

**MAZIE K. HIRONO**2<sup>ND</sup> DISTRICT, HAWAII

MEMBER OF CONGRESS



**Congress of the United States**  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-0906

## **Congresswoman Hirono Applauds Obama Administration's Support of Hawaii Island Farmers**

Oahu, Hawaii, Jul 18 -

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced recently a commitment of over \$560,000 for the Kohala Center's Ku I Ka Mana New Farmer Training Initiative.

**"As a state that imports about 85 percent of our food, it's clear we've got some work to do to make Hawaii more self-reliant. That's why I have been working with local agriculture leaders to determine what it would take to build Hawaii's food sustainability. One of the key priorities we all agreed on was the need to support our local farmers and ranchers whenever we can and develop the next generation of island producers. This is especially critical when thinking to the future, as the average age of Hawaii's farmers is nearly 60 years old," said Congresswoman Mazie Hirono (HI-02).**

**"This USDA investment in the Kohala Center's Ku I Ka Mana New Farmer Training Initiative is exactly the kind of support our sustainability plan outlines. The Ku I Ka Mana program will help Hawaii Island 'grow' 45 new farmers who will learn the tools they need to provide their communities with fresh, locally produced food. Mahalo to the Ku I Ka Mana program for its particular dedication to assisting limited resource and socially disadvantaged beginning farmers."**

The Kohala Center is a Hawaii non-profit organization dedicated to building local energy and food sustainability.

**"The Kohala Center is pleased to launch a project that will support new farmers and ranchers on Hawaii Island. A growing number of communities throughout the island continue to organize in order to produce more local foods and create a more resilient local economy. But, we need to train and develop new farmers to bring this vision to life. With this USDA support, the Kohala Center will be able to educate and train some 45 new farmers and ranchers with the goal of helping them**

**launch successful businesses in Hamakua and the Kohala area. This program builds on our existing efforts to support agricultural ventures throughout the state. If this pilot program is success, we look forward to replicating it in other parts of Hawaii island,” said Betsy Cole, Deputy Director of the Kohala Center.**

To read more about Congresswoman Hirono’s collaborative work to promote a more sustainable Hawaii, please [click here](#).