



MUFI HANNEMANN | LES CHANG

ON AGRICULTURE ISSUES

From our perspective, one of the challenges of this campaign has been evaluating the conversation about agriculture. With the adoption of new industry practices, we believe that agriculture has a great future in Hawaii that includes a mixture of big and small businesses and farmers as well as conventional, organic and biotech farming. Our history shows that due to economy of scales on importing needed supplies and building infrastructure, Big Agriculture is necessary for Small Agriculture to make a go at it. Collaborating together will ensure the industry's survivability and long-term growth.

The growth of the industry will positively impact the economy in several ways. Reversing the trend of importing most of the food we consume will help stem the flow of dollars that are currently leaving our economy. The expansion of both large and smaller scale farms producing locally grown produce that can be exported and marketed worldwide will also bring new dollars into the State's economy. So will increasing the capacity to produce more locally made food products. Both will continue to brand Hawaii and expand our internationally renowned local cuisine experiences for both resident and visitors. Partnerships between the agriculture and visitor industries to grow an agri-tourism niche market will also generate revenue for Hawaii and create jobs for our residents.

This growth is possible given Mufi Hannemann's exemplary agricultural background as a C. Brewer executive, once one of Hawaii's largest diversified agriculture companies and his strong support for agriculture and Hawaii regional cuisine. His experience as the former Director of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu and President and CEO of the Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Association also provide exceptional evidence of his unwavering backing of agriculture.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

During the course of this campaign, we have often said that agriculture and the Department of Agriculture in particular is the Rodney Dangerfield of government. **It gets no respect!**

Why do we say this? The Department of Agriculture budget says it all. It comprises only 0.7 percent of the state's budget even though the State has a constitutional mandate to conserve and protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture, increase agricultural self-

sufficiency and assure the availability of agriculturally suitable lands. (Article XI, Section 3) Given the level of funding, we should be grateful that there are people still willing to work in the department. With the vast array of issues they must contend with and limited financial support, it is no wonder why farmers and industry folks often do not get the support they need.

Our administration would not only increase the department's funding level over time but work to bring new life to the industry. Without doing so, the State will never achieve its security and sustainability goals. Nor will those interested in pursuing careers in this field will have the opportunities to do so. We need to make a concerted effort to entice young farmers and workers into the industry as well as keep existing farmers in agriculture. We need to make long-term land leases affordable, address water rates, strengthen the infrastructure, enhance market distribution systems and improve transportation options. We also need to address issues related to food labeling, invasive species, regulatory and trade. Bringing the farming community together to develop a long-range plan that not only addresses these critical issues but lays out a vision for the future of agriculture will be an important priority of our administration.

FARMERS' RIGHTS, LAND AND WATER

We support a farmer's right to farm. Farmers who follow the laws that govern their industry and respect their neighbors and community should be afforded the opportunity to farm and be profitable.

We believe one of the best ways to demonstrate our support of farmers is to form a new body known as the Hawaii Council of Leaders (HCL). The HCL will be comprised of the Governor and the Mayors of Hawaii, Kauai, Maui and Honolulu and will seek to find solutions for the State's most pressing problems, including those faced by the agriculture industry. Working through a community-based process, together we will reach out to farmers, ranchers and other stakeholders to ensure that all forms and scales of farming are supported.

Without a doubt, two key areas of focus will be land and water. The government, the State in particular, can play a key role in dedicating land for the sole purpose of farming. It can and should take the lead in ensuring that Hawaii has a ready supply of water for agriculture. While it is possible to farm on land that varies in quality, without water, farming cannot exist. In this regards, Hawaii must be open to public-private partnerships to develop needed infrastructure for the industry. An example would be building and maintaining desalination systems to supplement our dwindling water supply.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS 2 AND 5

We view the opportunity for voters to support two proposed constitutional amendments – 2 and 5 – as a great opportunity for farmers, ranchers and others in the agriculture community to

raise the capital needed to finance infrastructure and agricultural projects, including dams and reservoirs as well as workforce training, and renewable energy projects. We support the passage of both amendments.

GMO

We do not object to GMO. We are persuaded by the science that GMO is not harmful, therefore, it should not be banned. However, we share the concern of those who are troubled by pesticide drift. Because of the State's inventory of agriculture land, there are ways to help address this issue. An example is making land available to serve as buffer zones for the various forms of farming.

Because there are concerns on both sides, we believe that people should not view the GMO issue as an either or situation. It seems to us that the various parties should be able to work together to find reasonable solutions. For example, with respect to labeling, we believe that this issue should be addressed at the federal level. The food we eat and grow in Hawaii is both imported and exported so there needs to be a national standard that everyone lives by. Our administration will work with Hawaii's elected county, state, and federal officials as well as other interested parties to advocate in Washington, D.C. for labeling so consumers can make informed decisions about the produce and food products they purchase.

INVASIVE SPECIES

Protecting our islands from invasive species is critical for the expansion of agriculture in Hawaii. We must seriously look at funding a bio-security plan to protect our borders from invasive species. And be serious about developing an eradication plan once these species have come ashore. Since it is always better to prevent species from coming into our islands than trying to control them once they are here, we need to ensure that agriculture inspector positions are funded and filled.

INTERISLAND FERRY

Traditionally, governments have played a significant role in building large-scale physical infrastructures. In today's world, the building of infrastructure more and more is being done through public-private partnerships, something that the Hannemann-Chang Administration wholeheartedly supports.

Creating an interisland ferry system works towards this goal. As Retired Rear Admiral Thomas Fargo, former CEO of the SuperFerry project pointed out, Hawaii is one of the few archipelagos in the world not to have a ferry system to serve its citizens and businesses. Working to bring back an interisland ferry system will entail a community based process patterned after the

outreach efforts similar to the Oahu rail project. This process will also include conducting of a thorough environmental impact study, something that was conspicuously missing from the last ferry effort undertaken by the state. Efforts to secure federal funding will also be critical. Fortunately, Mufi Hannemann's great familiarity and experience in dealing with federal funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation will be a tremendous asset in securing federal assistance for this project.

Without a doubt, an interisland ferry system will not only create jobs but will also make it possible for residents, visitors, and businesses to choose the mode of transportation that best meets their daily commuting, travel and shipping needs. Farmers in particular would benefit from lower transportation and shipping costs.