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COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

March 20, 2025

Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
Richelle K. Kawasaki, Esq.

Ms. Rogerene Arce, Director
Department of Agriculture
County of Maui
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Dear Ms. Arce:

SUBJECT: **FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET** (BFED-1) (AG-01)

May I please request you submit your response to the following questions by **March 31, 2025**. This will enable the Committee to comprehensively review the FY 2026 Budget.

1. Please outline the major changes in your Department's budget from FY 2025 to FY 2026. If your budget will decrease, how will this impact your Department's operations and ability to serve the public?
2. How many vacant positions currently exist within your Department?
 - a. Please include the job titles for the vacancies and indicate how long the positions have been vacant.
 - b. What is the anticipated timeline for filling these vacancies?
 - c. What are the consequences, if any, for removing funding for these vacant positions from the FY 2026 Budget?
3. If your Department had expansion positions in the FY 2025 Budget, how many of those positions were filled? If they have not been filled, are they included in the FY 2026 Budget? How many months of funding are being requested?

4. If your Department is proposing expansion positions in the FY 2026 Budget, how do you plan to fill those positions?
5. How many positions were filled in FY 2025 that were not expansion positions?
6. Describe your recruitment process.
 - a. How did your Department recruit to fill vacancies and what were the most effective methods for attracting candidates?
 - b. Does your Department take an active role in recruitment or is recruitment handled primarily by the Department of Personnel Services? Please explain.
7. The following questions are related to overtime payments:
 - a. How much in overtime has been paid to date in FY 2025 and what was the reason for the overtime?
 - b. Were any of these overtime costs attributed to the number of vacant positions in your Department?
 - c. Do you anticipate that overtime costs in FY 2026 will increase or decrease and what are the reasons for your assumption?
8. The following questions are related to your Department's program and activities for FY 2026:
 - a. Identify the programs and activities conducted by your Department because of a Federal or State mandate. Indicate for each program and activity the amount of Federal or State funding your Department anticipates receiving and the amount of County funding your Department is requesting.
 - b. Identify the programs and activities conducted solely because of a Maui County Code mandate and indicate the amount your Department is requesting.
9. If your Department had Capital Improvement Projects in FY 2025:

- a. Provide the current status of each CIP, if different from the information provided in the Fiscal Year 2025 2nd Quarter CIP Report.
 - b. Provide information on how much funding has been encumbered or expended to date for each project.
- 10. If your Department has proposed CIPs for FY 2026:
 - a. Rank your proposed CIPs, by priority.
 - b. Will CIP funding included in the FY 2026 Budget be encumbered by June 30, 2026? If not, how much do you anticipate will be encumbered by that date?
- 11. If your Department manages a revolving fund:
 - a. Explain whether the revolving fund is still needed and why.
 - b. Provide the current balance.
- 12. If your Department manages grants:
 - a. For each grant line-item not designated for a specific recipient (e.g., Small Business Promotion; Youth Programs), provide a breakdown of the grants that will be funded by the line item.
 - b. Provide a breakdown of all grants that will be funded by your Department under Sub-object Code 6317, County grant subsidy.
 - c. Did your Department apply for any grant funding in FY 2025? If yes, how much grant funding was received?
- 13. Provide details on your Department's Carryover/Savings that were included in the FY 2026 Budget.
- 14. What are your top three Department priorities for FY 2026 and how does your Department's budget reflect that?

15. How much has your Department spent on Professional Services in FY 2025, and what projects and consultants were funded under this line item?
16. How much of your Department's expenditures in FY 2025 will be reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in relation to the wildfires? What amount of FY 2026 expenditures are expected to be reimbursed?
17. If your Department is receiving Federal grants, including pass-through grants:
 - a. What amount is your Department receiving for routine operations?
 - b. What amount is your Department receiving for August 2023 Maui Wildfires disaster recovery?
 - c. Explain any factors that could jeopardize your receipt of Federal grants, including Federal policy changes, compliance requirements, or expiration dates.
 - d. Explain how your Department will adjust if it does not receive the anticipated Federal grant funding.
18. If your Department received funding to repair or replace equipment, locations, and structures destroyed in the wildfires, provide the current status for each. If there are items still pending repair or replacement, provide the estimated cost and timeline for the repair or replacement.

The Department is scheduled to present on **April 7, 2025**. The schedule is subject to change and Committee staff will reach out if there are any changes to the schedule.

