

Dan Inouye

U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII



SENATE APPROPRIATIONS PANEL APPROVES MORE THAN \$33 MILLION FOR HAWAII-RELATED PROJECTS IN AGRICULTURE

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WASHINGTON—Hawaii will receive more than \$33 million for agriculture related initiatives in Fiscal Year 2010 including funds intended for agriculture research and geographically disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, Senate Appropriations Chairman Daniel K. Inouye announced today.

The funding, approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee, is \$10 million more than the state received in Fiscal Year 2009.

“Hawaii is fertile ground for an array of plant life and in order for our state to continue to work toward a sustainable food supply while protecting our products and sharing our techniques with the world we must commit to shoring up our agriculture industry,” said Chairman Inouye. “Federal government can play an important role in protecting our tropical plant species and ensuring that our environment remains pristine.”

The Agriculture Appropriations Bill approved by the committee includes \$5 million for the continued construction of the U.S. Pacific Basin Agriculture Research Center Phase III in Hilo.

The center is at the forefront of efforts to develop methods for tropical crop and commodity protection and genetic plant and disease research.

The approved funding bill contains \$3 million for agriculture inspections of passenger baggage leaving neighbor island airports and connecting through Honolulu en route to mainland destinations.

These inspections are critical to ensuring that harmful species do not make their way into and out of Hawaii.

The spending bill also includes \$2.6 million for geographically disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to help them overcome the competitive disadvantage of growing their crops and raising livestock on an island archipelago in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

High fuel costs hinder their ability to export products and import supplies and these funds will help.

The measure also includes language that allows Native Hawaiians to compete for grants under the Rural Utilities Service's Water/Waste Disposal Systems Program.

This U.S. Department of Agriculture program provides grant funds to build, repair, and expand water supply and distribution systems as well as waste collection and treatment systems, all obstacles encountered during the continued development of Hawaiian Homelands.

The legislation will be considered by the full Senate at a later time.