



GOFARM
HAWAI'I

Progress Report 2011-2014

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After just three years since conception, GoFarm Hawaii has become Hawaii's premier beginning farmer development program. This is a testament to many hands and minds, and the tremendous support of many partners. While the growth and progress of the GoFarm Hawaii program has been impressive, it is the new farmers that this young program has already produced that is most exciting for Hawaii's agricultural future.

BACKGROUND

In 2012, a group of professionals from the University of Hawaii met to discuss the need for a new kind of beginning farmer training program for Hawaii – one that had a science-based curriculum, included rigorous hands-on and business training, and was open to all willing adults – the kind of program that would prepare the growing population of those who were interested in farming with the knowledge, experience, and confidence to contribute to Hawaii's food security and economy as production farmers.

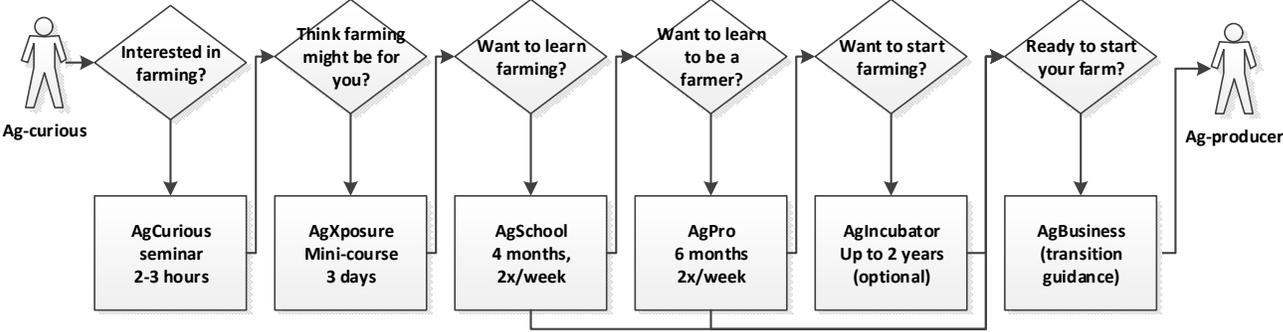
The timing was ripe: Farming and local food was in vogue and the group wanted to capitalize upon this newfound interest by developing at least some of this population into productive new farmers. A survey of beginning farmer training programs across Hawaii and the mainland U.S. led to an organized tour of some of the most successful examples, and was attended by the group from UH system as well as representatives from a Hawaii organization with large landholdings, all of whom had an interest in developing new farmers.

With increasing momentum and excitement (and using U.S. Department of Labor workforce training funding), the group launched the GoFarm Hawaii program in late 2012 with a hastily arranged seminar at Windward Community College. The surprisingly large turnout reflected the great interest and demand in learning to farm.



THE GOFARM HAWAII MODEL

In order to capitalize upon the large interest in farming, while recognizing the inexperience of many of the interested, a multi-phased development model is used to turn the Ag-Curious into the Ag-Producer:



In addition to the AgCurious, AgXposure, and AgSchool phases at Windward, Leeward, and Kauai Community Colleges, the AgPro and AgIncubator phases are offered at CTAHR’s Waimanalo Agricultural Experiment Station. The optional AgIncubator allows qualified participants to start their own agribusinesses using land, facilities, and equipment provided by the program for a fee. The AgBusiness one-on-one guidance is provided by UH’s Agribusiness Incubator Program whenever participants are ready to start their agribusinesses.

This innovative model requires increasing commitment of its participants along with increasing resources from the program. It has proven effective and efficient in developing new farmers who are both realistic and prepared to face the demands and complexity of farming.



