



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

S.C.R.#208/S.R.#115

URGING THE LEGISLATURE AND ADMINISTRATION TO SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE HAWAII'S AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY'S EFFORTS TOWARD SUCCESSFUL CO-EXISTENCE AMONG ITS SECTORS AND TO RECOGNIZE THE ECONOMIC, HUMAN, AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF SUCH CO-EXISTENCE IN A DIVERSIFIED AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY.

Testimony Presented Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AND AGRICULTURE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

April 1, 2005

By

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Dean, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
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Testimony for
Senate Concurrent Resolution 208/Senate Resolution 115

URGING THE LEGISLATURE AND ADMINISTRATION TO SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE HAWAI‘I’S AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY’S EFFORTS TOWARD SUCCESSFUL CO-EXISTENCE AMONG ITS SECTORS AND TO RECOGNIZE THE ECONOMIC, HUMAN, AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF SUCH CO-EXISTENCE IN A DIVERSIFIED AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY.

Presented before the
Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Agriculture
Senate Committee on Business and Economic Development

The Twenty-third Legislature
State of Hawai‘i
April 1, 2005

by

Dr. Andrew G. Hashimoto, Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
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I am pleased to contribute the expertise of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) to the decision-making process on Senate Concurrent Resolution 208 and Senate Resolution 115, which urge the legislature and administration to support and encourage the agricultural community to seek coexistence practices for the benefit of the industry, the community, and the environment.

Agricultural practices have evolved through time to improve farm productivity, meet market demands, and address environmental concerns. The University of Hawai‘i supports all forms of agriculture and does not believe in giving preference to one practice over another. By fostering a diverse set of agricultural approaches we can better meet the needs of society and the environment.

Agriculture’s resources must be used wisely to identify and mitigate real risks. Repeatedly debating small or non-existent risks deflects from efforts to address more serious needs. As an example, CTAHR, HDOA, and USDA have worked to identify mechanisms to segregate non-GM from GM papaya, resulting in practices that support a thriving market to Japan, which has a zero tolerance policy for GM papaya. If this time had been spent solely on debate, that Japanese market would not exist today. We strongly believe that there can be case-by-case development of procedures for various other crops and practices just as has occurred for papaya.

The University of Hawai‘i supports coexistence of all forms of agriculture. We try to find approaches that best meet farmers’ needs, whether through conventional cultivation, integrated pest management, organic production, or genetic engineering.

We strongly believe that conventional agriculture, organic farming, and biotechnology can coexist. Transgenic papaya is a fine example of this. Thus, we strongly urge this body to pass the Resolutions as written.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.