



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Written Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Agriculture  
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By

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And

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And

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### HB 573 – RELATING TO HAWAII GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Riviere, and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 573, which Establishes the Hawai'i good agricultural practices program to develop and support good agricultural practices for Hawai'i farms growing agricultural food products.

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) are essential to protect the health and safety of consumers, and the economic livelihood of Hawai'i's farmers. Although the Tester amendment to the Food Safety and Modernization Act (FSMA) may continue to shelter small farmers from mandatory adoption of FSMA requirements for several years, it is very unlikely that this will be acceptable to processors, retailers, and the companies that provide their insurance. A case of food-borne illness resulting from farmers' market purchases could well have a devastating impact on our local farming industry. Thus, it is essential that the state provide training and assistance to our 7,000 farmers to train and assist them in GAP compliance in order to minimize the risk of such public health issues, and prepare future compliance with FSMA, and food safety certifications that are already required by the larger food retailers.

Cooperative Extension Service faculty within the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR), University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, have partnered very successfully with the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health to provide GAP education and training. HB 573 provides a vehicle to insure that these essential efforts continue by formally establishing a Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) program within the Department of Agriculture.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 573.