



O'ahu Agritourism Guidebook

O'ahu Resource Conservation &
Development Council

2011



Acknowledgements

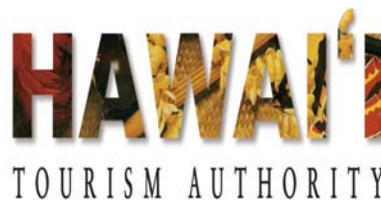
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Aloha and Welcome

Agricultural tourism – Agritourism – allows farmers and other agricultural professionals to broaden their income base, while offering visitors and locals alike an opportunity for a genuine experience in a new environment.

Agritourism has been practiced in Europe and parts of North America for decades, but is still relatively new in Hawaii. We are feeling our way, developing new rules and guidelines to govern agritourism, and there remains much to do and discuss and decide.

This Guidebook was produced by the O'ahu Resource Conservation and Development Council (O'ahu RC&D) with financial support from the City and County Department of Economic Development and the Hawaii Tourism Authority. It is intended as an introduction to guide those interested in agritourism on O'ahu through the process, from farmers and ranchers, to floriculturists and other agricultural producers interested in learning more about agritourism. We hope it is useful. Please direct any feedback or suggestions to our office at admin@oahurcd.org.

Mahalo!



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Introduction



Agricultural tourism in Hawaii is a small industry with great potential. Managed appropriately, agritourism provides farmers with cash income that is less influenced by weather, markets, pests or diseases, and can help smooth out cash flow peaks and valleys.

Making the effort to ensure that a farm is presentable and safe to the public provides added incentive to farmers to keep their fields and outbuildings in good condition, manage soil and water resources, and ensure a safe working environment for employees. Visitors often take products home and share them with friends, providing new marketing opportunities and broadening the customer base.

Visitors and residents also benefit from good agritourism programs. Visitors are often looking for genuine experiences that tell the story of how people in Hawai'i live day to day. Those from farming backgrounds elsewhere may be interested in the challenges faced by farmers in Hawai'i, and the many differences (and similarities) between agriculture here and elsewhere.

Residents may want to see where their food and flowers come from, understand what is involved in crop production in Hawai'i, and follow a growing trend to learn to "know their farmer."

According to the Hawaii Agricultural Statistics service, the value of agricultural tourism in the City and County of Honolulu nearly doubled from \$7.7 million in 2000 to \$14.2 million in 2006. However, during this same period, the number of farms engaged in agritourism activities on O'ahu dropped from 19 to 13, while overall farm numbers stayed the same. In 2006, O'ahu had the fewest number of agritourism operations of any county in Hawai'i, yet had the highest earnings. Most of those earnings were generated from larger farm operations.

In a statewide survey from 2006, farmers ranked zoning restrictions as the number one challenge facing agricultural tourism. Agricultural tourism on O'ahu is hampered by a lack of a City and County ordinance that permits agritourism activities without a Special Use Permit. The time, expense, and uncertainty in obtaining a permit may discourage farmers from engaging in agritourism activities. At present, less than 2% of O'ahu farms offer agritourism programs. Agritourism is not for every agricultural enterprise, but it does hold great potential for some.

There are so many considerations when thinking about launching an agritourism program, it is difficult to know where to begin. This *Guidebook* will help you get started. The following chapters are equally important, and can be read in any order. They delve into the fundamental questions you must consider: Is it legal? Will it be profitable? What does an agritourism program look like?

First, understand that in most cases, any type of tourism activity on agricultural land on O'ahu currently requires (at the very least) a Special Use Permit. More on this is included in the *Rules and Regulations* Chapter.

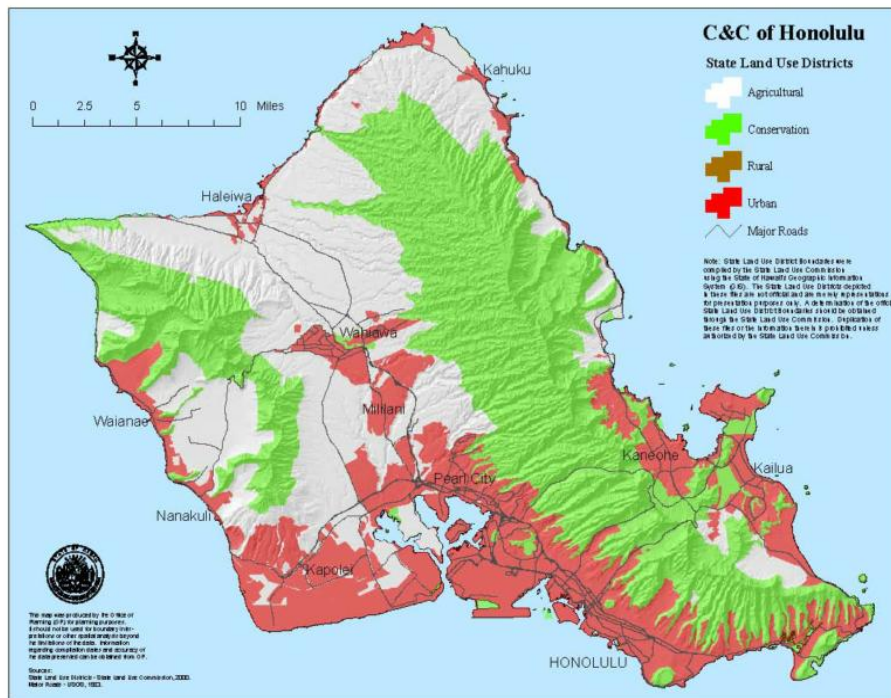
Second, consider that while an agritourism program may earn additional revenue, it will also entail additional costs. More on this is addressed in the Chapter entitled *Dollars and Sense*, which encourages you to take a hard look at the feasibility of an agritourism program for your operation.

Who you target and how you structure an agritourism program determines the scale of such an operation, and is fundamental to how the program is shaped. This is addressed in the *Target Audience and Program Structure* chapter. How do you create an agritourism program that is memorable, safe, and manageable? This is the fun part, explored in the *Developing the Program* chapter.

Finally, the *Appendix* includes a Checklist to guide you through the essential elements of an agritourism program, and other useful information.

Whether you choose to develop an agritourism program for your farm, collaborate with other farmers in your area to develop a joint program, or hold off on agritourism for now, your interest in the potential of agricultural tourism is valuable. Consider joining the Hawaii Agritourism Association or other supportive groups (see Appendix C) to keep abreast of this emerging industry, and add your voice to the conversation.

Rules and Regulations



If you are a commercial agricultural enterprise, you already know that there are many rules and regulations you need to follow to operate in Hawaii. If you wish to expand your agricultural activities to include agricultural tourism, there are additional considerations.

Allowable Activities

The Hawaii State Legislature passed H.B. Bill 2145 in 2006 (see Appendix B), establishing a framework for agricultural land use in the State of Hawaii. It allows for 16 permissible types of activities in agricultural districts. Aside from normal activities involved in cultivation of crops and raising livestock, these include operation of roadside stands. In addition, agritourism is permitted *in counties that have adopted ordinances related to*

agricultural tourism, so long as it is secondary to the principal agricultural use and does not interfere with that use.

The individual county ordinances establish requirements for access and parking, gift shops or other buildings, types of permissible activities, hours of operation, etc. Unfortunately for O'ahu businesses, as of February 2011, the City and County of Honolulu has yet to adopt such an ordinance. Until the County moves on this, **agricultural tourism on O'ahu may be conducted by Special Use Permit only.**

The only exception to this rule applies to farmers located on State Agricultural Parks. These farmers must work with the State Department of Agriculture to amend their lease to accommodate agritourism activities.

For all others, a Special Use Permit must be issued by the County Planning Commission to allow specific non-agricultural activities on agricultural lands. Such activities may include selling value-added products (e.g. mango chutney) operating a gift shop, or conducting regular tours for visitors. To apply, businesses are encouraged to meet with the Department of Planning and Permitting to discuss the project. Call 768-8049 to make an appointment. SUP application instructions are included in Appendix E.