Please be prepared to provide a ten-minute presentation on the changes in your Department's budget from FY 2025 to FY 2026, addressing the following:

- Operations
- CIPs, if any
- Grants awarded by the Department, if any

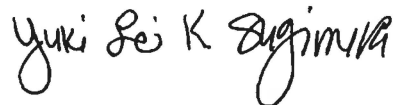
Ms. Rogerene Arce
March 20, 2025
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- Grants received by the Department, if any
- Revolving funds, if any
- Rates and fees, including any estimated increase or decrease in revenue as a result of the changes

Please transmit your response to bfd.committee@mauicounty.us by **March 31, 2025**. To ensure efficient processing, please include the Committee item number in the subject line. Please use a font size of at least 12 points for the response. This formatting allows Committee members and the community to clearly read the document once posted.

Should you have any questions, please contact me or the Committee staff (Kirsten Szabo at ext. 7662, James Krueger at ext. 7761, or Pauline Martins at ext. 8039).

Sincerely,



YUKI LEI K. SUGIMURA, Chair
Budget, Finance, and Economic
Development Committee

bfd:2026bgt:253019aag01:kes

cc: Mayor Richard T. Bissen, Jr.
Budget Director

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

ROGERENE K.M. ARCE
Director

KOA HEWAHEWA
Deputy Director



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 SOUTH HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.mauicounty.gov

April 2, 2025


Lesley Milner
Budget Director, County of Maui
200 South High Street
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Honorable Richard T. Bissen, Jr.
Mayor, County of Maui
200 South High Street
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL

 4-2-25
Mayor Date

For Transmittal to:

Yuki Lei K. Sugimura, Chair
Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee
Maui County Council
200 South High Street
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Dear Ms. Sugimura:

SUBJECT: FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET (BFED-1) (AG-01)

Thank you for your letter dated March 20, 2025. Please see our responses below:

1. Please outline the major changes in your Department's budget from FY 2025 to FY 2026. If your budget will decrease, how will this impact your Department's operations and ability to serve the public?
 - Salaries & Wages increased because of:
 - Adjustments in salaries due to step movements for:
 - Private Secretary
 - Grants Coordinator
 - two Grants Management Program Specialist III positions
 - Administrative Assistant
 - Position reallocations of Agricultural Ombudsman position created two full time Park Caretaker I's positions that were filled in FY25
 - Operations funding request have increased by a total of \$4,561,600. A large part of

the increase accounts for the transfer of four Maui Humane Society grant programs that total \$3,399,000, listed below. Also, there is an increase in grants to meet financial requests which tripled from last year

These include:

- Animal Enforcement Program at \$1,061,000
 - MHS for Animal Sheltering at \$2,033,000
 - MHS Molokai at \$140,000
 - Spay Neuter Program \$165,000
- The Equipment budget of \$8,145 is for the annual cost the xerox copier lease and is a decrease from previous fiscal year because no large agricultural equipment is needed.
- This FY there is a request for the following 3.5 EP's:
 - Secretary III
 - Provide clerical help for the Grants Division, and Administrative Assistant II, and to staff the KAP Committee, and the Animal Control Board
 - Education and Information Specialist
 - Develop a public information program for the Department that offers educational information of the Department's programs and of community relations activities, agricultural opportunities; prepares newsletters; provides content to IT for updating the Department's website; presents at community events by assisting Department leaders in sharing about the Department's programs
 - Value Chain Coordinator
 - Increase development of institutional purchasing among Maui County Food producers; connect producers to hubs, aggregators, and retail stores; provide technical assistance to Maui County food producers on food purchasing; develop knowledge products; conduct outreach, recruitment, and engagement of retailers across the county; expand collaboration in Maui County's food systems; and work closely with Food Access Coordinator to carry out monitoring and evaluation of Maui County's food networks
 - Park Project Coordinator (0.5 FTE)
 - Represents Department on all construction projects including CIP; coordinate and oversee all Department contracted work; procurement of materials, machinery; sourcing contract work for ag. parks; oversees ag. park operations while Ag. Park Maintenance Specialist/Ag. Park Manager oversees and participates in day to day operations in ag. park

2. How many vacant positions currently exist within your Department?

There are no vacant civil service positions.

- a. Please include the job titles for the vacancies and indicate how long the positions have been vacant.

Due to President Trump's Executive Order, the USDA NRCS Strategic Partnership in the Pacific Islands contract awarded in September 2024,

the 3-year Agriculture Conservation Liaison position has not been hired. We are awaiting further instructions from USDA NRCS.

- b. What is the anticipated timeline for filling these vacancies?

We are awaiting further instructions from USDA NRCS.

- c. What are the consequences, if any, for removing funding for these vacant positions from the FY 2026 Budget?

There are no consequences to the budget. The position is grant funded and USDA NRCS funding is paused.

3. If your Department had expansion positions in the FY 2025 Budget, how many of those positions were filled? If they have not been filled, are they included in the FY 2026 Budget? How many months of funding are being requested?

There was one expansion position, Agriculture Inspector, that was reallocated.

4. If your Department is proposing expansion positions in the FY 2026 Budget, how do you plan to fill those positions?

Positions will be open recruitment.

