between incoming and outgoing farmers to ensure succession so that agricultural lands and resources remain productive;
9. Encourage match making between recently trained farmers and available jobs in agriculture and food systems;
10. Cost-share differentials and funding set-asides for beginning farmers and ranchers in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP),

- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and other programs;
11. Including a priority for projects benefiting beginning farmers and ranchers within Value-Added Grant Program and fostering new entrepreneurial opportunities for beginning farmers and ranchers within the Rural Development grants and loans programs;
 12. The continuation and funding programs that provide education and training to beginning farmers and ranchers, including for agricultural rehabilitation and vocational training programs;
 13. The Risk Management Agency (RMA) ensuring fair access to crop and revenue insurance by beginning farmers and ranchers including an additional crop insurance subsidy;
 14. NIFA supporting research, education, and extension on issues related to beginning farmers and ranchers, farm transition, and farm entry;
 15. The reauthorization and full funding of programs previously administered by the National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service to serve as a resource for beginning farmers and ranchers;
 16. The establishment of a funding priority for the federal Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program for easements conserving farmland for which there is a generational farm transfer plan, easements which include the use of an Option to Purchase at Agricultural Value or easements which occur in conjunction with the transfer of the conserved land to a beginning farmer;
 17. Legislation that would forgive a portion of the student loans carried by new farmers and ranchers in their first five years of farming;
 18. Funding for farmers and ranchers to educate and train interns and apprentices on their farms;
 19. Increased funding and set-asides for beginning farmers and ranchers in disaster programs;
 20. Funding and training for organizations with beginning farmer training programs to be vetted and credentialed to accept GI Bill education funds;
 21. The advancement of land partnerships, such as farm incubator programs, that provide opportunities for for-profit and non-profit agricultural entities and strive to support educational commercial farms that teach agricultural and business skills;
 22. Increasing funding for Act 304 - the Farmer Apprentice Mentoring Program;
and

23. Establishing under the Hawaii Department of Agriculture a grant program for enhancing productivity on small and medium size family farms with a grant range of \$50,000 to \$200,000 per award and an annual target of 75-100 awards.

5. Climate Change and Carbon Sequestration

We acknowledge and accept the scientific evidence that clearly indicates that human activities are a contributing factor to climate change. We believe that human activity also has the potential to help mitigate climate change. Family farmers and ranchers are working to adapt to the changing climate by implementing conservation practices to build soil health and make their land more resilient. Farmers and ranchers can play a key role in mitigating climate change by storing carbon in soils and restoring ecosystems.

We support:

1. Farmers and ranchers being consulted as the United States moves forward to reduce its emission of greenhouse gasses;
2. Soil health practices that aim to increase organic matter and humus development;
3. Carbon sequestration being an innovative way to enhance income for producers and protect our environment. Therefore, the trading of carbon credits with the inclusion of carbon sequestration as an agricultural conservation practice for fair and equitable carbon offset payments should be encouraged;
4. The goals articulated for the United Nations Sustainable Development Program and in the Paris Climate Accords;
5. Practitioners of conservation practices should be rewarded for contributing to carbon sequestration and for other ecosystem services including a carbon tax credit to incentivize landowners the planting of trees and other crops to strengthen natural water systems; and
6. Programs that enhance opportunities for family farmers and ranchers to participate in the ecosystem service market; and
7. Farming methods that mitigate natural disasters, including funding for farmers to implement these methods and applied, on-the-farm research to refine and further our understanding about best practices for mitigation.

