

Agribusiness Development Corporation

# AG NOTES

March 2023 Newsletter



*ADC property previously occupied by brush, trash and abandoned vehicles have been cleared for farmers.*



*A new pumping system will transport irrigational water from our property reservoirs.*

## NEW TENANTS MOVING INTO ADC WAHIAWA LANDS

Last fall, the ADC board of directors signed license agreements with three new farming tenants to help fill our last remaining 1,200 acres of vacant property in Central Oahu. This was an important step in moving closer to our goal of 100 percent occupancy of these agricultural lands. Some of our tenants have already begun to move into their respective parcels and are prepping them for eventual crop production.

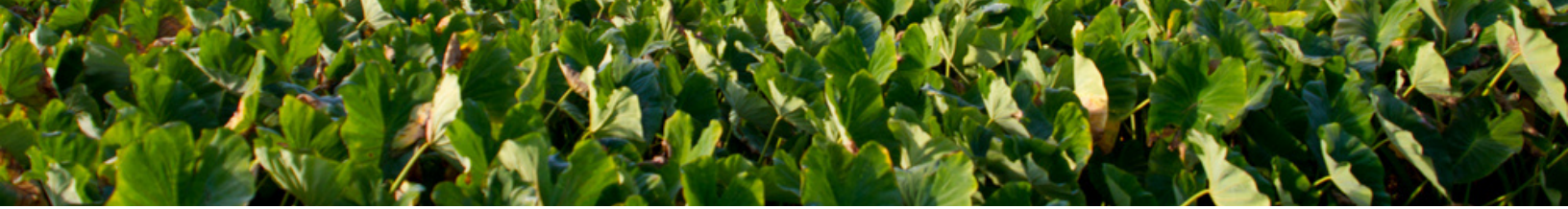
The three tenants are Ohana Hui Ventures Inc. (397 acres), Law Tieng's Farm LLC (87 acres), and TM Farm LLC (133 acres). Two other selected tenants have completed their soil conservation plans as part of pending approval for their license agreements to begin their ag operations.

These three tenants have already begun prepping the land, which includes removing and hauling away trash, soil testing, and installing irrigation lines. Their presence on our lands have already helped reduce the amount of trespassers and lessen the strain on our security patrols.

ADC also hired a separate contractor to remove brush and other trash from the area. The state Department of Health has assisted in the towing of abandoned vehicles from the area.

In the past three years, ADC has spent a great deal of effort developing the water infrastructure on these lands. With many of these parcels previously not having access to a nearby water source, ADC completed the construction of two reservoirs holding 13 million gallons of water to service our tenants. A pumping system was recently installed to help transport the water to the various parcels.

"We are pleased with these new farming tenants set to occupy ADC property in the Wahiawa area," said ADC board of directors chair Fred Lau. "This is the culmination of major strides made in the past three years by our agency to make our remaining vacant land in Central Oahu suitable for farming. These local farmers will soon begin planting crops and contribute to local food production."



## ADC NOW UNDER STATE DBEDT

The State Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) has officially transitioned from the state Department of Agriculture to the to the state Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT).

Senate Bill 2473, introduced by State Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz and signed into law by outgoing Governor David Ige, allowed the transfer to take place. While it once made sense for ADC to be part of the Department of Agriculture for our development and growth, our transition to DBEDT will allow us to tap into their expertise to further promote agricultural economic development for our tenants and economic diversification for Hawaii.

Under DBEDT, ADC is proposing several initiatives to support the livelihood of our tenants and other area farms and promote efficiencies in storage, distribution, packaging and marketing. While there are clusters of farmers, produce distributors, and packing/processing facilities, there needs to be better coordination across these sectors to enable them to be more successful.

ADC has begun the planning and design of a proposed food hub facility adjacent to Whitmore Village in Wahiawa. It will provide a centralized

storage, processing and distribution center for our tenants and farmers in the region. In addition, the University of Hawaii Community Colleges will complete the construction of The Wahiawa Value Added Product Development Center in early 2023. The planned Wahiawa facility will offer and inspire a work and learning environment capable of attracting college-level students, as well as entrepreneurs to pursue careers in the food sciences or start up their own businesses. The Food Hub would then provide leased space, cold and dry storage and processing facilities for these startups (click [here](#) to read a related Civil Beat article).

ADC is also working with the State Department of Education to provide land and infrastructure at the planned food hub for the construction of a centralized kitchen. This would give farmers the opportunity to deliver their produce directly to the food hub facility for sale to the DOE as part of its mandate to purchase locally grown food for public schools.

It's an exciting time for the organization, and we look forward to these proposed projects that can revitalize agricultural operations in the area, while boosting and diversifying the economy and creating local jobs.



*Mangoes and other ADC-grown crops could be brought to a planned distribution center in Wahiawa.*