The application must include a description of the property including the Tax Map Key (TMK), a detailed explanation of the proposed use, and address any likely impacts on neighbors, traffic, natural environment, etc. Remember that all the special activities you seek permission for must occur on that TMK.

The process takes many months, and will include a public hearing. The fee to apply for the permit is currently \$600 plus \$250/acre, up to a maximum of \$6,000. If your agricultural property is larger than 15 acres and/or has been designated as important agricultural lands, you will also need approval from the State Land Use Commission.

More information about permitting requirements is available online at: www.honoluluodpp.org/PermitInfo

More for information about how to apply for a Special Use Permit, go to: www.honoluluodpp.org/downloadpdf/planning/SUPAPP.pdf

In addition to the SUP, consider specific lease requirements and any special neighborhood or community restrictions.



If you own your property,

check your deed to ensure that there are no easements or riders attached that may interfere with your proposed agritourism program. Consider ways your program can have positive impacts (such as allowing for better care of an area), while minimizing negative impacts, such as traffic, noise and parking. When you are ready, submit your plans to the County Planning Commission and apply for a Special Use Permit.



If you lease your property

from a private party, you will need the landowner's permission to apply for a Special Use Permit. Contact your landlord early in the planning process to discuss your plans and gain his/her support. Consider ways your program can benefit the property and/or the landlord.

If you lease your land from the state, check your lease agreement carefully. Many Department of Agriculture and Department of Land and Natural Resource leases contain "Culture of Use" clauses that specifically prohibit agritourism activities. You may appeal to the landlord to modify the agreement, but without the landlord's permission, you cannot proceed with an agritourism program.

Permits

Once you have established permission to conduct agritourism related activities on your farm, ranch, or nursery, you may still need additional permits for certain activities or structures. Considerations include:



Food Sales

No permit is required if you are selling uncut, unprocessed food, such as a banana or mountain apple grown on your property. If you wish to sell processed food, such as mango chutney or banana bread, you must ensure that it is produced in a licensed commercial kitchen. You may either work with the Department of Health to acquire a license yourself, or rent space in a commercial kitchen to prepare your food products. For more information about how to build your own commercial kitchen, visit the CTAHR website at (www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/oc/freepubs/pdf/FMT-2.pdf).

Some of the commercial kitchens currently operating on O'ahu include:

- Waialua Community Kitchen
Waialua Sugar Mill
551-4464
www.waialuatown.info/kitchen/communitykitchen.html
- Culinary Kitchen Incubator
723C 'Umi St, Kalihi
851-7001
- Kapi'olani Community College
4303 Diamond Head Road
734-9000
www.kapiolani.hawaii.edu/page/home

Buildings, Signs and Structures

You must obtain a Building Permit from the City and County to erect, build, alter, or remove any building or structure. You need a permit to add a solar panel, conduct certain electrical or plumbing work, or to erect a sign. A permitted building that changes uses sometimes requires additional permits.

For more information, visit the Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) website at www.honoluludpp.org or <http://dppweb.honolulu.gov/DPPWeb>. Be sure to check with DPP before proceeding with any agritourism activity involving a building, structure, or sign!

Community Considerations

The word “Tourism” often conjures up images that people don’t want to see in their neighborhoods: lost tourists driving slowly to take pictures, huge tour buses emitting clouds of exhaust, throngs of people clogging up open areas or standing in the road. An operation that brings this to your neighborhood is not going to be welcome.

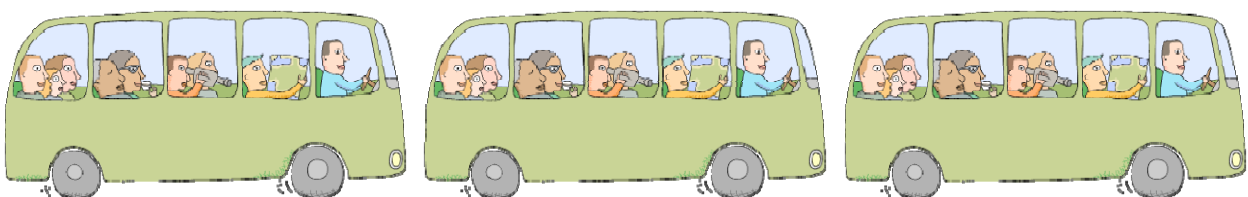
It is essential that you work with your neighbors and gain their support for your program. A visit to the neighborhood board or **local agricultural association** is a good place to start. Be prepared to listen and adapt your program as necessary. In some communities, explicit permission for your proposed agritourism operation may be required.

When developing your program, consider the scale of your neighborhood and your agricultural business. If your farm is at the end of narrow road, with limited parking, it may not be an appropriate destination for independent tourists in their own cars. Occasional visits by vans or small buses, that can park on your property and won’t cause **traffic** problems, may be a better choice.

If you are located on a highway or other high-traffic area, where buses and cars are commonplace, you may be able to accommodate drop in visitors, provided your site is clearly marked, has adequate parking, and has appropriate entry and exit sites.

Noise is another consideration, especially where large groups of people congregate. If you need a microphone to lead your tours, make sure that your voice doesn’t carry farther than it needs to. If you have music in your shop or restaurant, make sure that it isn’t broadcast beyond your property. Restrict programs during rush hour or at night.

Finally, consider ways your program can benefit neighbors and the community as a whole. Offer your program to schools, senior centers, or neighborhood groups. Donate tours or products to community fundraising efforts. Employ neighborhood youth to sweep pathways, or recruit retirees to assist with the program. Respond to community complaints promptly. Make your program a **win-win** for the community and your agricultural business.



Dollars and Sense



Before launching into a tourism program for your agricultural businesses, it's important to analyze the financial implications and make sure that such a venture makes good financial sense. Is agricultural tourism a good fit for your business?

Farming and Tourism: Finding the Balance

Agricultural tourism is not a tourism program that takes place in rural areas or has a farming spin. It is not a Dude Ranch adventure activity. It is an agricultural operation that accommodates some degree of tourism in an effort to diversify income and contribute to financial stability. It is, first and foremost, about agriculture, not tourism. That said, the day to day work on farms, ranches, orchards and nurseries is of interest to many. A visit to a bona fide agricultural

enterprise provides a glimpse of how people live and how food and agricultural products are produced. It's a field trip for grown ups and out of town guests, as well as for local schools, senior centers, and community groups.

The State of Hawaii has made it clear that tourism activities on agricultural land must always be secondary to the agricultural activity itself. Visitor programs that take valuable space and resources away from agricultural production, or degrade the character of the neighborhood, are unacceptable. Instead, visitor programs should have a negligible impact on agricultural operations, add value to the business through increased revenues, encourage superior farm safety practices and natural resource management, and be good neighbors to the surrounding community.

Agritourism and Your Business

If you are opening your agricultural business to any form of tourism, it is likely with the intent of diversifying revenue and increasing profits. Before beginning, consider what the venture is likely to cost you in terms of staff time, equipment and supplies, marketing and promotion, permits and site improvements.

The first step to this analysis is to refresh your company's Business Plan. Every business should develop a Business Plan to help guide them forward, establish contingencies for lean times, and set goals for growth. Some business owners hire outside specialists to help them develop business plans. Sources of support include the Small Business Administration (www.sba.gov), the Ag Incubator Program at the University of Hawaii's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (<http://aip.hawaii.edu>), and the Small Business Development Center (www.hawaii-sbdc.org). If you choose to draft your own Business Plan, be sure to include the following components:

◇ Summary

What is your business about? How large is it? Is it expected to grow, and if so, at what rate? What are the sources of revenue, in order of importance? What are the expenses, in order of importance? What potential risks and opportunities do you foresee? What are your goals for the coming year, five years, or ten years?

◇ Company Description

Define the ownership of your company (i.e. sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, etc.). When was it established? Who manages it and who are the employees? How stable is your workforce, and how easy is it to replace or add new workers? How do they manage their time? What is the management structure? Who handles marketing and sales? What are your typical annual earnings? What are your strengths and weaknesses?