6. Soil, Air, Water and Watersheds

HFUU promotes soil, air, water and watershed health because we understand their relationship to food, fiber and fuel crops and to the health and vitality of our communities. We support:

1. Hawai‘i-based traditional and ecologically advanced concepts and practices of the ahupua‘a resource management systems and the Aha or watershed councils within the ahupua‘a.
2. Increased funding for regional nutrient cycling centers.
3. Increased funding for restoration of ahupua‘a resources management system, restoration of watershed health, aha councils, and enhancement of native biodiversity.
4. Promotion of integrated agriculture and aquaculture production systems that optimize recycling of organic wastes and nutrient recovery;
5. Increased funding for applied research and environmental monitoring consistent with maintaining and enhancing native biodiversity, healthy plant, animal, and human communities; and
6. Advocate for protection of agricultural lands, water, and air from pollution, adequate water supply, and housing for farm workers; and
7. The development of local capacity to displace all imported plants and animals from out of State. Also following any and all inter-island plant transport to be allowed by certified nurseries.

A. Freshwater is essential to all life, and is Hawai‘i’s most important and scarce public trust resource. Freshwater resources must be equitably allocated and rigorously protected. Therefore, HFUU supports:

1. All freshwater resources, both ground and surface waters, and nearshore waters being recognized as public water trust resources to be held, conserved, managed, regulated, shared and enhanced for the greater public good. Appurtenant water allocations must first be met, on a watershed-by-watershed basis, before other water allocations;
2. Watershed resource conservation and restoration;
3. Access for smallholder farmers and farmer cooperatives to water resources with long term Memorandum of Understanding MOU’s from the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) Board of Land and

Natural Resources (BLNR) and these water uses will be prioritized over other lesser non-agricultural uses that do not support local food production and food security;

4. Amending FSMA to allow filtered catchment water for washing produce and value-added processing of food on a farm-by-farm basis;
5. Reestablishing and adequate funding for community-based watershed management with Aha councils to guide the comprehensive conservation and restoration of all natural and cultural resources; and
6. Specific language should be included to protect the use of surface waters for use by local farmers to produce food, fiber or energy for local communities in the Hawai‘i Water Code.

7. Land Access & Living on Farms

HFUU promotes access to land for family farmers and recognizes that the lack of availability and high cost of land are major constraints for new and established farmers in Hawai‘i. We support:

1. Legislation for farmers to live on the farm;
2. Living on Farms as a statewide priority for farmers because:
 - a. Living on-site allows farmers to better understand, monitor and respond to the effects of local weather on crops;
 - b. Farming is very hands-on and requires an intense time commitment;
 - c. Farmers can attract, train and employ farm workers by offering housing as an employee benefit; and
 - d. It helps with on-farm crop and equipment security and protection from theft. The challenge is to work with state regulations and county zoning ordinances to enable farmers and workers to be permitted to live on the farm and to afford additional housing for farm workers;
3. Affordable and adequate housing for family farmers and their farm workers;
4. Incentivizing land tenure for small and beginning farmers;
5. Counties to have the authority to allow more farm dwellings;
6. Funding for more farm dwellings;
7. Financial solutions for family farmers that are ineligible for traditional financial loans;
8. In order to establish food security, there is a need to amend State regulations,

County zoning ordinances and building codes that support family farmers' needs, including ordinances to permit the construction and use of farm dwelling, composting toilets, grey water systems, water catchment and off-grid alternative energy systems on property zoned agriculture;

9. The creation of an Agricultural Land Trust that holds land owned by or conveyed through a perpetual conservation easement, with the intent of keeping agricultural land affordable to farmers through the community land trusts model of housing development;
10. The right to have both water catchment, or gravity-flow surface water irrigation and legal access to County potable water on the same parcel of land;
11. The maintenance and repair of private/public agricultural irrigation systems provided they have no negative environmental impacts, and all appurtenant water rights are met or restored;
12. To amend State laws, rules and/or regulations and County ordinances to allow boundary amendments or other procedures as exceptions to the subdivision process to permit large landowners to sell property to adjacent landowners who are actively farming as the primary source of their income; and
13. Protecting family farmers and their workers from short-term vacation rental (STVR) regulations that affect farmers' ability to house volunteers, work-traders, interns, apprentices, workers, visitors and owners.

8. Food and Nutrition Programs

It is imperative that our nutrition policy addresses both the quantity and quality of food available to needy people. Nutrition programs should place an emphasis on fresh and local foods to ensure that people of all income levels have access to healthy, nutritious foods.

