



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committees on Tourism, Culture, & International Affairs  
and  
Committee on Agriculture  
February 4, 2009 at 9:00 a.m.  
by  
Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor  
and  
Andrew G. Hashimoto, Dean and Director  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### HB 1471 – RELATING TO FARMS

Chairs Manahan and Tsuji, Vice Chairs Tokioka and Wooley, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Andrew Hashimoto, and I serve as Dean and Director of the UH Mānoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR).

The purpose of HB 1471 is to establish a pilot food certification pilot program for small farms to encourage them to form agricultural cooperatives, to coordinate purchasing agreements with hotels and restaurants and others in the visitor and hospitality industries, and to develop a “safe” food certification program for produce grown in Hawaii. The bill appropriates \$160,000 or so of tourism special funds in Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011 to be deposited into a food certification pilot program managed by the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

We support the intent of this bill, as it supports local agriculture and farmers, and promotes safe, fresh, high-quality, locally-grown produce. Safety of the food we consume and health of our citizens and visitors is without saying, of utmost importance not only for our personal well-being, but to our State's economy and image as a tropical, safe destination in which to live and visit.

The bill is in keeping with the State's initiative to increase Hawai'i's food self-sufficiency from the current reality of importing 85% of all food we consume, provides funding for food safety education and awareness, and directly relates to CTAHR's vision to actively help Hawaii diversify its economy, ensure a sustainable environment, and strengthen its communities. CTAHR will assist in this effort by continuing to support the on-farm safety coaching program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.