Sustainable Agriculture Skill Panel Forum  
June 7, 2012  
Strengthening Diversified Agriculture

Chair: Leslie Mullens  
Facilitator: William Jacincto  
Recorders: Caroleen Tabata & Stan Fichtman

Discussion Outline:
I. Introductions: Why are we here?
II. Setting the Context Discussion:
   a. What is the current state of communication between educational entities and the agriculture industry on strengthening diversified agriculture?
   b. What is the current state of labor and labor shortages affecting strengthening diversified agriculture?
III. Preferred Vision in 10-20 Years: Best Case Scenario
IV. Develop Priorities
   a. What are the opportunities or supporting forces that will move us closer to our best case scenario/vision?
   b. What are the barriers or restraints that hold us back from moving closer to our best case scenario/vision?
V. Outline Actions for Priorities (time permitting)

I. Introductions: Why are we here?
   • Support diversified agriculture (mentioned by 5 attendees)
   • Listen and learn (mentioned by 5 attendees)
   • See how the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources can grow the agriculture industry (mentioned by 3 attendees)
   • Supporting diversified agriculture is the best opportunity
   • Help everyone make money
   • Gather groups to make an impact to sell agricultural goods
   • Future of Hawaii’s keiki
   • Keep agriculture going for the next generation
   • Create a venison industry in Hawaii
   • Learn and collaborate
   • Resolve food issues and create sustainability
   • Reconnecting students with the ‘aina
   • Support agriculture as part of a mission
   • Corrections Office has a mission to partner for offenders released from the judicial system and in need of employment
   • Feel like diversified agriculture has a great future in Hawaii
• Growth of aquaponics
• Build an Agriculture Industry that is resilient
• Share what public schools do for agriculture
• Information gathering for Moloka‘i farmers
• Needs assessment needs to be done for Moloka‘i
• Bring group’s attention to agricultural problems – now and future
• Potential for resources for wind and solar projects; Hawaii has potential
• Food security – make issues related to that into laws
• Share what is done in high schools and public schools
• Ensure everyone has a voice in agriculture
• Find out why $3.5 billion is leaving our state and what are we going to do about it
• Take information back to share with other farmers
• Find out what makes farming successful
• Local resource sustain local economy
• Learn issues and challenges
• Support agriculture efforts and meet needs
• Understand agriculture labor needs to be proactive
• Be an economical resource
• How skills and knowledge be developed for agriculture
• Gain understanding about sustainability
• Reconnect with members of the community
• How all needs tie together to help develop the industry

II. Setting the Context Discussion

What is the current state of communication between educational entities and the agriculture industry on strengthening diversified agriculture?

• Communication is good at the college level
• DLIR’s agricultural regulations have changed for hiring of young people into agriculture
• Conversation with education does not include workforce issues
• Fix and make easier to address challenge to get into agriculture
• Message needs to be developed
• Lack of opportunities for high schoolers
• Larger institutions (government, universities) tend to work with larger companies, not smaller family farms
• Information overload or no information; there’s no happy medium for farmers
• Need a liaison or other entity to match parties
• On Moloka‘i, we’ve got land and water, but no farms. No one wants to go into farming. A large gap exists between the industry and education.
• There is a gap between government, farmers and schools to bring curriculum focused on agriculture
• On Moloka‘i, a Directory of Agriculture Resources is lacking
• We have great communication today
• On Maui, there is no central area for resources and information
• Go to all schools – private and home school – not just the public schools
• On Moloka‘i, what can Workforce Development provide to the schools? There is a lack of information flowing from government to schools
• There are resource shortages within UH; we get quite a bit of feedback on that

