



**Minutes of the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity
April 28, 2026**

A video recording of this meeting can be found online by visiting this website:
<https://dab.hawaii.gov/meetings-reports/>

CALL TO ORDER – The meeting of the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Board) was called to order on April 28, 2026, at 9:09 am by Board Chairperson, Sharon Hurd. The meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom and in-person from:

*State of Hawaii, Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity
Plant Quarantine Branch
1849 Auiki Street*

Members Present In-Person:

Sharon Hurd, Chairperson, Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity

Members Virtually Present: Roll call/alone

Dave Smith (DLNR): Present
Mark Takemoto (DBEDT): Present
Diane Ley (Hawaii): Present
Nate Oswald (Maui County): Present
Dr. Jason Moniz (Member at Large): Present
En Young (Member at Large): Present
James Gomes Member a Large): Present
Sharon Hurd (Chairperson): Present

- A quorum was established.

Excused: **Dr. Parwinder Grewal** (CTAHR)

Deputy Attorney General Present In-Person:

DAG Jennifer Waihee-Polk

Others Present In-Person:

Others Virtually Present:

Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity Meeting

April 28, 2026

Page 2

1 KHDC Director
2 Alex Redeker
3 BTM B.I.
4 Diane Ley
5 KHDC Director
6 Brandi Ah Yo
7 Andy
8 Earl Yamamoto
9 Amandine Maury
10 takeminews
11 Mark Ladao
12 Greg Takeshima - DOH
13 Janet
14 Amandine Maury
15 Rodolfo's iPhone
16 BTM B.I.
17 Mike Faye
18 Mason Russo
19 Racquel Achiu
20 Kamran Fujimoto / HDOA Noxious Weed Specialist
21 Doreen Canto
22 Travis M
23 Kevin Moore - ARMD
24 'Imiloa Borland (Office of Hawaiian Affairs)
25 Chris Kishimoto
26 Stephanie
27 Mel
28 Elizabeth Speith
29 Roy Hardy (Akinaka)
30 La'a
31 Steph Kendrick (she/her)
32 Senator Lynn DeCoite
33 Richard Kim
34 Jonathan Ho, DAB Plant Quarantine Branch
35 Dexter Kishida
36 D. Goodwin-Leung Mason Russo
37 Jill Scheibe - DAB
38 Roy Hasegawa
39 Lesley Harvey
40 Travis Moon
41 Wayne Tanaka
42 Lindsey.Ancog
43 Rajita Antonia

1 Alex Redeker
2 Maria McCarthy
3 Rae Gee
4 Eseta Malufau
5 Christy Martin-CGAPS
6 Dean Matsukawa, Ag Loan
7 Heaton
8 Claire Orodio
9 Sharde Freitas
10 HDOA ARMD - Toy L.
11 Jan Ferrer, HDAB
12
13

14 **II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM 3/24/26 MEETING**

15
16 Motion to Approve: Gomes/Ley
17

18 Public Testimony:
19 None
20

21 Board Discussion:
22 None
23

24 Vote: Approved; unanimously
25

26 **III. COMMUNICATIONS FROM DIVISIONS AND ADMINISTRATION**

27 **A. AGRICULTURAL LOAN DIVISION**

28 **1. Request for Approval of Amended Hawaii Administrative Rules Chapter** 29 **4-8**

30 Wayne Takamine, Agricultural Loan Division, presented testimony as submitted.
31 Mr. Takamine explained that the proposed amendments previously received
32 Board approval and were subsequently presented at public hearings. The
33 amendments updated definitions, added line-of-credit and import replacement
34 loan provisions, revised denial letter requirements, clarified emergency loan
35 authority, updated interest rates, and removed the North Kohala Loan Program.
36

37 **Board Discussion:**

38 Member Moniz requested a summary of public hearing testimony and clarification
39 regarding implementation of the proposed changes. Member Young expressed
40 support for modernization of the loan program and discussed the importance of
41 encouraging local food production. Chairperson Hurd discussed food security

1 objectives and the need to support import replacement opportunities. Deputy
2 Director Matsukawa discussed funding capacity and anticipated demand for loan
3 programs. Member Gomes requested clarification regarding eligibility
4 requirements for new farmers.

