

## EACP Committee

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**From:** Mark Sheehan <mark@marksheehan.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 16, 2020 9:53 AM  
**To:** EACP Committee; Alice L. Lee; Keani N. Rawlins; Tasha A. Kama; Riki Hokama; Kelly King; Mike J. Molina; Tamara A. Paltin; Vickie Conmy; Shane M. Sinenci; Yukilei Sugimura  
**Subject:** Resolution for creating a Maui County Department of Agriculture

Aloha Chair Senenci and EACP Committee Members:

Creating a Department of Agriculture is a critical step for empowering the people of Maui County to revitalize an industry that has been in decline for decades. While Mahi Pono's efforts will take years to bear fruit (and much of it may be for export), there is a vast array of products and services that can and should be produced to strengthen our local economy and assure great food security.

Ten years ago the Kohala Center on Hawaii island did a study of the food resources and potential of that county, how they can be developed. At that time I advocated for such a plan on Maui but the mayor wasn't interested. We still need an overall assessment of what we currently produce, what crops would be of greatest value, the best growing areas, the farmer skills and workforce we need, how they can be trained. Further, we need a system of food hubs. All of this can't be coordinated by an underfunded state department operating remotes from Oahu.

In a separate email, Bill Greenleaf outlined many of the kinds of crops that can be grown here. In addition to industrial-scale farming, those efforts need to be supplemented by a SYSTEM of community gardens. All of these efforts need to be bolstered by a network of farmers' markets and CSAs.

For the past ten years, my HAPI 10 acre farm in Haiku has trained farmers in agroforestry and soil science. A professional-level program takes a solid year to train one cohort. So our efforts for great FOOD SECURITY on Maui need to be coordinated with trainings; at the end of those trainings there need to be jobs. In short, we need a MASTER PLAN.

Yes, these are high aspirations. Covid19 has temporarily obscured the mounting evidence of climate change. The mounting evidence makes clear that the impacts will be devastating. Couple that deterioration of supply chains of all kinds and the reasons for rapid mobilization of ranch and farm resources are compelling.

MAHALO for you close scrutiny of this proposal, a critical first step towards great food security for our three occupied islands.

Aloha,  
Mark Sheehan