

Policy Opportunities for Agriculture in the General Plan Update

Policy	Notes & Ideas for Actionable Solutions
<p>The primary intent of the Agriculture zone is to conserve land and water resources in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) insure an excellent resource base for existing and potential agricultural uses; (b) assure a sufficient supply of land available for sale or lease at a cost that is economically feasible for agricultural enterprise; and (c) promote and preserve open agricultural lands as a key element of Kauai’s rural character and lifestyle, essential to its image as “The Garden Island” and to the continued viability and development of Kauai’s visitor industry. 	
<p>Lands included within the Agriculture zone shall be predominantly used for or held in reserve to be used in the future for agricultural activities. These activities include the breeding, planting, nourishing and caring for, gathering, and processing of any animal or plant organism, including aquatic animals and plants, for the purpose of producing food or material for non-food products; the commercial growing of flowers or other ornamental plants; the commercial growing of forest products; and the commercial breeding and caring for domestic animals and pets.</p>	
<p>Agriculture should be coordinated with other land use elements within the General Plan, in particular, with the policies of rural lands, open space/conservation and proximity to industrial zones important for processing.</p>	

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Balance protection of important agricultural lands and small diversified crops with more intensive agricultural investments and the preservation of natural habitat so that the protection of farmland can also serve to protect habitat.	
Direct urban growth away from productive agricultural lands.	
Amend the Subdivision Ordinance to require preservation of viable irrigation systems - both government- and privately-owned – and to support the supply of irrigation water to farmers at reasonable prices.	
Develop specific controls on the subdivision and alteration of agriculturally-zoned lands to prevent the dissipation of agricultural potential, the loss of rural character, and the conversion of land use to Urban land use designations.	
Develop a definition for “rural” and “rural zone” for Kaua’i to include its relationship to agriculture.	
Maintain irrigation works and easements where feasible and beneficial to existing or potential agricultural uses within the site or downstream.	
Preserve wetlands and streams and provide a riparian buffer area to prevent land disturbance and to filter runoff.	
Prospective buyers of property adjacent to agricultural land shall be notified through title report that they could be subject to inconvenience or discomfort resulting from accepted farming activities, pursuant to HRS Chapter 205.	
Consider redistricting of homestead lands from agriculture to “rural” in order to reflect the nature of these areas as “rural communities.”	

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Protect productive agricultural areas from conversion to non-agricultural uses by establishing urban growth buffers or other land preservation easements.	
Promote and support marketing of Kaua'i agriculture and food products within Kaua'i and to out-of-state markets.	
Collaborate with federal, state, and private farm organizations to expand and diversify agricultural enterprise on Kaua'i.	
Collaborate with State and federal agencies to expand direct financial and tax assistance to agricultural enterprise as well as increase funding for programs that support agricultural development and marketing programs on Kaua'i.	
Examine the feasibility of revising the agricultural property tax to increase incentives to lease land to small farmers and shall prepare an ordinance or rule amendments, as appropriate.	
Develop an agriculture development and support program that would leverage County resources by working collaboratively with state and federal agencies, and private business and farm organizations, such as for the development of regional agricultural parks.	
Continue to support the Sunshine Markets and other means of marketing Kaua'i agricultural and food products to Kaua'i residents, businesses and visitors.	
Pursue opportunities to link visitor industry marketing with marketing of Kaua'i agricultural products.	
Maintain the financial viability of the agricultural sector by encouraging expansion of commercial agriculture, attracting new agricultural support and value added industries, and promoting locally-grown commodity sales.	

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Promote local agricultural operations and businesses that provide competitive edge to Kaua'i County farmers and ranchers.	
Establish programs and coordinate with local, regional, and State agencies to encourage new economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable agricultural industries in Kaua'i County.	
Establish, as part of the County's economic development strategy, programs that promote and maintain local commercial agriculture.	
Actively monitor, review, comment, and advocate on pending major State and Federal legislation that could impact Kaua'i County. Coordinate position statements with Kaua'i Community College, the Farm Bureau, and other agricultural interest groups.	
Develop more school programs to prepare Kauai's youth for future careers in diversified agriculture and aquaculture, with additional emphasis on business skills.	