We support:

1. Reauthorization and full funding of federal nutrition programs under USDA;
2. Expansion of nutrition programs to include farm-to-school, WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Programs, programs that allow SNAP and other

- federal nutrition program beneficiaries to double their benefits at farmers markets and others;
3. SNAP and federal nutrition program benefits used for grocery delivery and pick-up services for the purchase of approved food items;
 4. Congress continuing federal responsibility for nutrition programs;
 5. Requiring comprehensive and unbiased research precede any official dietary advice regarding the relationship between diet and health;
 6. The United States Dietary Guidelines to utilize the abundant and thorough evidence suggesting that Americans should consume a balanced diet rich in nutrients, which includes meats and dairy products;
 7. All federally funded nutrition programs following the U.S. Dietary Guidelines;
 8. Periodic reviews of federally funded nutrition programs to assess their effectiveness;
 9. Expansion of nutrition feeding programs for the elderly, including how to use Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) and the distribution of excess commodities when available; and
 10. The ability of consumers to purchase whole, less processed and unprocessed foods as a nutritional tool to encourage prevention of disease and strengthen immunity through gut microbiome diversity.
 11. The Food Stamp Act of 1964;
 12. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);
 13. Outreach efforts to extend services to the increasing number of hungry people who should be served, particularly in rural areas where access is a problem;
 14. Exclusion of farm loans as income in determining eligibility for SNAP;
 15. Continued development of the EBT Program and education on how to use EBT;
 16. Prohibiting efforts to substitute cash payment for SNAP;
 17. Programs which allow SNAP and WIC users to purchase food directly from farmers markets, community supported agriculture (CSA) programs, and local producers;
 18. WIC benefits to purchase the full spectrum of locally-produced foods;

19. Commodity distribution programs such as The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) and child feeding programs;
20. The Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), as well as including indigenous foods and foods grown on reservations in the program;
21. USDA making healthy surplus foods readily available to food banks and emergency kitchens, bearing the cost of transportation and storage;
22. Federal law that requires commodities distributed for nutrition programs be domestically produced;
23. Transparent supply chains and local and regional food procurement for domestic hunger relief;
24. Congress creating and funding a permanent national food pantry assistance program that funds technical assistance and the purchase local foods direct and/or through existing local food supply chains from the producers for use by food banks and pantries;
25. The allocation of national resources to alleviate “food deserts,” as defined by USDA, by increasing accessibility to a comprehensive range of nutritious foods;
26. Allowing cultural starches (kalo, poi, ‘ulu, ‘uala) to be allowable purchases under the GRAINS category;
27. Increased funding for SNAP Double Up Food Bucks Program;
28. Expansion of SNAP Double Up Food Bucks Program to include the full range of food products including proteins and dairy;
29. Allow nurses and doctors to offer medical opinions about alternative methods such as Endocannabinoidal treatment; and
30. Funding to support the administration of nutrition programs at farmers markets and food hubs.

9. Government Efforts that support Hawai‘i’s Family Farmers

We support:

1. Each County’s efforts to address climate change, its impact on regional ecosystems, and long-term sustainability of agricultural systems;
2. Increased funding for community-based watershed management practices that use Aha Councils as a conservation and restoration model;