◇ Service or Product Line

What do you produce? What are the costs of production, and what are the profit margins? Which products or services have the highest profit margin, and which have the lowest? Which have the highest risk factor, and which have the lowest? How do sales vary seasonally?



◇ **Market Analysis**

Who buys your products? Where do they live, what income levels and age brackets do they represent, what influences their buying decisions (i.e. price, quality, trendiness, etc.)? How do you market your company and your products? How does your method of marketing reach the target audience you are pursuing? How might you broaden or deepen your market reach?

◇ **Financials**

What are all your sources of revenue? How reliable are they? What are all your costs? How do operational expenditures break down into recurring costs (i.e. personnel, supplies, etc.) fluctuating costs (i.e. energy, feed, water), and operational costs (i.e. rent, fees, accounting costs and outside services)? What kinds of capital expenses do you have or foresee?

◇ **Risk Management**

What kinds of insurance coverage do you have? Are you adequately covered? Is your insurance company reputable, and are the premiums reasonable and included in your operational budget? Have you taken all reasonable steps to reduce risk?

◇ **New Project**

If you are considering adding agricultural tourism activities to your operation, review your current business plan, and evaluate how it might fit in. Will the additional staff demands of agricultural tourism detract from other profitable operations, or do you have “down times” that you could fill? Will you need to invest in capital improvements to accommodate visitors, or have such improvements already been made? Do the products you currently produce lend themselves to visitor purchases, or are they raw products that would be of little interest to visitors?

Are there any additional permits or licenses that you would need to acquire to operate an agricultural tourism program, and if so, how expensive would they be and how long might it take to get them? How will your insurance needs change? If you are considering bringing paying customers onto your property, be sure to discuss additional insurance needs with your agent and adjust your policy accordingly. A minimum of \$2 million in general liability insurance is recommended. Do a cost-benefit analysis. After all additional expenses are accounted for, how much would you need to earn to make an agricultural tourism program worth your while? What volume of visitors or tours would you need to break even or earn a profit? Is this feasible?

Sales and Marketing

If you are entering into the visitor market for the first time, you need to consider appropriate ways to market your program. The most efficient option may be to partner with an existing tour operation, hotel concierge, or travel agency and work with them to provide the marketing for you. If you choose to manage your own marketing and sales, you will probably need to hire or contract with someone familiar with the visitor industry. Consider the cost of your marketing plan in terms of your overall business plan. Include staff, products, travel, postage, paid advertisements, product placement, etc. To market your program, you will need to develop certain tools including a brand, logo, and website.

A brand will distinguish you from other businesses, and if you protect it and use it only for quality products and programs, it will help you grow your business in the long run. A brand allows you to “sell” your products and services directly, without going through a middle man. A brand that becomes known and sought after can often command higher prices and profit margins. You may wish to register your brand, or trademark, to protect it from use by others. Look up “trademark” on the web for information about how to do this.

Once you establish a brand, you'll need a logo. Even a company name used regularly with a certain font and color can be a logo. Your brand and logo should appeal to your target audience, so if you are considering launching an agritourism program, take a

fresh look at your logo from the perspective of the visitor. Is it artistic? Does it convey a sense of place in Hawaii? Is it easy to recognize? Can it be sized for various value-added products?

Many design firms and individual artists can help you develop a logo. There are also web-based programs that can help, often quite inexpensively. Look up “logo” on the web for a list of companies that can help.

Finally, if you don't currently have a company website, consider developing one. A website will make it easier for potential customers to find you and for past visitors to continue to purchase your products. Few of us have the skills to develop our own website, but there are many companies and individuals who can help. Bear in mind that the more complex your site, the more expensive it may be to create and maintain. You will need to provide images and copy to the website designer to help create your page. If you plan to sell products over the web, you need to establish links for secure payment. While costs vary, creation of a web site will start at about \$1,000 and can go up sharply from there.

You will also need to select a domain name, find a host for your website (look up “website host” for ideas) and pay an annual filing fee, typically around \$100. Finally, you will need to identify someone on staff or contract to maintain your website and update it regularly. There are many individuals and companies that can help you with your website needs. Search the web for ideas!

Managing Money

Finally, consider your sales system. If you are working strictly with a tour company for pre-arranged group visits, you can develop a voucher system in which you invoice on a regular basis at an agreed upon rate for each group or the actual visitor count. Be sure to maintain records of tour numbers, invoices, and fees paid.



If, however, you have entry fees or a gift shop selling products to individuals, you must establish a point of sales system that provides receipts to the customer. This is typically some sort of cash register. If your gift shop includes more than a few items, you may wish to invest in a more sophisticated system that identifies items sold to assist with your inventory and sales analysis. Decide what types of payment you will accept (cash, traveler's checks, checks, or credit cards), and set your system up accordingly. Note that accepting credit cards will make on-line sales much easier.

Most modern cash registers (and all credit card transactions) require electricity. Have a contingency plan for unforeseen electrical outages.

If you accept large amounts of cash, consider security issues. You may wish to purchase a safe, if only to keep small bills for change readily available. Plan regular bank deposits, and avoid having too much cash at your property at one time. Consider other security measures, such as security cameras or alarm systems. Determine who will have access to cash, and do your best to eliminate temptation. Protect your staff by making it as difficult as possible for them to ever come under suspicion of theft, and instruct them put safety first should an attempted robbery ever occur.

Target Audience and Program Structure



Identifying your target audience is a key component of any agritourism operation. Do you want to work with organized groups, or will you be open to individual visitors? Can you accommodate all age and ability levels, or is your program better suited to a certain demographic? Will you have regular hours of operation, or accommodate tours only on certain dates and at certain times? These are all matters to consider in light of your overall agricultural business.

Individuals or Group Tours

It's important to decide early on which type of visitor you can best accommodate, free

independent travelers (called F.I.T.s in the industry) or those visiting as an organized group. If targeting independent travelers, be prepared to make all the arrangements and answer all the advance questions visitors may pose. Working directly with visitors may require some customer service skills to handle complaints, changes of plan, inability to pay, and so forth. On the other hand, working with independent travelers allows you to experiment somewhat with what works, and to change your offerings, within reason, with little notice. You may charge what the market will bear, and the proceeds are all yours.

Working with group tours can be easier in as much as you are only working with a few people on a regular basis to arrange visits. However, you must be prepared to describe your program well in advance, and to share proceeds with the tour company. Your facility must be able to accommodate parking for vans or buses, unless you can arrange for the buses to drop visitors off and pick them up later. Working with a tour company gives you a partner in the visitor industry. Of course, you can always opt to work with both F.I.T.s and tour groups.

Visitor Demographics

Another important consideration is the type or types of individuals you wish to target. Are there certain age, ability, income, or interest levels you envision at your farm? Are there any restrictions you need to consider? Can you accommodate non-English speaking visitors? How long would a typical visit last? Are there ways visitors should prepare in advance (e.g. wear sturdy shoes and sun-screen)? Is there a niche market in the visitor industry you could target?

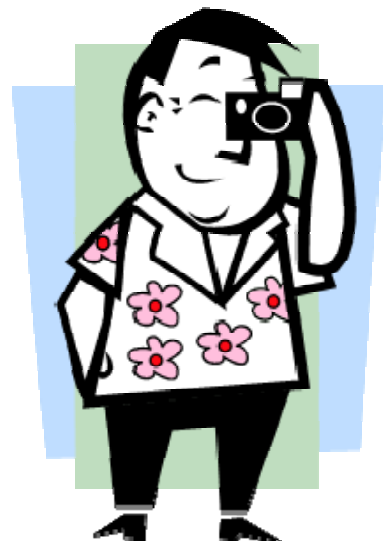
Some market analysis of visitor trends in Hawaii are provided by the Hawaii Tourism Authority and the Hawaii Agricultural Statistics service (listed in Appendices C and D). Thinking in advance about the target for your agritour program will allow you to tailor the program appropriately. Speak with hotel concierge or others in the industry in advance to ensure that your intended audience is a good fit for your proposed program, and be prepared to make adjustments as necessary.

