



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

House Committee on Agriculture
and
House Committee on Economic Development and Business
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by
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SB 3023 SD2 – MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND MARKETING OF THE ULU BREADFRUIT

Chairs Wooley and Tsuji, Vice Chairs Onishi and Ward, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture and House Committee on Economic Development and Business, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 3023 SD2, which makes an appropriation to the Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) for research, development, and marketing of 'ulu (the Hawaiian breadfruit)

Prior to European contact in the 1700s, and into the early 1880s, 'ulu groves were a common feature of the landscape and Hawaiian agriculture. The enormous 'ulu plantations of west Hawai'i Island fascinated early European visitors. However, by the late 1800s, these groves had all but vanished due to depopulation and changing land use patterns. Clearly, 'ulu is readily cultivated in Hawai'i, but is essentially nonexistent today as a commercial crop or food staple.

The Breadfruit Institute of the National Botanical Garden has credited the 2004 CTAHR publication "Hawaiian Breadfruit – Ethnobotany, Nutrition, and Human Ecology" with providing a blueprint for modern efforts to revitalize breadfruit in Hawai'i. CTAHR faculty strongly believe in the potential for 'ulu to again become a common fixture of our agricultural landscape, a valuable commercial crop and an important part of food security and self-sufficiency in Hawai'i.

We support the efforts of ADC to achieve these goals as described in SB 3023 SD2, and believe that this bill will encourage interagency partnerships to promote the value of 'ulu to Hawai'i residents, address cultivation and processing difficulties, develop new and value added products such as the gluten-free 'ulu flour cited in SB 3023 SD2, and greatly increase the profile of 'ulu as an important local food and a potential export of high value.

Thank you again for this opportunity to express our support for SB 3023 SD2, and to encourage interagency efforts through ADC to move 'ulu forward as a valued new (old) crop in Hawai'i.