**What is the current state of labor and labor shortages affecting strengthening diversified agriculture?**

• A lot of interest in interning and learning about organic farming
• Housing in Maui County is very cumbersome to link employers, employees and housing
• Agriculture is hard work. It is hard to encourage individuals to create a farm and become agricultural employers.
• Being able to find opportunities in agriculture is currently lacking
• Next generation want to work labs and not on the fields; they are clean jobs
• There is no “one place” that everybody can go to
• No students looking for jobs in over 10 years. I’m not sure of Department of Labor rules. There is a shortage in field labor.
• It’s difficult for farmers to house workers because of state and county laws
• Employment regulations
• On Moloka‘i, larger farmers pay more in wages and therefore staff leave small farms
• On Moloka‘i, it’s a subsistence economy. How is the government addressing that?
• Way to attract labor has change, the way to recruit now must change
• “WWOOFer Model”
• No positive feedback to growing our own food; no drive to learn all skill sets necessary to be a farmer
• Passion for farming currently lacking in youth
• The issue is that it is not a job shortage, it is a labor shortage
• Youth needs to better know agriculture and what the agriculture industry is
• Labor force that is displaced can and should be tapped for expertise
• Broaden subsistence farming; bring it under the umbrella for labor support
• Need to motivate students
• Missing vocational training in schools
• Need to identify what makes agriculture attractive for students; lots of students are interested, but we need funding
• In schools, students are not being exposed to various agriculture skills
III. Preferred Vision in 10-20 Years: Best Case Scenario

10-20 years from now, from a workforce development perspective, what is the best case scenario for assuring strengthening diversified agriculture?

- First, we have a hydrogen-based economy. Sugar is replaced. Current administration is the instigator of this change. More happy people and cooperation among farmers.
- We have enough water for everyone
- Price of produce increases on Maui
- Web-based database that is used to shape best practices so that 90% of our food is locally grown
- Thriving communities across the island sharing resources.
- New crops
- Having adequate shelter for farm workers
- More agriculture parks – large landowners
- Homes with backyard gardens
- Dairies
- Agriculture is integrated into other educational programs, i.e., science, engineering, math, science
- Young people inspired at school system
- Concept of farming is broader – pre K – 12 Woven into curriculum – fully integrated
- On Moloka’i:
  - Fishermen fishing
  - Able to drink valley water
  - Each home has a garden
  - Families growing sweet potato, etc.
- Communities working as a co-operative
- Having Kula farmers grow cold weather crops
- Transition homes for ex-offenders in communities and there are turned into places of healing
- Enlightened government that would allow farmers to farm by modifying regulations
- On Maui, a model of sustainable agriculture
- Government is a supportive partner
- People are not afraid to take risks and come up with solutions
- On Moloka’i, shared resources and partnerships
- Watershed has forest garden below and clean water
- Diverse skills for workforce; co-op society; share skills
- Make community-grown food accessible; farmers paid enough; and there is appreciation for agriculture
- We need an educated workforce that has many skills because agriculture is diverse
- Continuous training outside workplace is necessary to continuously improve
IV. Develop Priorities

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<tr>
<th>What are the opportunities or supporting forces that will move us closer to our best case scenario/vision?</th>
<th>What are the barriers or restraints that hold us back from moving closer to our best case scenario/vision?</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Priority 1: K-12, College: Integrated Agriculture curriculum (public/private/home) (27 votes)</strong></td>
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<td>• Design and oversee community Agriculture Park for part-timers</td>
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<td>• Maui Land &amp; Pineapple program from big landowners to individuals</td>
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<td>• Enthusiasm and drive by youth to create an agriculture farm to learn and be a successful farmer; a business incubator for agriculture</td>
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<td>• Web-based core curriculum that students can access; create online on demand</td>
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<td><strong>Priority 2A: Increased government support, i.e., inspectors, advertising, funding, permitting, regulations, statistics (22 votes)</strong></td>
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<td>• More people in brokerages; variety of growers</td>
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<td>• Support smaller farmers with advertising</td>
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<td>• Length of time for permitting</td>
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<td>• Soft skills training needed</td>
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<td>• Can’t separate the land from workforce development</td>
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<td>• Not enough food on Maui (part of Governor’s message two years ago); food production is not a priority</td>
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<td>• Government policy that negatively impacts agriculture</td>
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<td>• Solutions for state must encompass all types of agriculture and must be island-specific</td>
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<td><strong>Priority 2B: Land repurpose partnerships; open new agriculture parks as training spaces, i.e., incubators (22 votes)</strong></td>
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<td>• Maui County follows lead of Hawaii County for food self-sufficiency</td>
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<td>• Examine community plans</td>
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<td>• Agriculture parks based on elevations; agriculture models for different micro-climates</td>
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<td>Priority 4: Marketing &amp; PR (for recruitment, general awareness, education) regarding agriculture industry (12 votes)</td>
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<td>• Moloka‘i – Needs assessment for agricultural workforce in 24 months</td>
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<th>Priority 5: Air quality and contamination solutions (11 votes)</th>
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<td>• Encourage and support unconventional projects</td>
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<th>Priority 6: Business Support Services (10 votes)</th>
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<td>• Assessing needs, styles, and integrate agriculture education into K-12; set a goal and create a vision that is motivating!!!</td>
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<td>• Focus with teachers and industry people to do presentations that students listen to and share with friends</td>
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<td>• Misinformation out there on the agriculture industry; it deters the younger generation from getting into farming</td>
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<td>• Business knowledge for farmers</td>
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<th>Priority 7: Central Directory of Agriculture – supportive resources (concierge) (9 votes)</th>
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<td>• Industry recognized certifications</td>
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<th>Priority 8: Existing infrastructure use plan, i.e., reservoirs, ditches, etc.) (7 votes)</th>
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<td>• Extension – marketing issues, commerce and distribution, farm liabilities</td>
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<td>• Leverage current infrastructure</td>
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<th>Priority 9: Segmented training plan, including mentorship/apprenticeship) (6 votes)</th>
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<td>• Creation of a safety net for farmers</td>
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<td>• Certified kitchens</td>
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Priority 10: Research and Adopt/Adapt “Best Practice” Models
(4 votes)