5. How many positions were filled in FY 2025 that were not expansion positions?

One Grant Management Program Specialist III was filled with an emergency hire as we continue to recruit.

6. Describe your recruitment process.

- a. How did your Department recruit to fill vacancies and what were the most effective methods for attracting candidates?

Positions were open recruitment on the governmentjobs.com website. Also, opportunities were shared by word of mouth. Being a new Department has its advantages. Several interview candidates mentioned they wanted to work for the Department simply because it was new, and some were interested in agriculture, growing food, and raising animals for food.

- b. Does your Department take an active role in recruitment or is recruitment handled primarily by the Department of Personnel Services? Please explain.

Director and Private Secretary work together to draft position descriptions and then, include Department of Personnel Services for review and auditing. Once the position description gets a preliminary okay from Department of Personnel the process is taken over by the Administrative Assistant who works closely with Department of Personnel in moving the position description through the various steps in WorkDay to get it to the recruitment stage.

- 7. The following questions are related to overtime payments:

- a. How much in overtime has been paid to date in FY 2025 and what was the reason for the overtime?

Approximately \$7,800 has been paid to the Department's Grant Coordinator after his leaving the department. He performed in that role in overtime to assist the Department with the grants program which received triple the amount of grant proposals for this fiscal year awards which extended the time to complete the reviewing, scoring of grant applications. Additionally, there was only one Grants Management Program Specialist III employed. The second Grants Management Program Specialist III was vacant since last employee accepted a new job in Oregon. This past March, that vacancy was filled with an emergency hire in February 2025. The Grants Coordinator position is now filled as of April 2, 2025.

- b. Were any of these overtime costs attributed to the number of vacant positions in your Department?

Yes, the Grant Coordinator position became vacant in January 2025 and now will be filled in April 2025.

- c. Do you anticipate that overtime costs in FY 2026 will increase or decrease and what are the reasons for your assumption?

Overtime costs are expected to decrease for FY 2026. For FY 2025, continued assistance was needed with the grants program while we filled the vacant Grant Coordinator position.

8. The following questions are related to your Department's program and activities for FY 2026:

- a. Identify the programs and activities conducted by your Department because of a Federal or State mandate. Indicate for each program and activity the amount of Federal or State funding your Department anticipates receiving and the amount of County funding your Department is requesting.

No Federal or State mandated programs.

- b. Identify the programs and activities conducted solely because of a Maui County Code mandate and indicate the amount your Department is requesting.

Listed below is how the Department complies to the mandates (*italicized*) listed in the MCC Title 22 – Department of Agriculture 22.02.020 through the programs and activities that are conducted.

A. *Develop agriculture infrastructure:*

1. *Improving access to and availability of land, water, labor, workforce housing, equipment, commercial kitchens, processing and distribution facilities, and transportation:*

- The County's Agriculture Park Program provides low lease term rates for agriculture land to farmers at the Kula Ag. Park (KAP)
- Plans are being developed for a second reservoir in the Kula Ag. Park. This will provide for additional water storage in times of drought and for fighting fires. It's projected to be constructed in January 2027 and estimated to cost between \$15 million and \$27 million dollars paid for by funding the County has already acquired.
- A new booster pump will be installed at the Kula Ag. Park and is required per an agreement between Mahi Pono and County in order to supply 1.5 MGD to KAP and 1.0 MGD to UMAP

2. *Working to increase community co-operatives, technology, and access to locally grown food for County residents, while also protecting subsistence farming*

- Food Access Coordinator provided support to Lana'i Chamber of Commerce for getting their Food Stand started
- Food Access Coordinator and Director held community meetings with the Lana'i farmers and gardeners to gauge interest in a farmers market, and to get a baseline of their knowledge growing food