PROGRAM MILESTONES

- 7/2011 – New farmer development interest group formed of professionals from UH Maui College, UH Hilo, CTAHR statewide, Windward Community College, and the Agribusiness Incubator Program.
- 11/2011 – Basis of current model formed after nationwide survey of similar programs.
- 3/2012 – Interest group expanded to include Kamehameha Schools and the Center for Agricultural Success (Hawaii Community College).
- 7/2012 – Members of interest group tour farmer training and incubation programs across the Northeast U.S.
- 9/2012 – GoFarm Hawaii name chosen and website launched. Program to utilize WCC's US Department of Labor funding.
- 10/2012 – **First AgCurious seminar held at WCC.** 90 people attended!
- 12/2012 – First AgXposure sessions held for 20 selected applicants. Land secured at CTAHR's Waimanalo station.
- 1/2013 – **First AgSchool cohort started at WCC** for 13 selected applicants.
- 5/2013 – AgSchool cohort transitions to CTAHR's station at Waimanalo (AgPro).
- 9/2013 – **Second AgSchool cohort begins at WCC.**
- 10/2013 – Partnership with Green Wheel Food Hub and Waimanalo Health Center for a farmers market in Waimanalo. Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation passes resolution in support of GoFarm Hawaii.
- 11/2013 – WCC Cohort 1 graduates 7 students. 3 graduates start in AgIncubator.
- 12/2013 – **Ulupono Initiative provides \$160K of funding. Kamehameha Schools provides \$60K.** GoFarm Hawaii expands to Kauai Community College.
- 1/2014 – GoFarm Hawaii expands to Leeward Community College.
- 3/2014 – **Third AgSchool cohort begins at WCC.**
- 4/2014 – **Kamehameha Schools increases support by \$38K.**
- 5/2014 – **KCC's first AgSchool cohort begins.**
- 4/2014 – **LCC's first AgSchool cohort begins. Third AgSchool cohort begins at WCC.**
- 6/2014 – WCC Cohort 2 graduates 12 students. 7 graduates start in AgIncubator.
- 7/2014 – **Hawaii Community Foundation, Doc Buyers Fund provides \$25K.** AgPro named as the continuation phase of AgSchool at Waimanalo, accepts 10 from WCC and LCC AgSchool cohorts.
- 10/2014 – **Kamehameha Schools increases support by \$110K.**
- 11/2014 – **Fourth AgSchool cohort begins at WCC, second AgSchool cohort begins at LCC.**
- 12/2014 – **GoFarm Hawaii receives \$712K grant from USDA, and \$75K from Hawaii Department of Agriculture.** Concrete plumbed Wash station construction completed at Waimanalo. Reached 332 followers on social media.



IMPACTS (THUS FAR!)

- Expanded to three programs on two islands
- Attracted almost \$1.2M in federal, state, and private funding
- Over 400 reached at seminars
- 120 enrolled (34 Native Hawaiian)
- 44 graduated (20 more actively in program)
- 13 farming commercially (9 in incubator). Selling to restaurants, retailers, wholesalers, and individuals.
- Almost 4 tons of produce harvested (more currently in the fields)



FUTURE PLANS

Encouraged by the success of the GoFarm Hawaii model in developing production farmers and the financial and in-kind support that enables planning for the future, GoFarm Hawaii has set its sights on bringing its program to additional locations in Hawaii.

GoFarm Hawaii has done much to standardize and “package” its curriculum to ensure consistent quality and facilitate easy startup of



additional sites: Student manuals, a distance-learning website, online video lectures and demonstrations, and online quizzes are largely completed and will be in 2015; Policies and procedures for students at each phase and for land and equipment use have been developed; An organizational structure and procedures that facilitates information sharing and data collection has been implemented.

Over the next three years, the program will partner with The Kohala Center to look inward by evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum, and outward by surveying communities to analyze the demand and feasibility of adding additional GoFarm Hawaii locations on Hawaii and/or Maui islands.

Bringing the benefits of GoFarm Hawaii to other locations will, of course, require significant resources, and program leadership will continue to seek support from organizations that recognize the importance of developing new farmers for Hawaii and GoFarm Hawaii’s effectiveness at achieving this goal.



PARTNERS

GoFarm Hawai'i would not be possible without the generous support and collaboration of the following organizations:



UNIVERSITY of HAWAII[®]
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and Human Resources**



United States Department of Agriculture
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Contact the site of your choosing for workday opportunities:
<http://www.gofarmhawaii.org/programs.html>

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Please specify "for the benefit of GoFarm Hawaii"

Online:

<https://giving.uhfoundation.org/give/giving-gift.aspx>
Please enter "GoFarm Hawaii" in the Other program/account field.

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Contact the program at the contact information below.



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