



A New Kind of PIE: Introducing Public Issues Education-Hawai'i

What is PIE-HI?

Public Issues Education-Hawai'i (PIE-HI) is a new area of research and outreach in the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR). PIE-HI was created to measure consumer and constituent knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes about agriculture and natural resource issues that affect Hawai'i. Through unbiased research and proactive outreach, communication, and training, policy makers and the general public can make informed decisions to protect and preserve agriculture and natural resources in Hawai'i.

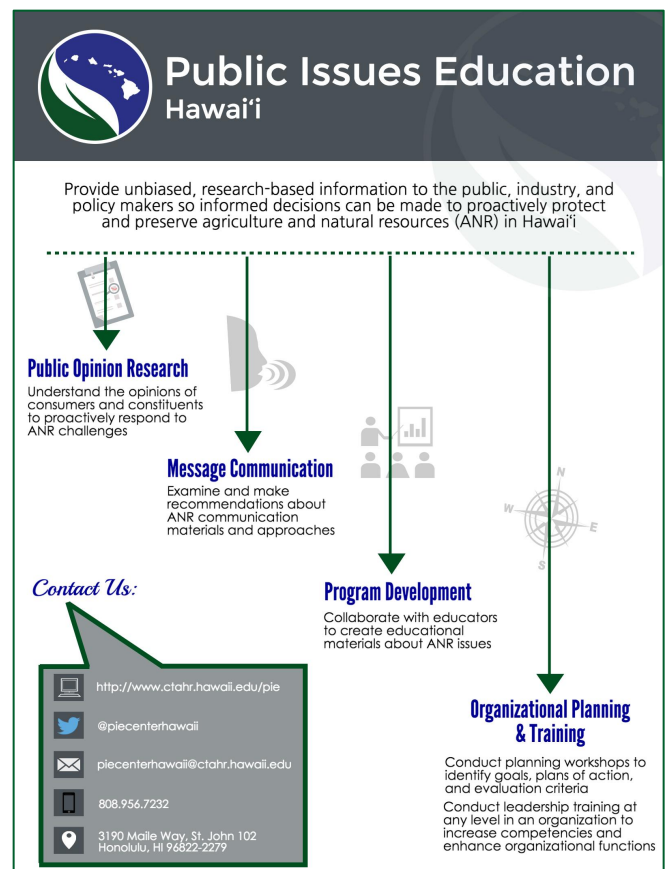
PIE-HI was launched in August 2014 with the hiring of Dr. M'Randa Sandlin and it has recently added Kauahi Perez, a doctoral candidate in Tropical Plants and Soil Sciences, as a graduate assistant. PIE-HI is modeled after the Center for Public Issues Education in the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida (www.piecenter.com). The two centers are working together to leverage resources, experiences, and other collaborative opportunities.

Activity Areas

PIE-HI works in four general areas: Public opinion research, message communication, program development, and organizational planning and training. This four foci approach allows for PIE-HI to work with stakeholders on specific issues or approach larger issues with a more systematic, holistic approach. **Click on the image for a larger version** or go to <http://cms.ctahr.hawaii.edu/pie/Infographics/PublicIssuesEducation.aspx>.

With an end goal of policy makers and the public making informed decisions about agriculture and natural resources, understanding opinions about such topics is foundational. Public opinion analysis allows stakeholders to understand the current state of understanding and perceptions about agriculture and natural resource topics and to respond proactively to challenges.

Message communication between the agriculture and natural resource industries, policy makers, and the general public is a source of information breakdown. Misunderstandings, misinformation, and poor audience targeting are all effects of poor communication. PIE-HI understands that the content of agriculture and natural resource issues can be challenging to communicate. They examine communication materials and approaches and make recommendations to improve and enhance the relationship between involved parties.



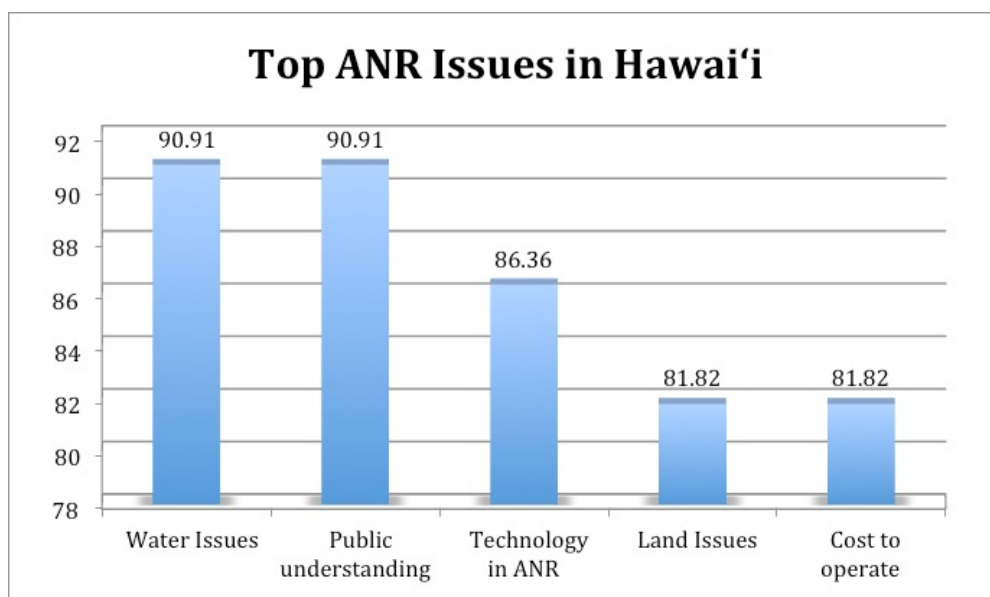
Program development is similar to message communication, but with an educational focus. Dr. Sandlin uses her background in agricultural leadership and education to work with educators at all levels, community leaders, and industry to create educational materials that are appropriate for the target learners.

PIE-HI supports long-term planning and training for organizations and businesses in agriculture and natural resources. PIE-HI provides customized organizational planning workshops to identify goals, plans of action, and evaluation criteria. They also conduct leadership trainings to increase competencies and enhance organizational functions.

Data to Date

Since its inception in August 2014, PIE-HI has been working to establish baseline data on the top agriculture and natural resource issues in Hawai‘i. The end goal is to gather data from agriculture and natural resource professionals, policy makers, and the general public. Several data collection techniques will be used to gather as much data as possible to represent the populations.

The first data set is complete. This set of data is the result of a modified Delphi study, a technique used for consensus building, with 25 agriculture and natural resource professionals. The process found the top five issues to be water issues and public understanding of agriculture and natural resources (tie), agriculture and natural resource technologies, land issues, and agricultural and natural resource costs.



It is important to note that this is only the first data set. It is also important to note these issues are not the only issues in agriculture and natural resources in Hawai‘i. These are the five that received the highest levels of agreement among the participants. The executive summary of this data set can be found at <http://cms.ctahr.hawaii.edu/pie/Research.aspx> in the Reports section; additional data sets will be added as they are completed.

Working with PIE-HI

PIE-HI is a great resource for the agriculture and natural resource community. Visit their website (www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/pie) or contact Dr. M’Randa Sandlin (piecenterhawaii@ctahr.hawaii.edu) if you have questions or if you would like additional information on how PIE-HI can collaborate with you.