B. *Creating agriculture markets and distribution networks by:*

1. *Developing and supporting programs to increase access to local products:*
 - The Lana'i Farmers Market pilot project will be launched in FY25
 2. *Working to increase marketing assistance and distribution channels on each island separately, as well as interisland:*
 - The Department's Food Access Coordinator provides contacts and resources to agriculture producers for marketing assistance
 3. *Developing institutional purchasing and distribution channels, including with the State of Hawai'i DOE*
 - The Department's Food Access Coordinator is working with HDOE Farm to School Program Coordinator
 4. *Collaborating with local community organizations and government agencies to increase access to and availability of locally grown products, locally made agricultural-related products, and monetary assistance, such as SNAP and EBT, to increase food security and overall County sustainability*
 - The Department contracted Lana'i Chapter HFUU to manage the Lana'i Farmers Market who is registered for SNAP sales
- C. *Ensure adequate funding for agriculture by;*
1. *Securing federal, state, and private funding and developing special funds and revolving funds to go directly toward agriculture.*
 - No federal funding was secured or special and revolving funds were developed by the Department but, a \$478,007.19 USDA NRCS contract from their FY25 Partnerships in the Pacific Islands Area program was awarded to the Department. The award funds an Ag. Conservation Liaison position that is non-civil service for three years. The Liaison's duties are to perpetuate good land stewardship, local food production, and culture within Maui, Molokai, and Lana'i including both terrestrial and near shore/coral reef systems as well as to promote land management solutions to help mitigate risks relating to future fires or natural disasters as well as promote the NRCS Farm Bill Programs related to climate resilience and the Inflation Reduction Act.
 2. *Managing the application and distribution process of agriculture-related grants to agriculture-related businesses in the County.*
 - The Department's Agriculture Grant Program ensures adequate funding for agriculture by managing the application and distribution process of the Department's grant subsidies
 3. *Providing grant writing assistance to agriculture-related businesses, organizations, and community projects.*
 - The Grant Management Specialists provide one on one technical assistance with clientele in the application process, as

well as, conducting a grants management preparation workshop at the end of the prior fiscal year.

D. Support agriculture research and development by:

1. Collaborating with government agencies, research institutions, community members, agricultural groups, stakeholders, and experts to gain insight and develop solutions to agriculture-related issues and obtain feedback to ensure the department continues to meet community needs.

- The CRB Working Group, formed in FY24 by the Department, met bi-monthly for a total of 10 meetings between July 2024 and March 2025. Together with partner agencies that include, UH CRB Response Team, Maui Invasive Species Committee, Molokai Invasive Species Committee, HDOA, and with County of Maui DEM EP & S, the group's main purpose is to educate, perform outreach, and determine biosecurity solutions for the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle. The accomplishments for FY25 include:

- Invasive Species Committees continued surveys and collect trapping data in Maui County on all islands, and in Kalawao County in Kalaupapa National Park
- UH CRB Response Team received reports of CRB and verified them, following up with pesticide treatments. After treatments, palm trees and near ground areas are surveyed, data is collected, and all have gotten zero detections.
- HDOA began development of an MOU Plan that will indicate approved actions each partner agency will take in each County. The MOU Plan is close to ready.
- CRB Working Group together with Maui Invasive Species Committee and UH CRB Response Team developed CRB point of sales initiative to encourage staff and consumers to check bags of soil, compost, and mulch for CRB holes and report any sightings to 643PEST or 643pest.org. Posters were placed in garden stores and other retail outlets, on Lana'i, Molokai, and Maui islands and, business card size with contact information if CRB is detected were placed at point of sales.
- County of Maui Department of Environmental Management EP & S continued the Green Waste Hauling Program funded by an HDOA Compost Grant awarded to Department of Environmental Management with proposal co-written with Department of Agriculture

- The group also worked toward the development of the CRB Response Plan
 - The Department was awarded \$479,007.19 contract from USDA NRCS's FY25 Strategic Partnerships in the Pacific Island Area program. The contract is to fund a full time Ag. Conservation Liaison position to work with key partners to develop land management solutions to help mitigate risks relating to future fires or natural disasters; do outreach and education on land stewardship, and on local food production.
 - The Department, together with Kaua'i County agriculture representative, Hawai'i agriculture representative, DLNR, and led by HDOA, made up the State Meat Task Force on Meat Processing formed in FY24 as a result of the SECTION 2. Section 145D-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes amendment. The objective of the Task Force is to reduce the wild game populations, but to utilize their protein to feed the under resourced population, including the homeless. The goal is for the Task Force to develop and implement a plan to expand the state's meat processing capacity in the state to allow the meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by non-profit food distribution services. A draft Plan was developed and the State will enter into a professional services contract with a consultant to conduct the research and develop the steps needed to reach the processing goal
2. *Assisting other County and State departments by providing new and up-to-date information that will promote sustainable growth in the agricultural sector.*
- The Department shares out to stakeholders agriculture educational opportunities conducted by other agencies who conduct agriculture research and development. Agencies include USDA and UH CTAHR.
 - The Department on behalf of the CRB Working Group organized and set up online CRB Identification and Response training on September 16, 2024 for County Public Works and County Parks employees
3. *Collecting available market and agricultural data.*
- Identify agriculture processing centers and agriculture stores that are a resource to the stakeholders to use to continue or begin a process of the agriculture production. These resources include slaughterhouses, community kitchens, aggregation centers, food hubs, agriculture retail stores, etc.
4. *Creating publicly accessible databases that will allow data to be put to use by members of the community to fill gaps in the agricultural sector.*

- Began a digital mapping of agriculture processing centers and agriculture stores that are a resource to the stakeholders. These resources include slaughterhouses, community kitchens, aggregation centers, food hubs, agriculture retail stores, etc.

