



**OHA-4  
HB205/SB434**

**Traditional Hawaiian Farming Techniques & Small Farms**

**This bill updates the State Planning Act's agricultural objectives to support traditional Hawaiian agricultural techniques and crops, and small farms.**

The State Planning Act currently establishes several objectives for Hawai'i's economy with respect to agriculture, including:

- the continued viability of our sugar and pineapple industries;
- the growth and development of diversified agriculture; and
- the maintenance of agriculture as a dynamic and essential component of the state's strategic, economic, and social well-being.

OHA-4 would level the playing field for traditional agricultural methods and small farms by adding them as additional agricultural objectives of the state. This would expressly allow the state agencies to consider these important components of food security and self-sufficiency in supporting programs, leasing lands, and taking other relevant actions.

**WHAT IS TRADITIONAL HAWAIIAN FARMING & WHY SHOULD WE SUPPORT IT?**

- Traditional Hawaiian agricultural technologies are integrated, time-tested agricultural approaches such as loko i'a (fishponds), māla (cultivated gardens), and lo'i (irrigated patches) that historically sustained significant populations with complete self-sufficiency.
- Traditional Hawaiian agricultural technologies and associated techniques of farming have minimal impact on our environment while allowing our agricultural resources to remain viable for generations. These techniques are particularly suitable for our climate and ensure maximum beneficial use of our land and water.
- Traditional Hawaiian farming technologies and techniques may help meet Hawaii's growing demand for food in a manner that is socially equitable, economically stable and ecologically sustainable over the long term.
- Traditional farming communities act as critically important repositories for traditional knowledge and help to perpetuate Native Hawaiian culture and lifestyles.
- The United Nations Commission on Trade and Development has reported that traditional subsistence agriculture may be critical to regional food self-sufficiency, crop diversity and the ability to feed one's family and community, particularly given climate change impacts.
- The Taro Security and Purity Task Force has similarly found that taro and traditional farming communities can support our islands' disaster preparedness and food security.

**WHY SHOULD WE SUPPORT SMALL FARMING BUSINESSES?**

- Small farms contribute significantly to our local economy, and provide a range of local agricultural products to help meet our local food needs and enhance our visitors' culinary experiences.



- On an individual level, small farming businesses may not have the same large outputs as industrial farming operations, but collectively may provide a diverse array of fresh, locally-produced agricultural products that are not subject to changing shipping costs and fees or fluctuating national and global markets.
- A diversified agricultural portfolio with both small and large farming operations can provide Hawai'i's local food production with the greatest protection against unforeseen circumstances, such as pest introductions, disease or climate-change related impacts.