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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. In the wake of the global recession that saw  
2 Hawaii's unemployment rate triple between 2007 and 2009, the  
3 legislature finds that rebuilding and diversifying Hawaii's  
4 economy to create new jobs, put people back to work, and build a  
5 strong economic base that carries Hawaii into the twenty-first  
6 century is a key priority.

7           The legislature also finds that Hawaii is dangerously  
8 dependent on imported food. As the most geographically isolated  
9 state in the country, Hawaii imports approximately ninety-two  
10 per cent of its food, according to the Pacific Regional  
11 Integrated Sciences and Assessments Program. Currently, Hawaii  
12 has a supply of fresh produce for no more than ten days. Ninety  
13 per cent of the beef, sixty-seven per cent of the fresh  
14 vegetables, sixty-five per cent of the fresh fruits, and eighty  
15 per cent of all milk purchased in the State are imported. The  
16 legislature further finds that Hawaii's reliance on out-of-state  
17 sources of food places residents directly at risk of food



1 shortages in the event of natural disasters, economic  
2 disruption, and other external factors beyond the State's  
3 control.

4 The legislature further finds that each food product  
5 imported to Hawaii is a lost opportunity for local economic  
6 growth. The legislature notes that according to the University  
7 of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and human resources,  
8 an increase in the production and sale of Hawaii-grown  
9 agricultural commodities would contribute to significant job  
10 creation. The research shows that replacing ten per cent of  
11 current food imports with locally grown food will create a total  
12 of two thousand three hundred jobs. The legislature therefore  
13 finds that increasing the amount of locally grown food by as  
14 little as ten per cent could keep hundreds of millions of  
15 dollars circulating within Hawaii's economy, stimulate growth,  
16 and create thousands of new jobs. Such diversification would  
17 help make Hawaii's economy more resilient to worldwide events.

18 The legislature further finds that increasing local  
19 production will ensure that Hawaii has food sources that will be  
20 more resilient to global supply disruptions, better able to cope  
21 with increasing global demand and shortages of commodities such



1 as oil, and better prepared to deal with potential global food  
2 scarcities.

3 The legislature notes that the nutrients in fresh fruits  
4 and vegetables degrade rapidly and recognizes that increased  
5 availability of local food typically ensures access to fresher,  
6 later-picked produce with greater vitamin content and higher  
7 nutritional value. A more robust local agricultural sector will  
8 lead to more consistency and a likely increase in nutritional  
9 choices for local residents. The legislature believes  
10 communities will thrive by having a steady, affordable stream of  
11 local products as staple foods for residents and by having food  
12 expenses recycled and reinvested in the local economy.

13 The legislature further finds that by establishing a food  
14 sustainability standard, Hawaii will be able to ensure a long-  
15 term commitment of resources and investment to producing a  
16 significant portion of Hawaii's food for local consumption.  
17 This standard will also create a framework for long-term  
18 planning, including land use planning, resource allocation, and  
19 tax incentives, and will otherwise direct Hawaii toward a more  
20 robust and sustainable future.



1           In summary, the legislature finds that establishing an  
2 increase in the production of local food as a key state priority  
3 will lead to the diversification of Hawaii's economy, create new  
4 jobs, advance Hawaii's long-term economic stability, and boost  
5 the food security of the people of Hawaii.

6           The purpose of this Act is to establish a nonbinding food  
7 sustainability benchmark for 2020 and, subject to the  
8 availability of funds, require the department of agriculture to  
9 conduct a study of the practical requirements to attain the  
10 benchmark. The food sustainability benchmark, as well as  
11 renewable energy and housing development goals, are taken from  
12 the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Plan.

13           The legislature finds that this Act comports with its  
14 title.

15           **SECTION 2. Food sustainability benchmark for 2020.** There  
16 is established a nonbinding food sustainability benchmark of  
17 thirty per cent by 2020. The "food sustainability benchmark of  
18 thirty per cent" means that thirty per cent of the food consumed  
19 by people within the State is grown or raised within the State.  
20 Direct sales receipts of farmers shall be the measurement unit  
21 for the benchmark.