5
6 **Vote:** Approved unanimously.
7

8 **2. Emergency Loan Request – R Inc. dba Small Kind Farm**

9 Wayne Takamine presented testimony as submitted. Staff reported that flooding
10 associated with the March 2026 Kona Low weather event contaminated
11 mushroom substrate and resulted in approximately one month of lost production.
12 Staff recommended approval of an emergency loan to assist with replacement of
13 materials and continuation of operations.
14

15 **Staff Presentation Summary:**

16 The emergency loan program was established following the Governor's
17 proclamations declaring a state of emergency on March 9, 2026, with a relief
18 period extended until April 13, 2026. The applicant (OCR Inc., operating Long
19 Bank Farms) sustained approximately \$20,000 in revenue losses from
20 flooding and heavy rain that contaminated mushroom substrate and halted
21 production for about one month. The borrower has very good credit and is in
22 good standing with the division. The Ag Loan Division recommended
23 approval.
24

25 **Public Testimony:**

26 None
27

28 **Board Discussion:**

29 None
30

31 **Vote:** Approved unanimously.
32

33 **B. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DIVISION**

34 **1. Lease Conversion S-4519 – Dieguez (Former Kaupakulua School Lot, 35 Maui)**

36 Roman Dieguez presented testimony as submitted. Staff explained that the
37 lessees operate a fruit orchard and requested conversion of the existing lease
38 into a new thirty-five-year lease term. Staff stated that the conversion would
39 provide long-term stability and encourage agricultural investment.
40

41 **Staff Presentation Summary:**

1 The lease was originally awarded in 1976 and assigned to Rodolfo V.
2 Dieguez and Rahita A. Dieguez in 2026. They operate a fruit orchard
3 (tangerines, tangelos, oranges, longans, bananas, lemons, and egg fruits).
4 The request is to convert to a new 35-year term to provide stability for long-
5 range investments. An appraisal determined the fair market annual rent to be
6 \$4,070 for the initial 15 years, plus 1.50% of gross proceeds, with a 25%
7 premium on the base rent for the first seven years. Staff recommended
8 approval, finding it in the public interest.
9

10 **Public Testimony:**

11 None
12

13 **Board Discussion:**

14 None
15

16 **Vote:** Approved unanimously.
17

18 **2. Right of Entry for Environmental Assessment – Pana‘ewa Agricultural**
19 **Park**

20 Janice Fujimoto presented testimony as submitted. The request would authorize
21 environmental assessment activities associated with proposed non-potable water
22 wells in Pana‘ewa Agricultural Park.
23

24 **Staff Presentation Summary:**

25 The 2025 legislature appropriated funds for an environmental assessment for
26 drilling non-potable water wells at Pana‘ewa Agricultural Park and Farm Lots.
27 A right of entry (ROE) is required for the contractor (Akinaka and Associates
28 Limited) to access properties for inspections. The proposed term is 60 days,
29 commencing May 1, 2026. Lessees will be responsible for all future costs
30 related to well planning, design, construction, and maintenance. Staff
31 recommended board approval of the ROE issuance and delegation of
32 authority to the Chairperson to approve extensions.
33

34 **Public Testimony:**

35 None
36

37 **Board Discussion:**

38 Board members discussed project scope and future responsibilities associated
39 with well development.
40

41 **Vote:** Approved unanimously.
42

1 **C. PLANT INDUSTRY DIVISION – PLANT QUARANTINE BRANCH**

2 **1. Request to Allow the Importation and Possession of Twenty-Seven (27)**
3 **Plains Bison, *Bison bison*, by Aloha Bison, LLC**

4 Jessica Miura presented testimony as submitted regarding the request by Aloha
5 Bison, LLC to import twenty-seven plains bison for breeding and commercial
6 meat production.

7
8 **Staff Presentation Summary:**

9 Michael J. Botha of Aloha Bison LLC seeks to import 27 plains bison from
10 Montana to Waialua, Oahu, for local meat production using regenerative
11 agriculture. The request includes amendments to the statewide bison import
12 permit conditions, last updated July 27, 1995. Biosecurity measures include
13 high-strength fencing, electric fencing, secure holding pens, staff training,
14 transport protocols, locked gates, and cameras. A supplemental plan for
15 escapes and floods was submitted. The request was approved by the
16 Advisory Subcommittee on Land Vertebrates (5-1) and the Advisory
17 Committee on Plants and Animals (5-0, April 2, 2026). Staff recommended
18 approval of both the importation request and updated permit conditions.

19
20 **Board Discussion:**

21 Board members discussed fencing requirements, quarantine procedures,
22 disease screening protocols, recapture requirements, processing capacity, permit
23 enforcement provisions, environmental impacts, and community engagement.
24 Applicant Michael Botha responded to Board questions regarding management
25 practices and operational safeguards.

26
27 **Public Testimony:**

28 Testimony was received from members of the public both in support of and
29 opposition to the request. Testifiers discussed community outreach,
30 environmental impacts, fencing requirements, processing facilities, public safety
31 concerns, food production opportunities, and agricultural diversification.

