



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

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Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
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SB 519 – RELATING TO FOOD SAFETY

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Ruderman and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 519. Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Certification is important, in fact crucial, for assuring both food safety and farm success. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM), College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) strongly supports increasing the GAP training that is already offered by Cooperative Extension. By providing safe and high-quality food to the public, Hawai'i agriculture will increase public confidence in Hawai'i products and serve as a model to other associated and supporting businesses resulting in a consistent contribution to the economy in Hawai'i.

The current activities by CTAHR in this area for GAP training and support, in preparation for certification and that apply to this bill include:

- The Website: **CTAHR Farm Food Safety: Good Agricultural Practices (Science-based education for Hawai'i growers & handlers)** (<http://manoa.hawaii.edu/ctahr/farmfoodsafety/>) This website is a resource of training and includes:
 - Tools and Resources (http://manoa.hawaii.edu/ctahr/farmfoodsafety/tools_and_resources/) such as Publications and videos, as well as helpful links
 - Step-by-step process guidelines
 - Dealing with the audit process
 - Outreach materials
- The website: **Consumer Food Safety** (<https://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/foodsafety-cs/>)

- 10 extension agents involved in food safety education.
- A Produce Safety Rule Train-the-Trainer held on O‘ahu, expanded the training capacity to 38 people.
- 125 consultations and trainings by extension agents that were provided to the Hawai‘i Department of Education teachers, faculty, growers, health educators, event coordinators, and Master Gardeners working with farms, school and community gardens, and animal exhibits.
- The CTAHR Farm Food Safety Facebook page and Instagram social media presence that was launched in August 2016.

Even with this level of activity CTAHR has not been able to keep up with the demand, and CTAHR is involved only in education and technical support, which is only part of the certification process. Being able to offer more education leading toward certification is dependent on funding to support the training. This bill addresses that need and additional needs that move the farmer toward certification. UHM/CTAHR is ready to collaborate with the Hawai‘i Department of Agriculture and other agencies to support the education process related to GAP certification.

One recommendation is that the goal of this bill should include the development of a one-stop website for all users related to food safety issues, making the information easily accessible to all users.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testify in strong support of SB 519.