1 SECTION 3. **Other goals of equal priority.** The following  
2 goals shall be equal in priority to attaining the food  
3 sustainability benchmark:

4 (1) The goal of meeting the renewable energy portfolio  
5 standard in 2020, partly with biofuel and biomass  
6 crops at the volume estimated by the department of  
7 business, economic development, and tourism;

8 (2) The goal of increasing agricultural products for  
9 export and livestock feed at a rate determined by the  
10 department of agriculture to be realistic based on  
11 available studies; and

12 (3) The goal of constructing the total new housing units  
13 needed in each county by 2020. The total new housing  
14 units needed in each county shall be the sum of the  
15 following:

16 (A) The total new housing units needed in each county  
17 from 2012 to 2016 as projected in the Hawaii  
18 Housing Planning Study, 2011 by the Hawaii  
19 housing finance and development corporation; and

20 (B) The total new housing units needed in each county  
21 from 2017 to 2020, as estimated by the Hawaii



1 housing finance and development corporation using  
2 the data in the Hawaii Housing Planning Study,  
3 2011;

4 For the purpose of this goal, the community  
5 growth boundary of a county's long-term general,  
6 development, or community plan shall be  
7 respected.

8 SECTION 4. **Food sustainability benchmark study.** (a)

9 Subject to the availability of sufficient funds, the department  
10 of agriculture shall conduct a study of the practical  
11 requirements to attain in the State the food sustainability  
12 benchmark established under section 2.

13 (b) The department of agriculture shall include findings  
14 and recommendations on the following in the study:

15 (1) The land, water, workforce, education, promotion and  
16 marketing, public infrastructure investment, private  
17 investment, and other pertinent requirements to attain  
18 the food sustainability benchmark;

19 (2) The net economic and employment effect of attaining  
20 the food sustainability benchmark; and



1 (3) The feasibility of attaining the food sustainability  
2 benchmark of thirty per cent in 2020 and whether a  
3 lower benchmark, such as sixteen per cent, is more  
4 practical.

5 SECTION 5. **Guidelines for study.** The department of  
6 agriculture shall use the following guidelines in the conduct of  
7 the study:

- 8 (1) The use of water for agriculture is a public trust  
9 purpose equal to all others under the state water  
10 code;
- 11 (2) Agricultural products grown or raised within the State  
12 and sold by retail stores, restaurants, and hotels to  
13 people for consumption are grown or raised in  
14 conformance with good agricultural management  
15 practices and food safety certification standards;  
16 provided that this guideline shall not apply to  
17 agricultural products sold directly to consumers by  
18 the farmer who grew or raised the agricultural  
19 products; and
- 20 (3) There is no state or county prohibition on the  
21 growing, raising, possession, or consumption by people



1 of genetically engineered agricultural products within  
2 the State if the products are grown or raised in  
3 compliance with federal law.

4 SECTION 6. **Advice.** During the conduct of the study, the  
5 department of agriculture shall solicit the advice of the Hawaii  
6 Green Growth Initiative, Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation,  
7 University of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture and human  
8 resources, and other organizations as the department deems  
9 appropriate.

10 SECTION 7. **Deadline for study.** The department of  
11 agriculture shall submit the study to the governor and  
12 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
13 the regular session of 2013.

14 SECTION 8. **Appropriation.** (a) There is appropriated out  
15 of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of  
16 \$ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
17 year 2012-2013 for the conduct of the food sustainability  
18 benchmark study required by this Act.

19 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
20 agriculture for the purposes of this Act.





1           SECTION 9.   **No liability for State or state officer or**  
2 **employee.**   There shall be no civil or criminal liability for or  
3 cause of action against the State or any state officer or  
4 employee for failure to attain the food sustainability  
5 benchmark.

6           No person may bring an action against the State or any  
7 state officer or employee for an act or omission alleged to be  
8 contrary to attainment of the food sustainability benchmark.

9           SECTION 10.   This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2012.



H.B. NO.

2703  
H.D. 2  
S.D. 2  
C.D. 1  
Proposed

**Report Title:**

Food Sustainability Benchmark Study; Department of Agriculture

**Description:**

Establishes a nonbinding food sustainability benchmark for 2020. Requires DOA to conduct a study of the practical requirements to attain the benchmark. Makes an appropriation for the study.  
(CD1 Proposed)

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