

GoFarm Hawai'i graduates 2nd cohort

Steven Chiang, Agribusiness Incubator Program



Some of the graduates proudly displaying their new GoFarm Hawaii alumni caps, with Farm Coach Jay Bost in the back row.

Congratulations to the graduates of GoFarm Hawai'i @ Windward's AgSchool2. Ten months of hard work and learning has resulted in the development of some fine farmers, some of which are starting to farm their own land in Waimānalo and Kamehameha School's land, and some of which are entering the AgIncubator plots at CTAHR's Waimānalo Agricultural Research Station to begin their careers as real farmers!

GoFarm Hawai'i (GFH), a comprehensive non-credit beginning farmer training program that started as a collaboration between CTAHR, Windward CC, and the Agribusiness Incubator Program, started in Fall of 2012 with its first cohort of 12 students at the WCC campus. Since then, GFH has added Leeward and Kaua'i Community College programs and collectively has or is training 5 cohorts of aspiring farmers. The Windward program holds advanced training and offers term-limited incubator space for the most promising graduates at CTAHR's Waimānalo Agricultural Research Station.



For information about upcoming GoFarm Hawai'i classes, visit their website at: <http://www.gofarmhawaii.org/>

GFH was started to serve the need for a practical, science-based, tropical/sub-tropical, sustainable, commercially oriented beginning farmer training program that provides aspiring farmers with a foundation in production and business management knowledge and practice to help them become viable commercial farmers. To do this efficiently, maintain standards, and facilitate the dissemination of the curriculum developed by GFH collaborators, GFH has begun efforts to develop content that can be delivered via a distance-education platform, with assistance from CTAHR's distance ed specialists.

GFH has received financial support from the U.S. Department of Labor, Kamehameha Schools, and the Ulupono Initiative. As the DOL funding comes to an end this fall, GFH hopes that the combination of tuition, foundation funding, and a possible award from the USDA will allow it to continue to develop aspiring farmers and complete its curriculum development project.

Article content is the sole responsibility of the author. For more information about this article, contact Steven Chiang, email: schiang@hawaii.edu.