## **Nutrient Management Workshop**

Matt Wung, District Conservationist, USDA NRCS Waimea Field Office

The Mauna Kea Soil and Water Conservation District recently held their second soil health workshop covering nutrient management on November 20, 2013 at the Waimea Civic Center in Waimea Town on the Big Island. The very informative workshop consisted of various speakers from University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, UH Cooperative Extension Service, and presentations from NRCS. Maria 'Didi' Diaz-Lyke from UH CES did a presentation on how and why do you take a soil sample and also covered Risk Management practices. Adam Reed covered nutrient management principles which include essential plant elements, how nutrients move in the soil, and within plants. In addition, he talked about how nutrients react within the plant, why and how to do a soil test, and the importance of a nutrient management plan.





Dr. Jonathan Deenik presented a power point on soil and nutrient management in organic farming systems. Jonathan emphasized the importance of having and building up organic matter in the soil environment to improve the soil's physical, chemical, and biological

properties. Jonathan also mentioned that to have a healthy soil the use of green manure and cover crops will aid with the soil structure and improves soil tilth. Another method of adding organic matter to the soil was through the use of adding compost to the crop field in addition to using organic fertilizers. One comment that Jonathan made was that we were all organic farmers before chemical fertilizers came in to the equation. One of the main points Jonathan brought up is that we need to look at soil as a long term investment for our next gen-



eration of farmers since improving the soil health is not an instant thing but a process that takes time.



The last presentation was a farm bill presentation by Soil Conservationist Jared Considine that covered the NRCS planning process and farm bill programs to help farmers improve their soil. The turnout and feedback from workshop participants was very positive which will set the stage for future workshops. I applaud the Mauna Kea SWCD for their commitment to better serving the local community and for collaboration with other agencies to make these workshops successful. Be on the lookout for future workshops.

For more information, contact Matthew.Wung, Email: Matthew.Wung@hi.usda.gov

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