3. Increased funding for The Hawai‘i Department of Agriculture’s (HDoA) and the Department of Land and Natural Resources’ budgets in order to support funding programs that are in alignment with HFUU’s policy statement;
 - a. Propose a gradual expansion of the HDoA budget to reach 3% of the total State budget allocation by 2026;
 - b. Propose a gradual expansion of the Maui County Department of Agriculture budget to reach 3% of the total County budget allocation by 2026;
4. Increased funding for Agricultural Skills Education;
5. Increased emphasis on the use of locally produced foods in all government nutrition programs;
6. Increased funding for comprehensive conservation and restoration of all natural and cultural resources;
7. Removing regulatory barriers such as conflicting health and building department regulations;
8. The development of Cottage Food and Hemp industry laws and regulations in Hawai‘i;
9. Sustainable, inter-generational jobs, fair wages and safe working conditions for farm workers;
10. Prioritization of local food procurement from all Federal, State and County government agencies;
11. Attracting new and beginning farmers and ranchers;
12. Programs and provisions for farmers with disabilities;
13. Increased funding for local leadership efforts to meet farmer and community needs during natural and manmade disasters;
14. Increased funding for municipal and institutional composting and nutrient recycling;
15. Farmer and cropland protection from chemical drift, urban storm water runoff and associated pollutants, raw manure and other organic runoff, GMO genetic transfers (such as pollen contamination), invasive species, regional pest and disease outbreaks such as Coffee Borer Beetles;
16. Funding priorities that emphasize production, training and workforce development;
17. Tax programs that enhance farm viability;
18. Expansion of Hawai‘i Food Producers Fund and similar approaches, which

- provides 0% interest crowd source funds to the local food system;
19. Representation of family farmers in the process of implementing laws regarding the development of studies, projects, programs and regulations; and
 20. The Maui County Department of ‘Ōiwi Resources to perpetuate our kai, ‘āina, and wai sources as part of ‘Ōiwi Resources.

10. Labor & Workforce Development

We support:

1. Continued funding of existing programs, as well as the establishment of new grant initiatives, that focus on improving the supply and stability of a locally based agricultural workforce. This would include educational opportunities designed to increase skills, as well as opportunities to attract new local residents to seek jobs in the agriculture industry;
2. Prioritizing on-farm education led by farmers for interns and apprentices as allies to increase availability of skilled farmers. This includes supporting the farmers as mentors through funding to enhance the farmer-apprentice relationship;
3. Increased funding and other assistance for Agricultural Skills Training;
4. Continued and expanded financial support for the HFUU Farm Apprenticeship Program (FAM) in order to increase program participation throughout Hawai‘i;
5. Encourage apprenticeship programs to develop stronger mechanisms for matching apprentices with farmland after their training and a stronger pathway for them to gain land tenure; and
6. Increasing funding for Act 304 - the Farmer Apprentice Mentoring Program.

11. Education

We support:

1. Involvement in local, state and national 4-H, Future Farmers of America (FFA), and other similar agricultural educational programs by encouraging these groups to connect and collaborate with local farming families;
2. School-based programs that support courses in agriculture and entrepreneurship as a means of encouraging young people to live and thrive in their local communities;
3. School-based initiatives such as school garden programs designed to educate

young people about where their food comes from as well as garden cultivation;

4. Environmental education for the general public, with an emphasis on increasing awareness of the benefits of producing agricultural products locally;
5. Pre-K-20 public, charter and independent school agricultural education programs;
6. Monthly and quarterly HFUU chapter meetings that include educational programs for its members;
7. University and vocational school working groups that support continuing education programs for farmers, apprentices, interns, through immersion programs in sustainable farming methods and systems;
8. Support State Department of Education in their efforts to create agriculture career paths and curriculum, along with internships, shadowing, and farm tours;
9. Work with Hawai'i Community Foundation to develop and manage a fund to provide scholarships for students pursuing degrees related to food and agriculture
10. Developing skills for farmers such as business management, marketing and entrepreneurship;
11. The effort to educate our communities on identifying the signs associated with depression, and how to help those with depression and suicidal thoughts; and
12. Increased funding for mental health and addiction treatment services.

12. Research & Extension

We support:

1. Research that is specifically designed to explore innovative methods of production, processing and marketing of agricultural products that will improve family farm operations;
2. Encourage collaboration between HFUU, University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR), and other Hawai'i based agricultural educational and research programs, to promote family farmer's contributions to Hawai'i's food security;
3. Education, research, and support of small, diverse farms as well as larger

farms;

4. Extension training and education that is based on traditional agricultural practices Indigenous Peoples with an emphasis on sustainable farming;
5. Farmer and ranchers becoming more engaged in teamwork with each other and other agricultural research entities;
6. Developing programs that offer college credit for apprentices and interns who train on local family farms;
7. Encourage the University of Hawai‘i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR), and other Hawai‘i based agricultural educational and research programs to prioritize regenerative agriculture and management of invasive species; and
8. Mentorship programs designed to target low and moderate-income individuals that provide practical training and experience in the area of value-added production.