32
33 **Vote (Roll Call):**

34 Smith – Yes
35 Takemoto – No
36 Ley – Yes
37 Oswald – Yes
38 Moniz – Yes, with reservations
39 Young – No
40 Gomes – No
41 Hurd – Yes
42

1 **Outcome:** Motion carried.
2

3 **2. Request to Update Permit Conditions for the Importation and Possession**
4 **of Plains Bison, *Bison bison*, by Aloha Bison, LLC**

5 Jessica Amuro presented testimony as submitted regarding proposed updates to
6 permit conditions governing the importation and possession of plains bison.
7

8 **Board Discussion:**

9 Board members discussed disease control measures, fencing standards,
10 restraint facilities, permit revocation procedures, emergency response
11 requirements, and statewide consistency in permit administration.
12

13 **Public Testimony:**

14 None.
15

16 **Vote (Roll Call):**

17 Smith – Yes
18 Takemoto – No
19 Ley – Yes
20 Oswald – Yes
21 Moniz – Yes, with reservations
22 Young – No
23 Gomes – No
24 Hurd – Yes
25

26 **Outcome:** Motion carried.
27
28

29 **3. Resubmittal of Petition from Nancy Holman, Kalaupapa National**
30 **Historical Park, to Amend Plant Quarantine Interim Rule 25-1**

31 Jonathan Ho presented testimony regarding the resubmitted petition requesting
32 authorization to transport treated gravel to Kalaupapa National Historical Park.
33
34

35 **Public Testimony:**

36 Wayne Tanaka testified in opposition and expressed concerns regarding
37 Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle risks.
38
39

40 Barron Chan testified in support and discussed public safety and infrastructure
41 concerns.
42

1 Laurie Buchanan testified in opposition and questioned transportation
2 safeguards.

3
4 Alex Redeker testified regarding treatment protocols and fumigation
5 effectiveness.

6
7 **Board Discussion:**

8 Board members discussed biosecurity concerns, treatment effectiveness,
9 transportation safeguards, public safety considerations, and options for future
10 requests.

11
12 The Board entered Executive Session to consult with legal counsel.

13
14 **Upon returning to open session:**

15
16 **Motion:** Motion to Amend Interim Rule 25-1 to Allow Case-by-Case Approvals:
17 Ley/Grewal

18
19 **Vote:** Approved unanimously.

20
21 **Motion to Approve a One-Time Shipment of Treated Gravel Subject to Department**
22 **Inspection:**

23
24 Ley/Grewal

25
26 **Vote:**
27 Approved.

28
29
30 **4. Request to Approve Proposed Chapter 4-69, Hawai'i Administrative**
31 **Rules, Plant and Non-Domestic Animal Quarantine Pest Designation Rules,**
32 **to Proceed to Public Hearing**

33
34 Jonathan Ho presented testimony as submitted.

35
36
37 **Public Testimony:**

38
39 Wayne Tanaka opposed the proposal and expressed concern that the proposed
40 list was outdated and incomplete.

41
42 Stephanie Easley opposed the proposal and recommended development of a
43 more comprehensive framework.

1
2 Helmut Rogg opposed the proposal and recommended reliance on existing
3 collaborative invasive species resources.

4
5 Laurie Buchanan expressed concerns regarding the proposal and requested
6 additional stakeholder review.

7
8 Christy Martin opposed the proposal and cautioned against reliance on a static
9 pest list.

10
11
12 **Board Discussion:**

13 Board members discussed the need for updated pest designation criteria,
14 additional stakeholder engagement, collaboration with partner agencies, and
15 further review before proceeding to public hearing.

16
17
18 **Motion:**

19 Smith/Grewal

20
21 **Vote:**

22 Motion Failed
23

24 **5. Authorization for the Chairperson to Schedule Public Hearings and**
25 **Appoint Hearing Officers for Chapter 4-69**

26
27 No action was taken because Item C-4 failed.
28

29 **IV. OLD BUSINESS**

30 None
31

32 **V. NEW BUSINESS**

33 1. Non-Action Item – Discussion Regarding the April 15, 2026 Joint Informational
34 Briefing on Biosecurity Activities

35
36 Jonathan Ho, Plant Quarantine Manager, presented the non-action item and
37 summarized the April 15, 2026 Joint Informational Briefing regarding biosecurity
38 activities.
39

1 Discussion focused on implementation challenges associated with widespread
2 pests, pests not known to occur, treatment requirements, enforcement authority,
3 and future rulemaking considerations.

4
5 No action was taken.

6

7 **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

8 **Motion to Adjourn:** Board Member Smith; Seconded by Board Member Gomes

9

10 The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:27 PM on April 28, 2026.

11

12

13

14 Respectfully submitted,

15

16

17 Riley Iyo

18