E. Provide education, outreach, and advocacy by

1 Working as a community liaison and advocate for farmers and the agricultural sector.

- Department is staffed with an Agriculture Advocate who tracked and identified state and county level bills to support and oppose based on stakeholder interests then, provided testimony on the Department's stance
- Department worked with Councilmember Johnson on the draft language for a FY25 Lana'i food voucher program he is calling the Lana'i Food Security Program
- Department also worked with Councilmember Johnson on the draft language for the Local Food Purchasing Incentive Budget line item.
- The Food Access Coordinator works closely with Ag. Advocate to track bills for agricultural and food security issues, including discussing the development of food policy and bills.

2 Improving agricultural literacy by developing and supporting programs that increase farmer, consumer, market, educator, and student awareness about agriculture, regulations, and opportunities.

- Partnering with MEDB STEMWORKS program, a high school student completes an internship and works on adding to the digital agriculture and food mapping of agencies and resources accessible to the farming community. The map will be part of the baseline for a future Department dashboard that the greater public can access on the Department website.
- Through the CRB Working group, landscaping industry professionals are offered educational training on identifying Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle as well as knowing what agencies to contact to respond to sightings.
- Coordinated with GoFarm in developing an educational training series on marketing and business for Lana'i growers to prepare them for the Lana'i Farmers Market the Department's Food Access Coordinator developed.

3 Providing educational resources and training to ensure safety of farmers and their families.

- In December 2024, MDOA supported CRB Response in developing the Maui County CRB Emergency Response MOU.

- The Department's Ag Resource Directory shares information on Food Safety trainings and certifications
 - Throughout the year, the Department shares food safety training opportunities through its mailing list, including events such as GoFarm Hawai'i's March 31st Food Safety Webinar.
- 4 *Supporting cultural volunteer programs and opportunities to provide hands-on assistance to the agriculture sector*
- Throughout the year, the Department shares opportunities for producers and the public to volunteer on farms and in lo'i. In February 2025, the Food Access Coordinator connected the Hawai'i Youth Food Council with Kipuka Olowalu for the We Grow Hawai'i Youth Food Summit volunteer workday.
- 5 *Providing the public with cultural- and language-sensitive materials and programs*
- Food Access Coordinator is working towards translating the newly completed Food Security and Nutrition Plan into other languages that are farmers' first languages.

F. *Provide policy and regulation assistance by:*

- 1 *Reviewing and providing input on regulations with consequences to the agricultural system and advocate for change, incentives, or exemptions when needed.*
- Provided input on Resolution 24-171 proposing a bill to amend Title 19 - Zoning, Maui County Code (MCC), making mobile food trucks or trailers of 1,000 square feet or less permitted accessory uses on farms in the Agriculture District.
 - Provided input on Bill 100 (2024) A Bill for an Ordinance Amending Section 19.30A.050, MCC, Relating to Composting in the Agricultural District, (ADEPT-15), July 25, 2024 which was adopted on August 13, 2024
 - Provided input on Bill 17(2022), Prohibiting Private Restrictions on Small-Scale Agricultural Uses and the Keeping of Small Animal (ADEPT-7), July25, 2024 which was adopted on August 13, 2024
 - Provided input to Councilmember Johnson's draft language for a Local Food Purchasing Incentive budget on January 23, 2025
 - Provided input to Councilmember Johnson's draft language for a food voucher program for Lana'i resident households
 - Department is currently working together with Corp. Counsel on amending MCC Chapter 22
 - Department is currently working with Corp Counsel on amending Bill 160

- 2 *Providing assistance to the agriculture community when needed with county, state, and federal regulations and permitting processes.*
 - Not yet worked on
 - 3 *Creating a streamlined process for all agriculture-related permits and applications.*
 - Not yet worked on
 - 4 *Performing agricultural property inspections with knowledgeable inspectors for all County departmental applications.*
 - Not yet performed but met with Department of Planning's zone inspectors and building permit person and identified possible ways the Department can assist in their agricultural related inspections which include, reviewing farm plans, and doing site inspections of agricultural infrastructures
 - The Department began conversation with Real Property Tax inspector of their inspections processes on agricultural land and learned they use digital imagery and do not do physical inspections
- F. *Promote agency coordination by collaborating with the agricultural sector, developing shared goals and visions for the County, and developing strategic plans to achieve those goals. This can include both private and public agencies and stakeholders.*
- Reference 8b response #D 1 bullet #3 on State Meat Task Force
 - Department's Food Access Coordinator championed the development of the first Maui County Food Security and Nutrition Plan of which the first draft was presented to ADEPT on October 10, 2024. Final copy was complete in March 2025.
- G. *Promote workforce development by:*
- 1 *Increasing and supporting agriculture-related industries, occupational skills training, and educational opportunities with the goal of increasing the number of agricultural workers in the County.*
 - Department is a workforce development site for the Americorp Program that is run through UH Maui College. Working together, an intern is selected. Interns are tasked with a major project to work towards for the year of their internship that benefits the Department in growing its informational resources, such as, the Agriculture Resource Directory first developed in FY 24.
 - 2 *Supporting agriculture-related businesses to increase opportunities for agriculture-related jobs that compensate workers with livable wages.*
 - Supported Resolution 24-171 proposing a bill to amend Title 19 - Zoning, Maui County Code (MCC), making mobile food