13. Specialty Crops

Specialty crops include but are not limited to fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, nursery crops, pulse crops, floriculture and horticulture including turf grass, sod, Camellia sinensis teas, yerba mate teas, coffee, hemp and herbal crops. We support:

1. Mandatory and expanded funding for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program;
2. Each county to extend specialty crop grants to producers and not supplant state appropriations;
3. Increasing the allowable THC content of industrial hemp to 3 percent in order to promote and enhance the important hemp industry;
4. Adopting policies and regulations that ensure the market for cannabis is accessible to family farms and do not create unfair advantages to large companies and monopolies. We oppose “pay to play” systems;
5. Tailoring Federal and State hemp programs to the unique needs of Hawai‘i farmers;
6. That hemp licensee applicants shall be natural persons who are fulltime residents of the State of Hawai‘i for at least five years (5) prior to submitting an application to support a local food economy;
7. A state’s right to make their own choice on medical and recreational

- marijuana by calling on Congress and U.S. DEA to remove from the State of Hawai‘i and Federal classification system;
8. Allowing cannabis and cannabis-related businesses that are state regulated to have access to the normal banking system;
 9. An expansion to Internal Revenue Code Section 280E that would allow businesses that are compliant with state laws to claim deductions and credits associated with the production and sale of medical and industrial cannabis.
 10. Amending state hemp cultivation rules to align with new Federal law when the U.S. Congress amends Federal laws to allow exemptions for industrial hemp crops that are grown for fiber, fuel, food or other purposes. Give the Hawai‘i State Department of Agriculture the authority to amend state rules when this anticipated change occurs. These exemptions may include relief from testing and transportation requirements as hemp strains grown for purposes other than cannabinoid production have zero or significantly low levels of THC that do not exceed the Federal and State definitions of hemp. The Federal testing and handling requirements that increase costs and slow down development of the hemp industry;
 11. Restrict marketing, sales, and labeling of hemp products to only those that include naturally occurring compounds. Oppose production of synthetic compounds allowed to be marketed as hemp products;
 12. Amending federal hemp cultivation laws to allow for exemptions for hemp crops that are grown for fiber, fuel, or grain for food; and
 13. A competitive hemp industry in Hawaii, ensuring that Hawaii regulations do not exceed federal rules for cultivation and hemp products; and
 14. The findings of the Hawaii hemp industry’s August 2024 Hemp Report to the Legislature which was accepted by the Hawaii State Department of Agriculture and Hawaii Hemp Task Force, including,
 - a. Encouraging investment in all hemp sectors (building, food, fuel, fiber) and dispel Hawaii’s reputation as being anti-hemp, support regulatory certainty and eliminate regulatory flux by avoiding disruptive legislation and rules.
 - b. Supporting the state adopt the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) hemp feed definition for laying hens.
 - c. Redefining hemp biomass to include both stalks and foliage material. Foliage material should be defined as the aggregate leaves, stems, and

residual floral material. Foliage material should never be regulated, or excluded, from any framework used to define industrial hemp or industrial-use hemp. Aligning this definition with the Federal definition of hemp will further a variety of industrial uses including the fuel industry.

- d. Developing and approving Performance Based Sampling Protocols with hemp farmers to eliminate or decrease costs associated with required laboratory testing of hemp crops for uses such as microgreens and fiber crops.
- e. Establishing an independent hemp program under the Hawaii State Department of Health to cover all aspects of hemp including cannabinoids.
- f. Excluding hemp from all recreational or medical cannabis legislation to ensure hemp farmers do not lose business services such as banking, insurance, and marketing platforms; and
- g. Supporting all insurance companies doing business in the state of Hawaii to offer hemp farmers and hemp processors the same coverage options for the same prices as other crops.

