



*Promoting the wise stewardship of our island resources.*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 4, 2020

**STIMULATING HAWAII AGRI-TOURISM ECONOMIC GROWTH**

STATE OF HAWAII - The Oahu Resource Conservation & Development Council (Oahu RC&D), in partnership with the Hawaii Tourism Authority and GoFarm Hawaii, has recently awarded \$45,000 to local farmers and businesses to support the development of innovative agri-tourism operations in Hawaii. Funding was made possible through the Hawaii Tourism Authority through tourism dollars that are being reinvested in community partners to further grow their agri-tourism projects. Fifteen local businesses were selected through a competitive application process after receiving training from GoFarm Hawaii and the Hawaii Agri-Tourism Association (HATA) via the 2020 Hawaii Agri-Tourism Webinar Summer Series:

- 21 Degrees Estate (Oahu)
- Beer Lab HI (Oahu)
- Bird and Bee Hawai'i (Hawaii Island)
- Hamakua Harvest (Hawaii Island)
- Hana Farms (Maui)
- Hawaii Ulu Cooperative (Hawaii Island)
- Keiki and Plow (Oahu)
- Ko Hana Rum Distillers (Oahu)
- Lydgate Farms (Kauai)
- Maui Dragon Fruit Farm (Maui)
- Nalo Meli Honey (Oahu)
- Opala Foods (Oahu)
- Punahale Provisions (Oahu)
- Tea Hawaii & Company (Hawaii Island)
- Yee's Orchard (Maui)

The 2017 USDA-NASS Census of Agriculture estimated 7,300 farms in Hawaii. Of these, over 75% earn less than \$25,000 per year. With high costs for land, labor, inputs, and energy, this level of income is insufficient. In order for farms to be sustainable and increase profitability, producers must explore various opportunities and revenue streams. Incorporating agritourism can be a positive revenue option for Hawaii farmers while providing visitors with unique on-farm experiences.

Hawaii agri-tourism offers opportunities to look behind the scenes, to experience more than just a sunny beach and the purchase of an Aloha shirt. With its natural beauty, warm weather, and renowned agricultural products (coffee, macadamia nuts, flowers, and tropical fruits of many kinds), Hawaii's small farms and rural communities are ideal venues to offer an extraordinary array of memorable experiences.

The mini-grants aim to expand and enhance new and existing agri-tourism projects. Awarded

projects are expected to capture growth and stimulate collaboration with public and private partners. Projects include unique experiences like enhancing virtual farm-tour and education experiences, developing advertising and marketing content, expanding farm-to-table experiences, and more.

One of awardees states, "this opportunity has ignited a whole new level of drive and heart for our farm, ohana, and agriculture community." Mini-grant recipients were awarded on the islands of Hawaii Island, Maui, Oahu, and Kauai.

Awarded projects are expected to commence in November and wrap up in March 2021, with expected long-term impact and growth after project completion. Support for these awards were created through an Oahu RC&D's partnership and collaboration with Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA), Hawaii Agri-Tourism Association (HATA), and GoFarm Hawaii (GFH).

***About Oahu RC&D***

*The Oahu Resource Conservation & Development Council (Oahu RC&D) is an independent non-profit entity that works to improve the quality of life in the communities we serve. Recent work has focused on assisting rural enterprises and farmers, while fostering education and adoption of sound conservation practices on rural lands. Oahu RC&D have provided training, fiscal sponsorship support, and a network to cultivate the growth of rural businesses. To learn more or request information, visit <http://oahurcd.org/>.*

###

**Media Contact:**

Contact: Dave Elliott, Executive Director

808-622-9026

Email: [dave.elliott@oahurcd.org](mailto:dave.elliott@oahurcd.org)

*For formatting purposes, all diacritical markings have been removed from this news release. Mahalo for your understanding.*