



Agribusiness Development Corporation

AG NOTES

October 2023 Newsletter

SOWING THE SEEDS OF GROWTH AND CHANGE

Agribusiness Development Corporation Opens 3,100+ Acres for Increasing Food Production in Hawai'i

The Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC), a state leader and innovator in agriculture, earlier this month posted online all remaining agricultural lands in its portfolio for interested farmers and food producers.

The posting on ADC's website (www.dbedt.hawaii.gov/adc/) includes ADC's remaining vacant acreage of 3,181 in Kālepa (160 acres) and Kekaha (2,950) on Kaua'i; and in Whitmore (65) outside Wahiawā on O'ahu. ADC is requesting any/all individuals who are interested in agricultural land from any island to fill out an "Expression of Interest" form that will be included online.



"I am encouraging people to think of ADC as being open for business," said newly selected ADC Executive Director Wendy Gady.

She added: "I cannot begin to express the enthusiasm of the board's hope that this action will invite new and younger farmers and ranchers into a conversation for how to grow their businesses and drive economic

growth in the communities they are in. We very much want to open a dialogue with producers at all stages of production in developing a future for Hawai'i in the ag industry."



Chartered in 1994, ADC's mission is to conserve and convert arable lands and their associated infrastructure that were formerly large mono-crop plantation lands into new, productive uses. The agency has since grown to include 22,801 acres of which 16,663 are farmable. Farmers, ranchers and agribusiness companies are working on 10,999 acres, with another 2,483 acres currently in negotiations with selected tenants.

While there is no set deadline, the filings by farmers and ag producers will help the ADC board in strategically planning how and where food production can expand in our state, said ADC board chair Warren Watanabe.

"This next step begins delivery on the aggressive goals of the new ADC board to increase local production of agricultural products for local consumption and

Sowing the Seeds of Growth & Change

(continued from page one)

reduce the state's reliance on imported food," said ADC board chair Warren Watanabe. "The new level of transparency from the board and these actions demonstrate the board's intention to fully embrace and grow in new ways the economic, environmental and social benefit for the people of Hawai'i."

While topography, soil and irrigation conditions, and climate of the remaining ADC parcels will determine what can be grown or raised there, Gady said that also shouldn't limit our agricultural options.



"While we want to be realistic in determining what will provide maximum food productivity, we also don't want to restrict ourselves," she said. "I would like to underscore that the ADC board is requesting Expression of Interest from across the state, and that the ADC board takes seriously our goal of serving all of Hawai'i."

New ADC Director Reaches Out to Ag Community

Since being named the new ADC director, Wendy Gady has been making the rounds with various agriculture-related organizations and state legislators who are strong supporters of the ag community.

Gady so far has given presentations on behalf of ADC at events such as the Hawai'i Farm Bureau annual convention, the Hawai'i Tropical Fruit Growers Association conference and before the Hawai'i Cattlemen's Council.

She flew to Kaua'i last month to meet with our ADC ag tenants there, along with our neighbors bordering our properties, such as the U.S. Navy at the Pacific Missile Range Facility.



"I'm grateful to been given the opportunity to meet with various important stakeholders in the ag community, running the gamut from farming leaders and experts who strive for food sustainability to lawmakers and community leaders who want to make ag a strong segment of our local economy," Gady said.

Gady welcomes operators, entrepreneurs, and active stakeholders, or those exploring ag opportunities to contact her directly. She is interested and open to exploring new research, technology, and uses for ADC lands, and value-added production.



"Our recent aggressive outreach matches my personal goal in connecting with our ag partners and our community in general. One of my mottos is, 'If you want to go fast, go alone; If you want to go far, go together.' So, let's try and do this together."