Drop-In Guests or Prior Arrangement Only

⇒ **Agritourism program with regular hours of operation**

Farms with facilities (including parking) that can accommodate drop in visitors can schedule regular hours of operation. This could range from all day every day to a much more restricted time frame (i.e. Saturdays from 1:00 pm-5:00 pm). Whatever schedule is established, it's important to stick to it, promote it widely, and be available during the times advertised.

Agritourism programs with regular hours of operation must have someone available to assist visitors during the hours of operation. It's helpful if that person can greet visitors and give them a brief orientation to the farm, suggest areas to visit and establish any places that are off-limits, and answer questions. Having an entry through a gift shop is always a good idea, as it enables the person managing the shop to double as a greeter when business is slow. This type of operation is best for a passive or self-guided activity.



⇒ Agritourism program by prior arrangement only

Many farmers are reluctant to get involved in agritourism because of the anticipated interruptions and time commitment. No one wants to be interrupted in the middle of milking cows or spreading manure to deal with casual visitors. Moreover, some farming operations are not suitable for certain types of individuals (people with respiratory distress, for example, or toddlers).

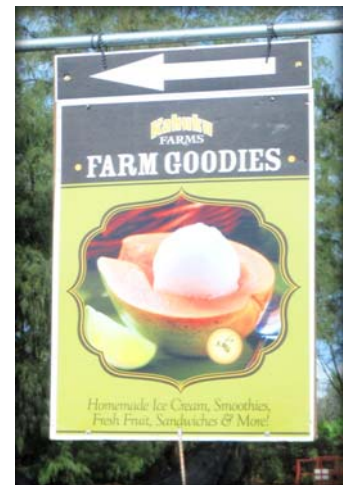
One way to address these problems is to host agritourism programs by pre-arrangement only. Restricting the program in this manner will likely result in a longer start-up period, and may be slower to gain momentum. But if the program is run well, has good reviews and is effectively promoted, there's no reason it can't succeed on the farmer's own terms.

With this type of program, the farmer knows exactly who to expect, and can tailor experiences for the group. This can result in a higher quality, and higher value, experience. Group size and other characteristics (age, ability level) can be tailored to whatever the farmer deems optimal. Farmers may even wish to work with specialized tour companies to develop programs that include compatible

experiences off the farm (a visit to a restaurant featuring the farm's produce, for example). This type of program is best suited to an active, organized and guided activity.

⇒ Agritourism Program with Regular Hours of Operation and Scheduled Tours

If the farm has a gift shop that is regularly staffed, a third option is to keep the gift shop and a common area of the farm open during regular hours, and provide guided tours at an additional cost during selected times. The farm can tailor different tours to different crops or seasons, or to accommodate specific requests from independent travelers or tour companies.



Going it Alone, Forming a Partnership, or Working with a Tour Company

Going it Alone

Developing an agritourism program for your own operation on your own terms affords you the greatest degree of autonomy. However, it can also be the most difficult, at least in the beginning. You will be responsible for developing and marketing your program, handling reservations or requests, managing every visitor, and handling unforeseen circumstances (e.g. your property experiences a flood and you must cancel programs and access, a visitor suffers a medical emergency while on your property, etc.). Farm operators wishing to go it alone are advised to start with something small and manageable, such as tours by appointment only, or a small area that is accessible with a gift shop, or a “pick your own fruit” weekend during harvest or a particular time period.

Forming a Partnership

Farm tours may benefit from the synergy of several different types of operations within a certain geographic area. The program may be more interesting to visitors if it includes not just your tropical plant operations, but a neighboring orchard, an aquaculture facility, and a banana patch as well. Maybe one site includes an option for lunch or refreshments. Smaller participants could pool items available for sale and share management of a single gift shop. Forming a partnership or hui

with neighbors helps insure that others in the community also benefit from the increase in traffic, and that there is someone else to step in if your farm experiences a sudden emergency and you need to offer visitors an alternative experience. Alternatively, farms in a certain area could agree to hold “open house tours” on a certain day each month, or a certain week each quarter, making their farms tours more appealing to both residents and independent travelers, while minimizing effort and time commitment.

Working with the Visitor Industry

Tour companies, hotel concierge, and travel agencies are experts in the visitor industry. A good tour company can take care of the back-end portion of an agritourism program (taking reservations, making payment, dealing with customers), allowing farmers to focus on what they do best. Some will even train their own guides to present the program on your farm, leaving you with little to do beyond greeting the group and thanking them for coming. Most tour companies need a good deal of lead time to establish and market a program. If you think you might be interested in working with an industry professional, it's up to you to make the first step and contact the tour company of your choice.

Developing the Program



When you welcome visitors onto your farm, ranch, or nursery, you become an ambassador to the agricultural industry and to Hawai'i. The experience you provide has the potential to create lifelong memories and a lasting impression.

Many visitors who seek out a farm or ranch are looking for **genuine** experiences reflective of the lives of the people of Hawai'i. Others are curious about how familiar plants grow (pineapples actually don't grow on trees), how poi is produced, or where the ti leaves that adorn the buffet table come from. In short, they are looking for genuine insights into a place they've come to visit and wish to learn more about.

With this in mind, it is not necessary, or even desirable, to turn your operation upside down to accommodate guests. Your farm is interesting as it is. Your job is to make sure it is safe and accessible, and to create an experience that genuinely reflects the agricultural operation visitors have come to see.

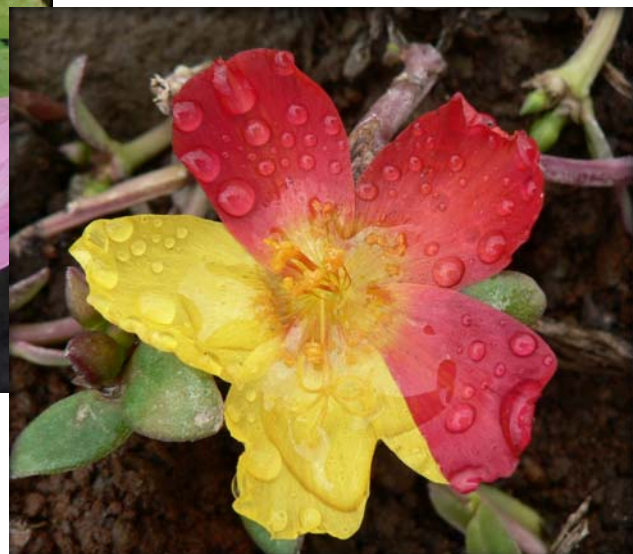
Agricultural tourism covers a very wide range of activities, from brief guided farm tours to sites with hours open to the public with a gift shop and food service. In each instance, agriculture should be your business' primary activity. Whatever level of agritourism operations you pursue, remember that the program should support, and not significantly detract, from your agricultural business.

When planning your program, bear in mind that making your facility more open to the public can have its drawbacks. For example, if you establish regular hours of operation during which you are open to the public, you may unwittingly make yourself more vulnerable to **agricultural theft**. Consider placing personnel where they can deter casual theft, and taking additional security measures (installing cameras or theft deterrent devices, for example).

If you produce food for human consumption at your farm, you already know that food safety is a growing concern. Make sure that your program does not enable casual visitors to touch or handle food that is destined for markets. Children in diapers should be restricted from areas where fresh food is present. Visitors to processing facilities should wear hair nets, and travel in guided groups along pre-determined routes. If your establishment is **food safety** certified, make sure that nothing in your new program may compromise that status.

Consider the nature of your audience. Sites open to the public cannot control who visits them, and may wish to confine visitors to certain areas with this in mind. It's always good to have a place where **children** can move about and seniors can sit down.

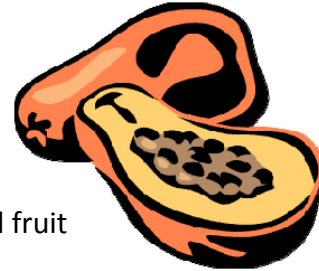
Add some interpretive signage, and provide translations if your program targets non-English speakers. The most important signage to post involves safety: where not to go, what not to touch, how to get out. Other signage should be short, simple and to the point, identifying crops or machinery, or outlining production steps. Mounted **photographs** of the operation or the site, especially those from years ago, are wonderful interpretive tools for all audiences.