14. Labeling

We assert that each individual has the right to a transparent and ethical framework for making decisions about food. We support:

1. Reauthorization and full implementation of mandatory country-of origin labeling (COOL) for agricultural, aquaculture and wild-caught seafood products. Mandatory COOL is a valuable marketing tool for producers, and it allows consumers to know where the meat products they consume are born, raised, slaughtered, and processed. U.S. producers and consumers have the right to distinguish products from those of other countries and U.S. products should not be categorized as a North American product. We recommend that USDA and Congress reinstate mandatory COOL;
2. Thorough and accurate food labels are an important tool that helps consumers make informed decisions and allows producers to differentiate their products. We support conspicuous, mandatory, uniform, and federal

labeling for food products throughout the processing chain to include all ingredients, additives, and processes such as:

- a. Artificial growth hormones;
- b. Products derived from cloned animals;
- c. The identity of the parent company;
- d. Carbon monoxide injected in meat and seafood or packaging for appearance or shelf-life purposes;
- e. Point of origin and producer-determined standards for geographic indicators, including percentage coming from that origin;
- f. Date of kill, for meat and seafood;
- g. Whether the meat was frozen;
- h. The date/dates the meat was subsequently refrozen;
- i. Irradiated products, and we call for further research on its long-term effects on human health;
- j. Maintaining and protecting the integrity of organic labeling;
- k. Labeling standards for the sale of organic products, while not limiting opportunities to market other natural or sustainably produced food products;
- l. A designation for soil-less systems so as to maintain the integrity of the USDA Organic label;
- m. Requiring labeling of milk from cows injected with recombinant bovine somatotropin (rBST), a hormone to stimulate milk production. In the absence of federal labeling requirements, we encourage farmer-certified rBST-free labeled products;
- n. Labeling the use of casein, MPC/UF dairy blends, and food preps in food production;
- o. Requiring the labeling of artificial sweeteners;
- p. Requiring any laboratory or artificially produced products to be labeled as such; and
- q. Adding to the Food Standards and Labeling Policy Book the following definitions and labeling requirements for meat and beef:
 - i. “Meat” is a product derived from the tissue or flesh of animals that have been harvested in the traditional manner;
 - ii. “Beef” is a product derived from the tissue of cattle born, raised, and harvested in the traditional manner.

3. All government efforts of enhancing the attractiveness and authenticity of Hawaii grown products through labeling;
4. Specifying Hawai‘i grown ingredients on the nutritional label for all Hawai‘i origin, quality, and certification programs;
5. Certified organic labeling and enforcement of labeling laws to ensure the integrity of organic foods in Hawai‘i; and
6. The goal that the labeling and sale of Hawai‘i Origin agricultural products should require 100% Hawai‘i-grown product in the packages-- as is the case in several other states where origin products are grown.
 - a. Truth in labeling to clarify the origin of Camellia sinensis tea cultivated, processed, and packaged in Hawai‘i;
 - b. With respect to the labeling of Hawaii coffee “blends”, we support the interim step of requiring that a minimum of 51% Hawaii grown coffee labeled by regional geographic origin and that the origin of all other coffees in the blend be listed on the package; and
 - c. Truth and transparency in labeling to clarify the percentage of Hawai‘i grown hemp in hemp products sold in Hawai‘i if the product is being portrayed or marketed as Hawai‘i origin product.

We oppose:

1. Labeling poultry chilled below 26 degrees Fahrenheit as fresh;
2. USDA regulation that allows the addition of up to eight percent water weight to poultry products without mandating that these products are so labeled;
3. Labeling alternative protein sources as meat;
4. Cellular technology being called agriculture;
5. The use of the words milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, or other words used to describe dairy products in labels on imitation or substitute dairy products without conspicuous labeling as non-dairy ;
6. The use of the word milk to designate any product not derived from mammals without conspicuous labeling as non-dairy; and
7. Labeling meat products produced from animals raised outside the United States as “Product of U.S.A.” or equivalent.

