

Regenerative Breadfruit Agroforestry Workshops

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Breadfruit is an iconic tree that has been cultivated sustainably by Pacific peoples for centuries in forest-like plantings that we today call “agroforestry.” Agroforestry combines a diversity of trees, shrubs, and crops synergistically in productive landscapes that provide multiple economic and environmental benefits. Over the past 40 years, the field of agroforestry has matured into a specialized field of science that is substantiating advantages of agroforestry over single-commodity plantings.

For the first time in its 3000-year history, breadfruit is being commercialized on an increasingly large scale. Long-term experience in the Pacific Islands and recent agroforestry science suggest that breadfruit is an ideal crop for agroforestry to meet goals of farm sustainability, both economically and environmentally. The advantages of growing breadfruit together with other crops instead of single-commodity plantings include

- Building soil and regenerating degraded lands
- Establishing a farm crop portfolio, rather than farmers relying upon just one or two crops
- Mitigating the risks of weather extremes to agricultural productivity
- Attaining higher overall productivity and profitability

The Breadfruit Institute of the National Tropical Botanical Garden in collaboration with Agroforestry Net is presenting a series of six workshops throughout Hawaii to build capacity in regenerative breadfruit agroforestry on Kauai (February 9 and 10), Maui (March 3), Hawaii Island (March 9), and Oahu (March 15 and 16). Workshop topics include design of regenerative organic breadfruit-based agroforestry, breadfruit varieties, companion crops for agroforestry, crop spacing and management, products and commercial markets, and economic planning. Workshop presenters include Diane Ragone (Breadfruit Institute), Craig Elevitch (Agroforestry Net), Heidi Bornhorst (Pruning for Productivity), and outstanding local presenters on each island. Dr. Ted Radovich will be hosting one of the workshops at the ‘ulu research project at the Waimanalo Experiment Station.

Participants will leave the workshops with an in-depth perspective on the opportunities and challenges of regenerative organic agroforestry, breadfruit establishment and care, product options, and economic evaluation. More information about the workshops is available at www.breadfruit.info.