Making the Experience Memorable

To make your program stand out, try to create active experiences for your visitors. An active experience involves actually doing something, as opposed to passively watching or listening. Examples include:

- Picking plumeria and stringing a lei
- Planting huli in a taro patch
- Cracking open kukui nuts and feeling the oil
- Picking, smelling, and perhaps tasting an assortment of unusual fruit
- Hand pollinating a rare flower
- Observing a honey comb being removed, and then tasting the honey
- Taking turns husking a coconut
- Helping to herd chickens into a coop
- Chewing on a fresh stalk of sugar cane



If your program is for organized group tours only, offer a contest to each group (guess how many guavas it takes to make a jar of jam, or how many months it takes pineapple to mature, or where plumeria originated) and provide an appropriate prize (a jar of jam, a pineapple, a plumeria lei) to the winner.

Share the challenges of your operation, and explain how you surmount them. Give visitors a chance to appreciate your expertise and the value of your products.

Don't overwhelm visitors with information. Determine the most important points to convey, and start with that. Encourage a dialogue with guests that encourages questions and answers.

When people have unusual experiences, they tend to want to record the moment with photographs. Make sure to allow time and a place for this, and/or offer to help take photos. You might even market small picture frames with your company logo.



One of the best ways to make a visit memorable is to establish a **personal relationship** with your visitors. Find out about their interests and backgrounds, and relate them to your own. Encourage questions and turn your presentation into a conversation. If it isn't a burden, adjust your tour to meet the specific interests of the group. Treat your visitors as guests, not customers.

Enhancing the Setting

A subtle but important aspect of the visitor experience is the setting. Farm sites need to consider the basic comfort of their guests. A hot, dry site needs a shady area for respite. A rainy site needs shelter from inclement weather. All sites need a bathroom or portable toilet that is clean and well maintained, a place for people to wash their hands with soap, and basic seating for at least a few people who need to get off their feet. Provide a rubbish bin, and if guests are likely to have water bottles or soda cans, provide a recycle bin too.

If part of the experience includes a sit down activity (such as stringing a lei), a little background music is always welcome. A live instrument, such as a ukulele, is a very nice touch. Guests often like to “talk story” with someone from the farm during these interludes, and this can help in creating a **memorable experience**. If your farm is a family business, this is an excellent opportunity to get other family members involved.

In considering gathering areas, shelter, furniture, and props, remember that **charm** goes a long way in creating a positive experience. A graceful tree may provide more comfortable shade than a tent, a picnic bench is often nicer than a folding or plastic chair, and a Hawaiian print cloth can dress up a simple table to display fruit or flowers. Where possible, designate gathering sites in places that offer an interesting view. Avoid areas that are noisy, smelly, or dusty.

Creating a comfortable, welcoming and memorable experience does not need to be expensive. It just takes some careful consideration and a little aloha.



Adding Value

You can increase revenues at your site by providing opportunities for guests to pay for more than basic program admission. Fresh fruits and vegetables, whole and uncut, can be sold directly to a customer. By offering to ship fruits out of state for the customer, you can add value to this product. Be sure to check with the Department of Agriculture to determine if, how, and to where you specific products can be shipped, and include all costs, including your time, in establishing a price.

Foods that are processed (bananas into banana bread, mangos into chutney, etc.) must be prepared in a commercial kitchen approved by the State Department of Health. The University's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) has developed guidelines about establishing a commercial kitchen, available for download at <http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/oc/freepubs/pdf/FMT-2.pdf>.

Additionally, there are a number of commercial kitchens around O'ahu that can be rented for specific time periods (see Rules and Regulations).

If you are licensed to sell non-agricultural goods, consider selling handicrafts or other non-perishable items that relate to your agricultural activities. Involve neighbors with crafting skills. And don't forget to stock a few items that all visitors look for, such as snacks, drinks, postcards, and batteries for cameras.

In conjunction with developing value added products, businesses should develop a brand identity, with a label or sticker that is easily identified. That label or sticker needs to be on every value-added item you sell.

If you want customers to continue to be able to buy your products after they leave, help them do it! Provide a website or email address, or tell them how they can get in touch with you. You may also want to get their contact information (voluntary only), so that you can alert them to seasonal specials or other purchasing opportunities. For more information about branding and marketing, see the *Hawaii Agribusiness Guidebook*, which you can download from our website at <http://www.oahurcd.org/hawaii-agribusiness-guidebook>.

Establishing Rules

If there is anything you don't want visitors to do, let them know up front! Add signage if appropriate. Things to consider include:

- Running
- Taking photos in sensitive areas
- Entering certain areas
- Yelling or otherwise disturbing animals
- Touching equipment, produce, or animals
- Eating
- Littering
- Changing diapers
- Interfering with farming activities

If you do need to correct someone's behavior, try to do it with grace and good humor.

Health and Safety

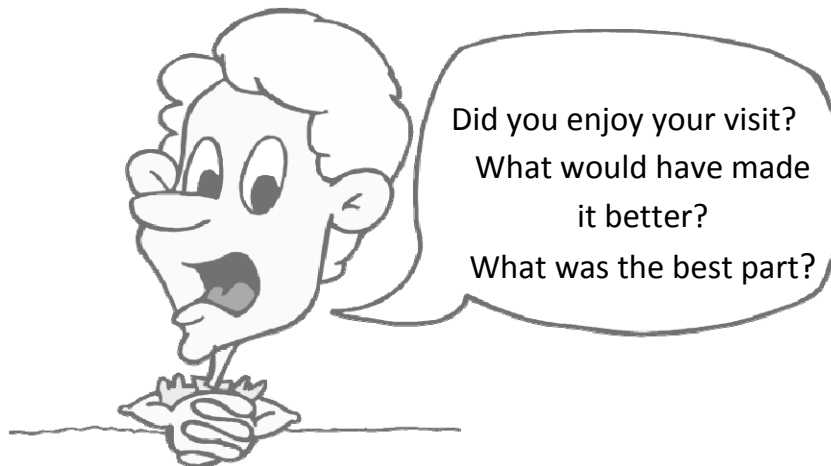
Site safety is an extremely important consideration. If you are negligent in not maintaining a safe site, you could be held liable should a visitor suffer an accident. Here are a few basic safety considerations:

- Remove accessible **poisonous** plants from your property. If it is not possible to remove them, clearly mark them as poisonous. A good reference on poisonous plants in Hawaii is available on the web at <http://hurthawaii.blogspot.com/PoisonPlantsHawaii.pdf> or visit the library for a pamphlet entitled *Common Poisonous Plants of Hawaii* from the Hawaii State Department of Health.
- Make sure that any paths are clear of tripping hazards, not slippery, well-marked and well-lit. Properly **maintain** all hand rails and walkways. Remove wasp hives, and make sure visitors know in advance if there are any bee hives in the vicinity.
- Ensure that any potential hazardous equipment (i.e. pruning shears) or supplies (i.e. pesticides) are locked up or otherwise out of reach of guests.
- Label anything potentially **hazardous**, and have clearly marked exit routes.
- Develop a system to ensure that you know where your visitors are, and that none are left behind from group tours, or are still on property at the end of the day.
- Maintain a clean establishment. Make sure there are places for guests to wash hands.
- Don't let your guests become dehydrated or overheated. Make **water** available, either in a cooler with cups or in water bottles.
- Require that all **children** have chaperones.
- If your property is in a tsunami inundation zone, develop an emergency evacuation plan. If a possible tsunami (or other natural disaster) is forecast, it would be prudent to cancel your program.
- Consider taking a **First Aid** and CPR class from the American Red Cross. If you have staff, have everyone trained and certified.
- Maintain a well-stocked, well-marked, easily accessible First Aid kit.
- Develop an emergency plan: Identify who makes decisions, how communications are handled, and establish a rendezvous site.
- If your farm is not easy to locate, visit your local fire station and offer to show them the route. In an emergency, they will likely be the first responders.