15. Food Safety Certification for Smallholders and Family Farmers

We support:

1. Consumer and regulator education on the benefits of healthy soils in relation to our physical health, particularly as related to the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA);
2. FDA ensuring Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) rules are science based, have size-appropriate regulatory flexibility, and do not conflict with the National Organic Program;
3. A continued evaluation of the regulations for the FSMA to rationally address the practice of organic, natural and diversified farm operations vital to the local food movement, to scale requirements and fees with an understanding of the differences between corporate and family agriculture, and remove from the regulations the needless elements that serve the purposes of corporate agriculture at the expense of family farms, sovereign nations, growers of local foods, and consumers; and request that Congress provide appropriate funding to support the implementation of FSMA;
4. We support the development of an appropriate food safety registration system, county and state, for family farmers, smallholder farmers, including aquaculture, aquaponics, and other animal husbandry practices;
5. We support an alternative to the current food safety certification system with a new food safety registration system to eliminate third party certifications and the need for inspections. Appropriate food safety certification systems should require a farmer to identify farm location and contact through the label, maintain a liability insurance policy for its products, and permit health officials to inspect the farm in the event of food borne illness. In exchange for the health officials' access to the farm to trace the source and cause of the food borne illness, the farmer will be granted a reasonable dollar limit to its liability;
6. We support an affordable, efficient, and equitable food safety registration system that is socially equitable, environmentally sound and economical efficient;
7. We support a cost-sharing program through the department of agriculture for the benefit of small farmer compliance with food safety laws.
8. We support the development and implementation of mobile slaughter units for each island, and appropriate recycling of all waste including Large Animal Mortality Composting (LAMC); and

9. We recognize that the traditional staple Hawaiian crop of kalo, because of its inherent biological composition, and its function in watershed nutrient recycling and sediment trapping, its function in providing excellent habitat for endangered Hawaiian water birds, and that it must be cooked before eaten, and be exempt from food safety certification laws.

16. Agritourism

Agritourism is a critical revenue stream for many family farms and we encourage expanding responsible agritourism development. According to Merriam- Webster, the definition of agritourism is the practice of touring agricultural areas to see farms and often to participate in farm activities.

We support:

1. Cultivating a strategic partnership with Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA), pinpointing areas where family farming and tourism can mutually support each other;
2. Funding to promote agritourism and work-trade programs on family farms instead of the conventional tourism industry;
3. As part of the definition of “agriculture”, farm stays and similar agritourism activities;
4. Encouraging USDA, State and County governments to recognize the value of agritourism and on-farm education programs as a value-added product development;
5. Encouraging USDA, State and County governments to develop and implement a program to educate producers about opportunities and responsibilities associated with agritourism operations;
6. Educating the tourism industry about the many Hawai'i agritourism opportunities available, including the HTA, each island's visitor bureau and hotel concierges; and
7. Allowing agritourist to legally sample food and herbal products grown on participating farms.

17. Pesticides

HFUU supports Hawai'i Article 11 Section 7, as well as the creation, implementation and enforcement of safety standards and buffer zones around all water resources and aquatic eco systems, schools, hospitals, roadways, and

residential areas to protect people and wildlife from exposure to harmful pesticides. We support:

1. Encouraging conventional farmers to implement farming methods that enhance soil health, increase water retention and availability, produce healthy, nutritious and uncontaminated crops, and are more sustainable. Through these practices, many farmers have been able to reduce or eliminate pesticide use;
2. Integrated Pest Management;
3. Rigorous pesticide safety policies at all levels of government that protect human health, downwind farms and communities and the environment;
4. Discontinued use of restricted-use and neonicotinoids pesticides;
5. Risk Benefit Studies of pesticides that strongly weigh toward human, animal and environmental safety;
6. Adequate local monitoring and enforcement of pesticide drift laws;
7. Environmental pesticide residue monitoring of food, soil, air, water, and pollinator health;
8. Creating and implementing an independent pesticide review process to allow reevaluation of the safety of pesticides and combinations of pesticides, such as restricted use pesticides and Glyphosate; and
9. Increased funding and resources to implement these policies; and
10. Establishing mandatory safe buffers around well-heads and water resources to prevent the application of restricted-use pesticides and synthetic chemicals

