

EAR Committee

From: Tama <brandeburg@hawaii.rr.com>
Sent: Monday, January 25, 2016 8:43 PM
To: EAR Committee
Subject: Testimony in support of Ag Tourism

To: EAR Committee **Date:** 1/25/16
Re: Ag Tourism Bill
In Support of Bill

This is Tama Brandeburg, Owner of Tambra Gardens, a small, family operated, 2-acre farm in the Lower Kula area, specifically Kula 200 subdivision. We have been involved with Agricultural endeavors since purchasing our property in 2088. We grew & sold protea on a wholesale & retail level for aprox 18 years until the trees outlived their commercial life. We then re-planted and have been growing coffee for the past 8 years in addition to fruit trees & vegetable garden. Although we are dedicated to our coffee operation and have award-winning coffee (voted best Maui coffee in 2012-our first harvest, and again in 2015 in the Hawaii State Coffee Association Annual Cupping Competition, it has not been possible to sustain ourselves on our farming operations alone. We have dedicated 51% of our property to ag, however farming income has not provided an adequate income in itself. This is a second job for both my husband and myself.

We are in support of the Ag Tourism Bill, which may offer additional opportunities for income including farm tours, u-pick gardens and farm stays involving overnight accommodations of 21 days or less.

We are in our 60s and as we approach retirement we would like to stay on our property and continue with our farming operation which includes coffee trees, a green house, fruit orchard and garden. Although we sell all our coffee and fruit through The Upcountry Farmer's Market and our website, the income is not sufficient to sustain us as a free-standing independent business.

We are hopeful that with the passing of the AgTourism Bill, that we may be able to increase our income which might actually sustain us in our retirement years and allow us to continue living on our property after retirement.

Please consider the small back-yard farmers in your consideration of this bill.

Mahalo,

Tama Brandeburg
Owner/Grower
Tambra Gardens and Kula Beans Coffee



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