trucks or trailers of 1,000 square feet or less permitted accessory uses on farms in the Agriculture District.

- July 9, 2024, acknowledged to ADEPT of the Department's awareness of the local industrial hemp industry on Maui which is using hempcrete in construction of homes in response to ADEPT-1(20) letter dated June 24, 2025
- Provided input to Resolution 24-171 referring to the Planning Commissions a Proposed Bill on Mobile Food Trucks or Trailers in the Agricultural District (ADEPT-17) on November 21, 2024 ADEPT meeting

3 *Developing pathways to increase on-site farmworker housing opportunities and affordable workforce housing for agricultural workers and their families.*

- FY24-Provided comment letters to the Planning Commissions (January 9, 2024 email and January 16, 2024 letter) regarding two proposed Council initiated code amendments - one that would increase the size of a second farm dwelling in the Ag district from 1,000 to 1,500 square feet. The second was to change the definition of "farm" and "farm labor dwelling"

H. *Minimize invasive species, pests, and threats by:*

1 *Collaborating with federal and state agencies to develop additional time-sensitive protocols, such as pre- and post-inspections, to prevent the introduction of invasive species and additional inspections for invasive species at retail locations, airports, harbors, and via mail delivery.*

- Reference question #8 b response in D1
- The Department will continue to assist with gathering people assets, physical assets, and intellectual assets while taking guidance from community as well as HDOA who has the power to compel compliance, design treatments and act as a primary prevention at the ports

2 *Providing education to the agricultural sector about agricultural threats, such as climate change and pests, and ways to prevent unnecessary imports that may introduce invasive species.*

- Reference question #8 b response in D2 second bullet

I. *Developing policy and legislation to prevent the introduction of invasive species, combat agricultural threats, and manage pests.*

1 Working with community organizations and county, state, and federal agencies to provide insight and feedback on projects that affect the agricultural sector.

- CRB Working Group, formed in FY24 by the Department, together with partner agencies that include, UH CRB Response Team, Maui Invasive Species Committee, Molokai Invasive Species Committee, HDOA, and with County of Maui DEM EP & S. The Group met bi-monthly for a total of 10 meetings between July 2024 and March 2025.
- The Department's Advocacy, Grants and Food Security Divisions met many times with ag. communities through the development of our Food and Nutrition Security Plan
- The Department met with over 90 federal, state agencies and community led organizations on a diversity of subjects that help guide our department in addressing issues that affect the agricultural sector

2 Implementing and supporting programs that ensure the sustainable utilization and regeneration of major natural resources, such as land, soil, water, air, minerals, forests, fisheries, fishponds, and wild flora and fauna.

- The Department's Deputy Director and Ag. Advocate contributed time and effort into the Long Term Recovery Plan development meeting regularly with community, non-profits, private sector and many of our federal and state agencies to understand the inefficiencies and gaps, and identify where to put our highest priorities and best use of our capacity and resources to protect our very finite and valuable natural resources. It was identified through the long-term recovery process that Maui County does not have a local level Department of Land and Natural Resources which led to securing federal funding for an Ag. Conservation Liaison.
- \$478,007.19 USDA NRCS contract from their FY25 Partnerships in the Pacific Islands Area program was awarded to the Department. Due to President Trump's Executive Order, the funding is paused until further notice. Therefore, the project has not been started. The award funds an Ag. Conservation Liaison position that is non-civil service for three years. The Liaison's duties are to perpetuate good land stewardship, local food production, and culture within Maui, Molokai, and Lana'i including both terrestrial and near shore/coral reef systems as well as to promote land

management solutions to help mitigate risks relating to future fires or natural disasters as well as promote the NRCS Farm Bill Programs related to climate resilience and the Inflation Reduction Act.