While health and safety concerns must be paramount in your operation, don't let them overwhelm you. Make every effort to avoid problems at the outset, but should they arise, be prepared and know your plan of action.

Program Evaluation

Most program participants have little interest in evaluating a program and providing feedback. But getting their candid thoughts is essential to improving your program and developing a successful agritourism operation. If you have managed to establish a rapport with your guests, consider asking a few essential questions:



Be attuned to visitors' actions and body language. Is there a place they seem to favor? Do they look happy? Bored? Frustrated? Do they seem pleased to browse, or impatient to leave?

If you are working in partnership with a tour operator, enlist the tour guide or driver to elicit feedback from the visitors once back on the bus, and follow up with them later. The tour operators themselves, who are experienced with many different types of visitors programs and venues, may also provide valuable feedback and suggestions.

Despite all the planning and preparation that goes into launching an agritourism venture, no one gets it completely right the first time. Learn, modify, and adapt your program as you go. Keep it fresh, and make it fun.

What's Next?

We hope this document has been useful in providing guidance, information and ideas to help you evaluate an agritourism program for your farm. We encourage you to learn as much as you can by visiting other agritourism operations and talking with other farmers. Should you decide to embark on an agritourism program, plan as well as you can, but be prepared for surprises along the way. Agritourism is still a very young industry, with plenty of room to grow and develop. Please let us know about your agritourism adventures so that we may share your experience with others. Mahalo!

Appendix A

Agritourism Checklist

Before You Begin...

- Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of your proposed plan
- Present your proposed program to the Neighborhood Board or other community group
- Obtain a Special Use Permit to conduct agritourism activities
- Obtain other required permits (e.g. Building Permit) and lease modifications
- Develop a program and field test it with friends and neighbors
- Establish a brand identity, develop a logo, and give your program a name
- Set up a sales system for direct sales
- Obtain liability insurance
- Develop an emergency plan
- Clearly mark areas for visitors and areas that are off limits
- Provide a restroom for guests to use
- Identify a gathering place in the event of inclement weather

Once you get started...

- Invite neighbors and community groups to visit
- Track expenses and revenues closely, and analyze for points of weakness or profit
- Incorporate a mechanism for feedback and evaluation
- Maintain all public areas in good, safe condition
- Train others to take your place if needed
- Work to ensure a consistent, high quality experience for every visitor

Appendix B

House Bill No. 2145

This Bill establishes permitted uses on agricultural lands in the State of Hawai'i. Note that the permitted agritourism activities are only allowable in counties that have developed an ordinance addressing agricultural tourism. Honolulu County currently has no such ordinance.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
 TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE,
 2006
 STATE OF HAWAII

H.B. NO. 2145
 H.D. 2
 S.D. 1
 C.D. 1

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL TOURISM.

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

SECTION 1. Section 205-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (d) to read as follows: "(d) Agricultural districts shall include [activities]:

- (1) Activities or uses as characterized by the cultivation of crops, orchards, forage, and forestry; [farming]
- (2) Farming activities or uses related to animal husbandry, [aquaculture,] and game and fish propagation; [aquaculture,]
- (3) Aquaculture, which means the production of aquatic plant and animal life [for food and fiber] within ponds and other bodies of water; [wind]
- (4) Wind generated energy production for public, private, and commercial use; [bona]
- (5) Bona fide agricultural services and uses that support the agricultural activities of the fee or leasehold owner of the property and accessory to any of the above activities, whether or not conducted on the same premises as the agricultural activities to which they are accessory, including but not limited to farm dwellings as defined in section 205-4.5(a)(4), employee housing, farm buildings, mills, storage facilities, processing facilities, vehicle and equipment storage areas, and roadside stands for the sale of products grown on the premises; [wind]

- (6) Wind machines and wind farms; [small-scale]
- (7) Small-scale meteorological, air quality, noise, and other scientific and environmental data collection and monitoring facilities occupying less than one-half acre of land[,]; provided that these facilities shall not be used as or equipped for use as living quarters or dwellings; [agricultural parks; and open]
- (8) Agricultural parks;
- (9) Agricultural tourism conducted on a working farm, or a farming operation as defined in section 165-2, for the enjoyment, education, or involvement of visitors; provided that the agricultural tourism activity is accessory and secondary to the principal agricultural use and does not interfere with surrounding farm operations; and provided further that this paragraph shall apply only to a county that has adopted ordinances regulating agricultural tourism under section 205-5;
- 10) Open area recreational facilities.

[For the purposes of this chapter,] Agricultural districts shall not include golf courses and golf driving ranges [are prohibited in agricultural districts,], except as provided in section 205-4.5 (d). [These] Agricultural districts [may] include areas [which] that are not used for, or [which] that are not suited to, agricultural and ancillary activities by reason of topography, soils, and other related characteristics."

SECTION 2. Section 205-4.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

"(a) Within the agricultural district, all lands with soil classified by the land study bureau's detailed land classification as overall (master) productivity rating class A or B shall be restricted to the following permitted uses:

- (1) Cultivation of crops, including but not limited to flowers, vegetables, foliage, fruits, forage, and timber;
- (2) Game and fish propagation;
- (3) Raising of livestock, including but not limited to poultry, bees, fish, or other animal or aquatic life that are propagated for economic or personal use;
- (4) Farm dwellings, employee housing, farm buildings, or [activity] activities or uses related to farming and animal husbandry. [Farm dwelling] "Farm dwelling" as used in this paragraph means a single-family dwelling located on and used in connection with a farm, including clusters of single-family farm dwellings permitted within agricultural parks developed by the State, or where agricultural activity provides income to the family occupying the dwelling;

- (5) Public institutions and buildings that are necessary for agricultural practices;
- (6) Public and private open area types of recreational uses, including day camps, picnic grounds, parks, and riding stables, but not including dragstrips, airports, drive-in theaters, golf courses, golf driving ranges, country clubs, and overnight camps;
- (7) Public, private, and quasi-public utility lines and roadways, transformer stations, communications equipment buildings, solid waste transfer stations, major water storage tanks, and appurtenant small buildings such as booster pumping stations, but not including offices or yards for equipment, material, vehicle storage, repair or maintenance, or treatment plants, or corporation yards, or other like structures;
- (8) Retention, restoration, rehabilitation, or improvement of buildings or sites of historic or scenic interest;
- (9) Roadside stands for the sale of agricultural products grown on the premises;
- (10) Buildings and uses, including but not limited to mills, storage, and processing facilities, maintenance facilities, and vehicle and equipment storage areas that are normally considered directly accessory to the abovementioned uses and are permitted under section 205-2(d);
- (11) Agricultural parks; [or]
- (12) Agricultural tourism conducted on a working farm, or a farming operation as defined in section 165-2, for the enjoyment, education, or involvement of visitors; provided that the agricultural tourism activity is accessory and secondary to the principal agricultural use and does not interfere with surrounding farm operations; and provided further that this paragraph shall apply only to a county that has adopted ordinances regulating agricultural tourism under section 205-5; or
- [(12)] (13) Wind energy facilities, including the appurtenances associated with the production and transmission of wind generated energy; provided that such facilities and appurtenances are compatible with agriculture uses and cause minimal adverse impact on agricultural land."

SECTION 3. Section 205-5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

"(b) Within agricultural districts, uses compatible to the activities described in section 205-2 as determined by the commission shall be permitted; provided that accessory agricultural uses and services described in sections 205-2 and 205-4.5 may be further defined by each county by zoning ordinance. Each county shall adopt ordinances setting forth procedures and requirements, including provisions for enforcement, penalties, and administrative oversight, for the review and permitting of agricultural tourism uses and activities as an accessory use on a working farm, or farming operation as defined in section 165-2; provided that agricultural tourism activities shall not be permissible in the absence of a bona fide farming operation. Ordinances shall include but not be limited to:

- (1) Requirements for access to a farm, including road width, road surface, and parking;
- (2) Requirements and restrictions for accessory facilities connected with the farming operation, including gift shops and restaurants; provided that overnight accommodations shall not be permitted;
- (3) Activities that may be offered by the farming operation for visitors;
- (4) Days and hours of operation; and
- (5) Automatic termination of the accessory use upon the cessation of the farming operation.

