



# MAUI COUNTY FARM BUREAU

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Nov 1, 2022

OFFICE OF THE  
COUNTY CLERK

**Executive Director**  
Warren K. Watanabe

Chair Shane Sinenci  
Maui County Council  
Agriculture and Public Trust Committee

**Board of Directors:**

Re: Bill 160 "A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 22.04A, MAUI COUNTY CODE, RELATING TO KULA AGRICULTURAL PARK PHASE I EXPANSION AREA"

**President**  
Kyle Caires

Chair Sinenci and Members of the Committee

**Vice President**  
Joshua Shyloh Stafford-Jones

Maui County Farm Bureau on behalf of our farm and ranch families and organizations **supports with suggested amendments**, Bill 160 amending Chapter 22.04A, Maui County Code, relating to the expansion area of the Kula Agricultural Park.

**Secretary**  
Jayson Watts

Phase 1 of the expansion provides an opportunity for expansion of agricultural production on Maui. The park's location suits a variety of crops with long-standing production history in Maui County, and its' adjacency to the University of Hawaii Field Experiment Station helps ensure the availability of technical resources and content area expertise for the new farm tenants.

**Treasurer**  
Tim Stevens

**Directors:**

We ask for reconsideration of a few items/matters.

Rodrigo "Rudy" Balala

1) Scope of Ag Park: Amending scope of Park to include all forms of agriculture. Agriculture's strength is in diversity to meet a range of consumer choices. Farm Bureau has long supported the myriad of agricultural types and practices and we believe the Park should also provide such an opportunity. Discussions with the local SWCD office should be the first step to identify best mapping for conventional and organic agricultural practices to co-exist and minimize future conflict between farmers.

Brendan Balthazar

James "Kimo" Falconer

Bobbie Patnode

Teena Rasmussen

2) Committee make up: Reconsideration of a GoFarm position. GoFarm is part of the University of Hawaii - CTAHR that already has a position on the committee. CTAHR has an extensive network of education outreach programs; GoFarm is one of them.

Heidi Watanabe

3) While the current application form requires a Soil and Water Conservation practice plan included within the farm plan, an areawide Conservation Plan should be undertaken by the County during its' design and engineering phase, prior to plot allocations. Proximity of organic farms relative to traditional practices must be considered. Good planning will support best opportunities for success of all farmers at this new Ag Park for many years to come.

4) Section 22.14A.085. This proposal prioritizes food production over other crops. Food Security also involves planting of non-food crops.

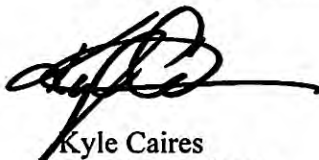
a. Crop rotation is a critical practice to improving soil health, optimize nutrient management of soil, and limit the emergence of pests, weeds and plant diseases.

This practice often involves planting of non-food species (such as cover crops) to encourage populations of pollinators and support beneficial insects to combat farm pests. These non-food crops can also be terminated to build soil health using several practices, sold as feedstuffs for supplemental income, or tilled into the ground as a green manure crop. Cover crops increase soil organic matter helping to raise soil moisture holding capacity allowing farmers to improve their drought resiliency prospects. ***Taken together, these practices will help reduce the need for chemical inputs to control pest pressures, reduce costs to the producer, and improve overall production efficiency.***

- i. We urge the deletion of this priority to allow implementation of integrated pest management practices and cover cropping to support the viability of all farmers (organic and conventional)
- b. Cover crop seed production is a significant opportunity for farmers to add income, build local capacity for genetic resources and limit novel invasive species. As our farmers consider cover crop options to improve soil health, access to seed has been an issue for many years. Major seed producers in the continental USA regularly empty their warehouses in preparation for the next season, often at a time when the local demand for those seeds in Hawaii are highest. Building the capacity for local cover crop seedstocks can help address this shortfall, while also minimizing seed purity issues, and risks that provide avenues for the introduction of invasive species with imported seed.
- c. Importation of non-food nursery plants and other ornamentals is a major source of invasive species that not only impact the environment but food production. Local production of highly desirable foliage e.g. Myrtaceae spp demanded by florists for supporting wedding venues (brides) within Maui county presents an important step to protecting us from introduction of Ohia Rust species such as *Austropuccinia (formerly Puccinia) psidii*, and other novel fungal pathogens that may be present on imported plant materials that could be detrimental to our native forests.

We appreciate this opportunity to voice our opinion on this exciting opportunity for agriculture on Maui. If there are any questions, please contact reach out to me, or contact Warren Watanabe at 808-281-9718.

Mahalo for your consideration.



Kyle Caires  
President, MCFB

## APT Committee

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**From:** Tamara A. Paltin  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 1, 2022 2:15 PM  
**To:** APT Committee; Alison N. Stewart  
**Subject:** Middle  
**Attachments:** E2D21700-5089-4F57-BE2C-AA75E1E90DBF.Written Testimony for 11-4-2022 Council Meeting.pdf

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