- Craft marketing message to attract new farmers into the industry
- Formation of marketing and other co-ops
- Travel scholarships for Molokaʻi students to observe and learn about agriculture
- Willing workers on organic farms
- Increase training and pool together resources; constantly update
- Mentorship and apprenticeship programs

V. Outline Actions for Priorities

Priority 1: K-12 COLLEGE INTEGRATED AGRICULTURE CURRICULUM (PUBLIC, PRIVATE, HOME)

- Develop a farm reality show to solicit interest
- Determine speaker/expert pool as a resource (list of educators, etc.)
- Align curriculum to standards – look for flexibility with integration
- Create a Junior Plant Scientist Project
- Put together a curriculum team of experts (involve teachers)
- Look for external grants
- Look for partners to work together for grant opportunities
- Get buy in for DOE, DOA and DOH
- Look for models from other states – could also be models outside of agriculture
- Future Farmers of America – incorporate at all schools
- Survey and find local talent – create list
- Outline a plan of action
- Identify the needs of the farmer
- Identify courses students need for a career in Agriculture.
- Educate counselors on the career of agriculture (they can assist with the link to industry)
- Always involve parents in engaging students with agriculture
- Create more competitive opportunities for students, i.e., get corporate sponsors to donate money for competitive research projects for students
- A “School Garden Coordinator” at every school
- Make sure there is true integration from K-12 and secondary education; determine the incentives
- Create opportunities to talk story with all levels of educators
The pilot plan needs to be evaluated each year
Identify the integration examples that already exist and share with all – work on creating a mindset for people to have
True networking
Identify Subject Matter Experts and develop a survey
Look for external support – funds, resources, in-kind and time
Develop a plan to engage the DOE, CTAHR, etc.
Develop a team of stakeholders

Priority 2A: INCREASED GOVERNMENT SUPPORT (INSPECTORS, ADVERTISING, FUNDING, PERMITTING, REGULATIONS, STATISTICS)

Educate the public on what government resources are out there
  - Talk story sessions on each island community and with community associations
  - Introduce needs assessment survey on-line for 2 weeks
Report back out on needs assessment survey
DOA Inspector on every Island
Needs assessment baseline self-sufficiency study for Maui
Reinstate transparent data on agriculture production statewide
Government should “Buy Local” for DOE lunches and meals
  - Revised procurement laws to favor local producers by island
Define grant opportunities on each island

Priority 2B: LAND REPURPOSE PARTNERSHIPS TO OPEN NEW AGRICULTURE PARCELS AS NEW TRAINING SPACES (INCUBATORS)

Hilt-Like farm trust
Allow cluster housing for the farmers on agriculture properties