Each county may require an environmental assessment under chapter 343 as a condition to any agricultural tourism use and activity. Other uses may be allowed by special permits issued pursuant to this chapter. The minimum lot size in agricultural districts shall be determined by each county by zoning ordinance, subdivision ordinance, or other lawful means; provided that the minimum lot size for any agricultural use shall not be less than one acre, except as provided herein.

If the county finds that unreasonable economic hardship to the owner or lessee of land cannot otherwise be prevented or where land utilization is improved, the county may allow lot sizes of less than the minimum lot size as specified by law for lots created by a consolidation of existing lots within an agricultural district and the resubdivision thereof; provided that the consolidation and resubdivision do not result in an increase in the number of lots over the number existing prior to consolidation; and provided further that in no event shall a lot, which is equal to or exceeds the minimum lot size of one acre be less than that minimum after the consolidation and resubdivision action. The county may also allow lot sizes of less than the minimum lot size as specified by law for lots created or used for public, private, and quasi-public utility purposes, and for lots resulting from the subdivision of abandoned roadways and railroad easements."

SECTION 4. Section 343-5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

"(a) Except as otherwise provided, an environmental assessment shall be required for actions that:

- (1) Propose the use of state or county lands or the use of state or county funds, other than funds to be used for feasibility or planning studies for possible future programs or projects that the agency has not approved, adopted, or funded, or funds to be used for the acquisition of unimproved real property; provided that the agency shall consider environmental factors and available alternatives in its feasibility or planning studies; provided further that an environmental assessment for proposed uses under section 205-2(d)(9) or 205-4.5(a)(12) shall only be required pursuant to section 205-5(b);
- (2) Propose any use within any land classified as a conservation district by the state land use commission under chapter 205;
- (3) Propose any use within a shoreline area as defined in section 205A-4;
- (4) Propose any use within any historic site as designated in the National Register or Hawaii Register, as provided for in the Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Public Law 89-665, or chapter 6E;
- (5) Propose any use within the Waikiki area of Oahu, the boundaries of which are delineated in the land use ordinance as amended, establishing the "Waikiki Special District";
- (6) Propose any amendments to existing county general plans where the amendment would result in designations other than agriculture, conservation, or preservation, except actions proposing any new county general plan or amendments to any existing county general plan initiated by a county;
- (7) Propose any reclassification of any land classified as a conservation district by the state land use commission under chapter 205;

- (8) Propose the construction of new or the expansion or modification of existing helicopter facilities within the State, that by way of their activities, may affect:
- (A) Any land classified as a conservation district by the state land use commission under chapter 205;
 - (B) A shoreline area as defined in section 205A-41; or
 - (C) Any historic site as designated in the National Register or Hawaii Register, as provided for in the Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Public Law 89-665, or chapter 6E; or until the statewide historic places inventory is completed, any historic site that is found by a field reconnaissance of the area affected by the helicopter facility and is under consideration for placement on the National Register or the Hawaii Register of Historic Places; and
- (9) Propose any:
- (A) Wastewater treatment unit, except an individual wastewater system or a wastewater treatment unit serving fewer than fifty single-family dwellings or the equivalent;
 - (B) Waste-to-energy facility;
 - (C) Landfill;
 - (D) Oil refinery; or
 - (E) Power-generating facility."

SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Appendix C

Supporting Organizations

HAWAII AGRITOURISM ASSOCIATION

If you are interested in developing an agritourism program at your farm, ranch or nursery, we urge you to join the Hawaii Agritourism Association. Visit their website at www.hiagtourism.org for information and ideas about agritourism around the state.

HAWAII ECOTOURISM ASSOCIATION

If your farm or program includes elements that may be of interest to those seeking ecotours (e.g. native water birds in taro, or native trees in an agroforestry program), you may wish join the Hawaii Ecotourism Association (www.hawaiiecotourism.org).

HAWAI'I FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

The Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation is a nonprofit organization comprised of farmers state-wide. The HFBF is very active in legislative and land use issues, advocating for programs that protect farmland and help farmers. To learn more, visit their website at www.hfbf.org.

HAWAI'I FARMERS UNION

As a division of the National Farmers' Union, the Hawaii Farmers' Union works to advocate for island farmers on policy and land use issues, and to promote progressive farming technologies. Learn more at their website at www.hawaiifarmersunion.org.

HAWAI'I TOURISM AUTHORITY

HTA is an invaluable source of information concerning the visitor industry. In particular, it conducts in-depth market research identifying visitor trends, which can be useful when establishing a target audience and designing a program (www.hawaiitourismauthority.org).

O'AHU RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

O'ahu RC&D supports resource conservation and rural development programs in our communities. Visit the O'ahu RC&D website at www.oahurcd.org to download free resources such as this Guidebook, the *Hawaii Agribusiness Guidebook*, and information about upcoming programs and events. To receive our free e-bulletin, send us an email at admin@oahurcd.org.

Appendix D

Government Resources

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

Bill 55

This bill, approved by the City and Council of Honolulu in 2008, refers to direct sales from plant nurseries. An excerpt from the document includes: "retail sales shall be limited to plants sold directly from the greenhouse or open field where the product has been grown or cultivated and only sales of the products in their primary form shall be allowed. There shall be no retail sales of secondary products such as jams, candies, juices, and baked goods. Except for an accessory roadside stand or an enclosed structure approved by a conditional use permit for accessory agribusiness activities, there shall be no separate structures utilized primarily for retail sales". Read the entire bill here <http://www4.honolulu.gov/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-92028/4glq5l2q.pdf>.

Department of Planning and Permitting

This City and County agency provides services and information relating to building permits, development projects, and planning activities. For information about permitting requirements visit: <http://www.honoluluodpp.org/PermitInfo/>. For information regarding how to apply for a Special Use Permit visit: <http://www.honoluluodpp.org/downloadpdf/planning/SUPAPP.pdf>.

Land Use Ordinance

This ordinance, from the City and County of Honolulu, provides information about zoning district classifications and map designations; parking and sign regulations and specific uses; minor and major permits; agricultural clusters; and height and noise regulations. Review this ordinance under chapter 21, entitled "Land Use Ordinance", at http://www.honolulu.gov/refs/roh/21_990.pdf. To see a complete listing of Honolulu ordinances, visit <http://www.co.honolulu.hi.us/refs/roh/>.

HAWAII COUNTY

Ordinance 08 155 (BILL 148)

This agritourism ordinance was adopted by Hawaii County in 2008, and may serve as a model for an ordinance for Honolulu County. Read it at <http://www.hiagtourism.org/pdf/news/Bill148.pdf>.

STATE OF HAWAII

Department of Agriculture

The State Department of Agriculture offers a valuable website and extensive resources for famers. Programs include the By Local, It Matters campaign and various quality control incentives. To learn more, visit their website at www.Hawaii.gov/hdoa.

Department of Business , Economic Development and Tourism

This department defines itself as the provider of “the economic and statistical expertise that guides State economic development efforts”. Its focus is related to interpretation of district boundaries (urban, agricultural, conservation, rural) and permissible land uses. Read Chapter 15 entitled “Land Use Commission Rules” at <http://luc.state.hi.us/docs/har title15 chapter15 web.pdf>.

Department of Health

The State Department of Hawaii provides information about, requirements and permits for different types of food establishments; food preparation, storage and transportation; equipment, utensils and employee hygiene. Read chapter 12, entitled “Food Establishment Sanitation”, at <http://gen.doh.hawaii.gov/sites/har/AdmRules1/11-12.pdf>.