18. HFUU and Our Organization

1. Communication. We support:
 - a. Inter-Island and Intra-Island communication that is paramount to the functioning of this organization. We support regular communication and other healthy interaction between Chapters, as well as between the State organization and the individual Chapters;
 - b. HFUU's Newsletters, Notices and Legislative Updates and continued funding to be allocated to these functions. Chapters should regularly report their activities, plans and meetings for inclusion in the HFUU

- newsletter or their own Chapter newsletters published through our communication channels; and
- c. Encouraging Chapter Presidents to submit their regional updates, concerns or success stories with images or video on the HFUU Website blog page via the HFUU Communication publisher.
2. Strategic Planning. We support:
 - a. HFUU leadership physically meeting twice a year. One of these meetings should be held in the Spring for two or three days to permit enough time for true strategic planning. The other meeting should be during or following the Annual Fall Convention focused on prioritizing and implementation of policies adopted at the Annual Conventions. The HFUU State Division shall pay for the Spring and Fall meeting sites and a professional facilitator if needed. Allocation of other costs such as for food and lodging shall be determined on a case-by-case basis; and
 - b. Chapters shall raise and use their funds for travel to enable their President to attend the Spring and Fall meetings.
 3. Membership. HFUU members feel that numbers matter and drive the desire to be a member of HFUU. We support:
 - a. The State Division and its Chapters shall each make membership recruitment a strategic priority by diligently pursuing programs and benefits of value to their members;
 - b. Social media and informational programs to recruit and retain members; and
 - c. The Communications Division shall assist and advise the State Division and its Chapters in the development of such programs.
 4. Fundraising: Fundraising for the chapters or the state shall be under the supervision of the State Treasurer and the State Executive Committee. The HFUU State Chapter has one EIN and is ultimately responsible for accurate and timely revenue reporting and accounting for the State and all the Chapters. Thus, we support:
 - a. A state level Finance Committee with the HFUU Treasurer as its Chair and one representative from each Chapter-- preferably the Chapter Treasurer.

- b. The Finance Committee shall recommend the proper manner of fundraising, whether it be for state or local purposes.
 - c. Local resolution of any disputes regarding the raising of funds. If local Chapters cannot agree on any fundraising issue, the entire Committee will vote as a whole, with a majority vote required to resolve the issue.
 - d. Revenues raised being deposited into the HFUU State Bank account, or the Hawai‘i Farmers Union Foundation, a 501(c)(3), bank account.
 - e. Funds raised by a specific Chapter for a specific purpose shall honor the wishes of the donor as long as the purpose is in accordance with our mission and preamble.
 - f. Chapter Treasurers maintaining accurate and timely financial records.
 - g. Grant proposals being communicated to and approved by the State Executive Committee prior to submission to the grantor.
 - h. Any online funding campaign being approved by the State Executive Committee before initiating and any fundraising campaign launched by the state organization be approved by the State Board of Directors.
5. HFUU Committees. We support:
- a. The formation of Specialty Crop Committee(s) within the HFUU organization to promote the cultivation, processing, marketing and distribution of Specialty Crops including Hemp, Camilla sinensis Tea, Chocolate, Breadfruit, Jackfruit, ‘Awa, Coffee, Moringa and other Specialty Crops for Hawai‘i’s family farmers; and
 - b. The formation of non-Specialty Crop Committee(s) within the HFUU organization to support family based and regenerative dairy and other non-Specialty Crops for Hawai‘i’s family farmers.
6. HFUU Chapters. We support:
- a. Resource sharing at the HFUU Chapter level including tools, materials and expertise; and
 - b. Farm-visits with opportunities for hands-on experience at the HFUU Chapter level.

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