- The Department makes itself available for assisting ‘Oiwi Resources Department on the Restoration of Moku‘ula and Loko o Mokuhinia in Lahaina, with Malu‘ulu o Lele (Ulu groves/breadfruit trees), one of the projects for the recovery of Lahaina.
- The Department has a part in many of the following recovery projects listed below, specifically in information sharing and networking with efforts around Biosecurity, Revegetation/Reforestation, Green Workforce Development and Long Term Food Security planning and implementation.
 - Biosecurity/Compost Facilities
 - Native Plant Nursery
 - Lahaina Wai and Watershed Recovery Working Group and Watershed Master Planning for Lahaina Recovery
 - Updating Community Wildfire Protection Plans
 - Environmental Monitoring, Sampling, Testing, and Reporting Project
 - USDA Emergency Watershed Protection Program projects (Kula, Olinda, and Pulehu burn areas, and Mauka Lahaina), including soil erosion controls, soil restoration, invasive species management, and restoration of riparian habitat and wetlands
 - Restoring forests for W. Maui
 - Coral Reef Monitoring Restoration Project
- West Maui Greenway
- Efforts via the Department’s grants division supported many educational programs, fencing and restoration projects impacted by wildfires.

J. Assist with contracts and procurement by providing assistance to promote local food production and import substitution with a focus on local food security.

- Department shared with farmers, the Hawaii Department of Education, Farm to School Program’s procurement requests with farmers and food aggregators to support Farm to School and get locally grown foods into the DOE cafeterias
- The Department connected the Hawaii Department of Education, Farm to School Program Coordinator with Lana’i

and Molokai growers who will assist them in supplying Ham's Produce.

- The Department is connecting kalo farmers who are poi makers with HDOE to get poi into cafeterias.
- In FY26, MDOA will work with Procurement to establish a local food purchasing policy for all County-supported events that include catering.

K. Address transportation issues by:

1 Collaborating with the State of Hawai'i public utilities commission to minimize cost and other barriers for transportation and crops or livestock lost in transport.

- Not yet worked on

2 Providing support for the agriculture community to access federal programs that reduce the cost of transportation.

- Not yet worked on

3 Coordinating transportation-sharing to support the distribution of local products.

- Not yet worked on

L. Minimize agricultural theft, vandalism, and liability by working with police, prosecuting attorney, and County and State authorities to address the losses from agriculture-related theft and vandalism.

1 Not yet worked on

M. Provide priority resource assistance to low and moderate sized agricultural operations—as defined by the prior calendar year's annual gross cash farm income, or GCFI—with special considerations for minority-owned agricultural operations. The GCFI designations are as follows:

1 Low GCFI between \$1,000 and \$149,999.

2 Moderate GCFI between \$150,000 and \$349,999.

3 Midsize GCFI between \$350,000 and \$999,999.

4 Large GCFI between \$1,000,000 and \$4,999,999.

5 Very large GCFI of \$5,000,000 or more.

- Not yet worked on

9. If your Department had Capital Improvement Projects in FY 2025:

- a. Provide the current status of each CIP, if different from the information provided in the Fiscal Year 2025 2nd Quarter CIP Report.

No CIP's in FY25

- b. Provide information on how much funding has been encumbered or expended to date for each project.

No CIP's in FY25

10. If your Department has proposed CIPs for FY 2026:

- a. Rank your proposed CIPs, by priority.

No CIPs in FY 2026, but the following projects remain a priority:

1. Build second reservoir at the Kula Ag. Park
2. Install 12" main line to connect new reservoir to UMAP
3. Build UMAP Phase II

- b. Will CIP funding included in the FY 2026 Budget be encumbered by June 30, 2026? If not, how much do you anticipate will be encumbered by that date?

No CIP funding is being requested for the FY 2026 budget. The balance of the already acquired funding for the various CIP projects in the Kula Ag. Park will be applied to the designing and constructing the second reservoir. A budget amendment may be needed to recognize state funding that was anticipated in an earlier FY.

11. If your Department manages a revolving fund:

- a. Explain whether the revolving fund is still needed and why.

The Department adopted the FY 2026 Animal Management Revolving Fund (Chapter 3.84, Maui County Code) from the Department of Human Concerns.

- b. Provide the current balance.

Estimated balance as of 6/30/2025 is \$72,938.

12. If your Department manages grants:

- a. For each grant line-item not designated for a specific recipient (e.g.,

Small Business Promotion; Youth Programs), provide a breakdown of the grants that will be funded by the line item.

[Please see the table referenced below for a general breakdown.](#)

- b. Provide a breakdown of all grants that will be funded by your Department under Sub-object Code 6317, County grant subsidy.