University of Hawaii, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

CTAHR is a valuable resource for the entire community. One publication, *Test-Kitchen Incubator*, provides guidelines for commercial kitchens; read more at <http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/oc/freepubs/pdf/FMT-2.pdf>. It also hosts the Agribusiness Incubator Program, which provides business consulting services to agriculture-related businesses. Learn more at www.ctahr.hawaii.edu.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

United States Department of Agriculture

The USDA has many programs to support small farmers, including grants (Rural Development, www.rurdev.usda.gov), low-interest loans (Farm Service Agency, www.fsa.usda.gov) and funds for improvements that address conservation needs (NRCS, www.pia.nrcs.usda.gov).

Hawaii Agricultural Service

Working in concert with the USDA, the Hawaii Agriculture Service (HAS) compiles data concerning agriculture in our state. For example, according to a 2008 HAS publication, 62% of Hawaii agritourism participants came from the Mainland, followed by 20% Hawai'i residents and 18% international visitors. For most operations, business was about the same year round. To learn more, visit the Hawaii Agricultural Service website at <http://www.nass.usda.gov/hi/>.

Small Business Administration

The Small Business Administration (<http://www.sba.gov>) and the Small Business Development Center (<http://www.hawaii-sbdc.org>) are two helpful portals for all small business people. Services provided include information on loans, grants and funding opportunities leadership lessons.

Appendix E

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND PERMITTING State Special Use Permit (SUP)

Application Instructions

This document is intended only as a guide to preparing an application. Please refer to the State Land Use Law, Chapter 205 HRS, and the Rules of the Planning Commission of the City and County of Honolulu for more information.

I. Overview

A. Pre-Application Meeting. You are encouraged to review this guide and schedule a preliminary meeting with DPP staff to discuss the application and processing requirements. Please call 768-8049 to schedule a meeting.

B. Neighborhood Board. You are encouraged to make an informational presentation to the neighborhood board in whose district the proposed project is to be located. For information regarding the appropriate neighborhood board to contact, please call the Neighborhood Commission at 527-5749.

C. HRS Provisions. Please refer to Chapter 205, HRS, and the Rules of the Planning Commission of the City and County of Honolulu for additional information. In particular, refer to the following:

Section 205-2 Districting and classification of lands

Section 205-4.5 Permissible uses with agricultural districts

Section 205-5 Zoning

Section 205-6 Special Permit

Rules of the Planning Commission, City and County of Honolulu (effective 1.16.1995)

Subchapter 4 Rules Applicable to State Special Use Permits

Subchapter 5 R

D. Process. If the subject area for which the SUP is requested is 15 acres or less, the City Planning Commission will be the final authority for approval or denial. If the subject area is greater than 15 acres, the Planning Commission will make a recommendation, and the State Land Use Commission will be the final authority for approval or denial.

II. Application Requirements

A. DPP Master Application. Complete and submit the DPP Planning Division Master Application Form. Provide all requested information.

B. Fees. Submit the appropriate fees calculated as follows: \$600 base fee, plus an additional \$225 per acre, or major fraction thereof, of the project site, up to a maximum of \$6,000. Fees should be made payable to the City and County of Honolulu and are non-refundable.

C. Written Statement. Your application package must include two (2) copies of the following material. The written statement and supporting materials should be bound or stapled together to insure that all the submittal materials are kept together when transmitted to the public and agencies for review. If you are submitting a multi-permit application, please submit two copies for each permit. Upon completion of the DPP's initial review of your submittal, you will be notified of the number of ADDITIONAL copies required for agency and community review and comment.

The written statement must address the following issues:

1. Land Use Commission Guidelines. Describe how the proposed use will meet the following State Land Use Commission "guidelines" for granting an SUP:

a. Such use shall not be contrary to the objectives sought to be accomplished by the (State) Land Use Law and Regulations.

- b. That the desired use would not adversely affect surrounding property.
- c. Such use would not unreasonably burden public agencies to provide roads and streets, sewers, water, drainage and school improvements, and police and fire protection.
- d. Unusual conditions, trends and needs have arisen since the district boundaries and regulations were established.
- e. That the land upon which the proposed use is sought is unsuited for the uses permitted within the District.

2. Compliance with LUO. Indicate how the proposed use complies with the purpose and intent, uses and development standards of the applicable zoning district, as set forth in Article 3 of the Land Use Ordinance.

3. Project Site. Describe the project site, including:

a. Soil type(s) and classifications under current ratings systems, including:

(1) Land Capability Groupings by the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

(2) Agricultural Lands of Importance in the State of Hawaii (ALISH) by SCS, University of Hawaii (UH) College of Tropical Agricultural and Human Resources, and the State of Hawaii Department of Agriculture.

(3) Overall Productivity Rating by the UH Land Study Bureau.

b. Topography, abutting uses and chronological history of the use of the land including the present use of the property.

4. Project Description.

a. Details on existing and proposed uses and activities, such as hours of operation, number of persons (clients and staff) on the site, and use and number of structures.

b. Details on existing and proposed structures, building and site alterations, including parking areas, grading and landscaping including building heights, setbacks and buffering from adjoining parcels.

5. Infrastructure Requirements. Describe infrastructure requirements for the project, including the following if applicable (preliminary checks with the appropriate agency are encouraged):

a. Method of wastewater disposal and adequacy of the system to accommodate the proposal. Contact DPP, Wastewater Branch (768-8197) and/or State Department of Health (586-4294).

b. Water needs. Contact Board of Water Supply (748-5440).

c. Drainage problems, if any. Check flood hazard maps. Contact DPP, Civil Engineering Branch (768-8102).

d. Streets and Transportation

(1) A traffic impact analysis may be required.

(2) Contact DPP, Traffic Review Branch (768-8077) and/or the State Department of Transportation (587-2171) for details.

(3) Address transportation issues; i.e. road improvements, park and ride facilities.

6. Mitigative Measures. Identify major concerns raised during preliminary agency review and community input, and indicate proposed mitigative measures to address these concerns.

D. Photos. Submit photos of the project site showing the following:

1. Street access (ingress and egress) to the project site;

2. Uses on adjoining properties; and

3. Building setbacks from property lines, distances to neighboring buildings, parking areas, and other uses, on the site.

(Note: All photos should be labeled and keyed to a general site map.)

For further assistance or information on how to complete the application, please call the DPP at 768-8049 or 768-8054.

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER A SPECIAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION HAS BEEN SUBMITTED

The Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) will review the application to make sure that it is complete as described above in Section II: Application Requirements. Our guideline for this review is that DPP will determine whether the application is complete and notify the Planning Commission and the applicant that the application has been accepted for processing.

Thirty-days after acceptance, the period of agency/public review and comment will close, and DPP will begin to prepare the Director's Report and Recommendation concerning the proposed Special Use Permit for transmittal to the Planning Commission with the application.

Within 60 days after acceptance, a notice of a public hearing before the Planning Commission will be published.

Within 14 days after the public hearing notice is published, any party seeking to require that the permit be decided through a contested case hearing must file a petition to intervene.

Within 21 days after the public hearing notice is published, anyone opposing a proposed intervention must file written objections to the intervention.

Within 90 days after acceptance, the Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing on the permit, unless an extension has been agreed to by all parties.

If one or more petitions to intervene have been received, the Commission will first decide if the petitions will be granted. The commission shall grant or deny the petition to intervene within a reasonable time. The public hearing on the Special Use Permit shall remain open until after the commission acts on the petition to intervene.

If the project requiring the Special Use Permit also requires other permits or approvals that require a public hearing before the Planning Commission, the Planning Commission may conduct a single hearing.

Within 60 days after the close of the public hearing,

If the SUP is for an area of 15 acres or less, the Planning Commission will issue a written Decision and Order, including Findings of Fact and

Conclusions of Law, unless a longer period of time is agreed upon by all parties.

If the SUP is for an area of more than 15 acres, the Planning Commission will transmit the application, a complete record of the proceedings before the Planning Commission, and their written Decision and Order, including Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, to the State Land Use Commission (LUC).

Within 45 days after the LUC receives the complete record from the Planning Commission for an SUP for more than 15 acres, the LUC will act to approve, approve with modification, or deny the SUP.



Mahalo