[The budget still needs final approval and we have yet to solicit applications for next fiscal year. The following programs and associated funding as proposed in the FY 2026 budget:](#)

Name of Grantee/Program	FY 2026 Proposed
Animal Enforcement Program	\$1,061,000
Agricultural Micro Grants Program	\$3,000,000
Agriculture Operations/Infrastructure/Education	\$1,917,000
Agriculture Recovery	\$1,000,000
Grow Some Good	\$150,000
Hawaii Farmers United Union	\$375,000
Lāna‘i Agriculture	\$80,000
Lāna‘i Grown Food	\$70,000
Livestock	\$80,000
Maui Humane Society for Animal Sheltering Program	\$2,033,000
Maui Humane Society Molokai	\$140,000
Maui Nui Botanical Gardens, Inc.	\$150,000
Molokai Agriculture	\$100,000
Molokai Livestock Cooperative	\$20,000
Non-Food Agriculture (Landscape, Turf, Flowers, Foliage, Hardwood trees, etc.)	\$80,000
Spay Neuter Program	\$165,000

University of Hawaii Tropical Agriculture/Human Resources	\$150,000
TOTAL COUNTY GRANT SUBSIDY – AGRICULTURE PROGRAM	\$10,571,000

- b. Did your Department apply for any grant funding in FY 2025? If yes, how much grant funding was received?

Yes. The Department applied and was awarded \$478,007.19 for the FY25 Strategic Partnerships in the Pacific Islands Area program to fund salary for a three-year, limited term, non-civil service full time position called the Ag. Conservation Liaison. It is a reimbursable program. The Liaison has not been hired but the Department has begun advertising the position in March 2025. Funding is currently on pause due to President's Executive Order.

13. Provide details on your Department's Carryover/Savings that were included in the FY 2026 Budget.

The carryover savings included in the FY 2026 Budget are from the unrestricted fund balance for FY 2024 reflected in the County's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) along with anticipated additional revenues based on the funds collected in the first half of FY 2025. Any carryover savings from FY 2025 will be recognized in the FY 2027 Budget.

14. What are your top three Department priorities for FY 2026 and how does your Department's budget reflect that?

1. Development of the Ag. Emergency Response Plan will be done by Tetrattech as part of the development of the County Emergency Response Plan paid with the Professional Services budget
2. Development of Department Dashboard and Mapping will be paid with Professional Services budget
3. Development of the Food as Medicine Program will be done by Department but the implementation and management of the program will require a contracted agency that will be paid with Contractual Services budget
4. Coordinating and conducting educational opportunities for invasive species identification and response
5. Contracting a nursery grower to propagate coconut trees

15. How much has your Department spent on Professional Services in FY 2025, and what projects and consultants were funded under this line item?

\$74,764 EnviroServices for lot 30 clean up
 \$4,982 Contractor for office renovation (demo, drywall) to expand Department meeting space

\$1,500	Electrical contractor for adding lights in ceiling for Department meeting space
\$4,398	Add wider gate to KAP reservoir B
<u>\$517</u>	808 Towing to relocate 20' container at KAP for field office
\$86,161	Total spent on Professional Services to date

16. How much of your Department's expenditures in FY 2025 will be reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in relation to the wildfires? What amount of FY 2026 expenditures are expected to be reimbursed?

There are no reimbursements for FEMA.

17. If your Department is receiving Federal grants, including pass-through grants:

- a. What amount is your Department receiving for routine operations?

\$85,643 from USDA NRCS PIA contract – FY25 Strategic Partnerships in the Pacific Island which funds the Ag. Liaison position.

The amount covers:

Travel \$82,443

Supplies \$1,400

Other \$1,800

- b. What amount is your Department receiving for August 2023 Maui Wildfires disaster recovery?

No funding is being received.

- c. Explain any factors that could jeopardize your receipt of Federal grants, including Federal policy changes, compliance requirements, or expiration dates.

Currently, funding is paused due to President Trump's Executive Order. After receiving the USDA NRCS contract in September, it was necessary to develop and establish the Ag. Conservation Liaison position which the funds are to be used for. Advertising for recruitment began in early March.

- d. Explain how your Department will adjust if it does not receive the anticipated Federal grant funding.

The project will not begin and no hiring will take place until Executive Order is lifted.

18. If your Department received funding to repair or replace equipment,

locations, and structures destroyed in the wildfires, provide the current status for each. If there are items still pending repair or replacement, provide the estimated cost and timeline for the repair or replacement.

No funding needed as there was no damage from the wildfires.

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office at ext. 8278 or by email to rogerene.arce@mauicounty.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rogerene Arce', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rogerene "Kali" Arce
Director

BFED Committee

From: Janina E. Agapay <Janina.E.Agapay@co.maui.hi.us>
Sent: Wednesday, April 2, 2025 2:20 PM
To: BFED Committee
Cc: Lesley J. Milner; Rogerene Arce; Travis K. Hewahewa
Subject: (BFED-1)(AG-01)
Attachments: (BFED-1)(AG-01).pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hello,

Please see attached correspondence (BFED-1)(AG-01)

Thank you,

Janina Agapay

County of Maui | Budget Office

Phone: (808) 270-7836

Email: Janina.E.Agapay@co.maui.hi.us