Issues related to ag viability:

- Land
  - Availability
  - Soil
- Farmers

Need to know what types of agricultural activities are taking place?

- Maui Land and Pine will try to continue to farm pineapples on Maui, but may be shifting its operation to include other crops
- Farmers need to have support to stay competitive and in looking at global markets
  - Need help in identifying markets
  - Entering new areas
  - Need capital expenditures to shift operations

CRITERIA & QUALIFICATIONS

Different commodities vary in terms of:

- Profitability
- Return on assets
- How many years will it take for a new crop
- Markets
  - Distance
  - Availability
- What makes agriculture work?
  - Current water supply?
  - What are the land issues?
- Cultural aspects (Laotian and other immigrant populations)

Sustainability – definition should keep it in context within the industry

- Should agricultural land criteria be geared to what it takes to be self-sustaining?
- What is the population growth?
- Is it to grow all fruit and vegetables or is it to increase the percentage of import substitution?
- Agricultural commodities worldwide, and not realistic to think we will supply all our products because of issues such as:
  - Radical change in consumer habits
  - Regional/seasonal production
- Sustainability is a component of the direction of general change
  - Workable definition might be: increasing import substitution whether it is a crop or value-added
  - Self-sufficiency or sustained viability is the bottom line for the individual as well as corporation
    - Increase consumption of locally grown products
Increase export of products

Collectively, this group’s agenda may be to create markets, research the agricultural opportunities

- Identify what products are and the outer limit growth area
  - What is imported, trends for future needs, to the outer limit
- Convert to productive agriculture
  - Import: Gross figures – all local capacity needs
  - Export (macadamia nuts, flowers, pineapple, etc.)
  - Capture from agricultural equation
    - Profitability
    - Crop viability
      - Need to allow lands to remain fallow, protected for new crops that may emerge over time

Need to Identify What Other Supports Would Help Sustain Ag Viability

- Financial
  - Redefining how lending institutions lend
- Programmatic
  - What programs need to be in place with DOA, CTAHR to support these efforts

Not the State’s role to say what new crops to get into, that should be left to the ag community and the marketplace to determine what kind of crops should be in specific agriculture areas

- Need system to identify good ag land that deals with factors that are easy to measure and are consistent over time, that boils down to the physical attributes
  - It would be ideal to include agricultural viability in the criteria – but we’ve already noted that how you measure viability varies widely by individual farmers and individual business decisions and choices they make
  - Incorporating these by crop or farm type would be a daunting and subjective task
  - Beyond prime, how do we come to agreement on what else is worth protecting?
    - Areas that would support multiple crops?
    - Unique?
    - Pasturage?
- Important to redefine and release lands not appropriate for agriculture:
  - Lands that can be moved to urban designation
  - Lands that can be moved to rural designation

Need to outline a system for agricultural land use that would create:

- Identification of important agricultural lands and resources, and how these can be protected over time:
  - Strategic resources for agriculture—prime
Unique agricultural lands: lands where agriculture is or supports unique crop

Which are agricultural lands?

Mapping exercise was to help identify factors that contribute to agricultural viability

- Flexible – map agricultural criteria to consider physical criteria as well as the type of activity
- Economic viability and profit → this is what we use—yield and other economic factors Mapping exercise as means to identify shared, common agricultural issues for ag in regional areas, to identify how to or why...
  - Solve water problem for strategic agricultural areas
  - Lease/tenure
  - Marketing
  - Location – key to success
  - What we have now in agriculture and why it is happening in those locations
  - Affordability of land is important factor in location of current activity

- Why? What other criteria conducive for agriculture
  - How do we aggregate agricultural activities to create a critical mass
  - How do we maximize efficiency and scale to drive down cost
  - Areas that have the best qualities for agriculture
    - not preclude agriculture in other than prime areas
    - Red Flag if it moves to land use regulation – revision of zoning, land usage, buffer

- Mapping of ag areas should be used to help identify a system of supports diversified agriculture, both generically and region-specific
  - Infrastructure to export
  - Training programs to support entrepreneurs
  - Extension services to provide support of production, business development, etc.

- Become road map for Dept. of Agriculture/CTAHR program to support
- Organize set of programs

The focus of all this discussion has been agriculture for the existing → what/where is the future for new farmers?

Government – where it should it be?

- County level
  - General Plan/request to amend or rezone – public hearings, etc.
  - Limited by the fact that with Agricultural land, there is an inability to move into other areas when urban expansion occurs
  - Potential for agriculture / State does agriculture water

Re-evaluate what are the defining criteria in context of viability, sustainability, market demands

- Viability previously has been defined as
  - Good soil
• Good water
  • Identify tools that could be utilized or tapped to make it viable to preserve lands for agricultural use
    o Transfer of Development Rights can be utilized
    o Designation/zoning
• Other things
  o System has not identified agricultural lands that is incapable of supporting agriculture, and releasing it to urban or rural designation
  o Use the regulatory system in place for addressing issues of viability of continued ag of particular lands and market demand for lands use for other purposes:
    ▪ Provides flexibility to individual needs
    ▪ Dealt with in a fair, consistent way
    ▪ Problem: Prime agriculture is often in direct competition with prime development
    ▪ Require State policies to deal with in a fair way

Background:
• ALISH maps have been used 1978 to now
  • 30,000+ acres of ALISH lands reclassified to Urban from Agricultural District
    o ALISH is not regulatory in that sense, it’s an overlay
  • One option would be to start with ALISH to identify strategic resources
  • Otherwise, other ways to designate or another approach would need to be developed
Agree the following need to be dealt with to make ag work:
• existing large lot agriculture
• residential use of ag zoning
• making the rural district work better
Recommend:
  o State removes marginal agricultural designation – lands not that good to rural for development
    o Let counties decide

• Big Island: Most of the land is in conservation or agriculture
  o lack of urban
  o lack of rural
  o cost of redesignation leads to higher cost of land and houses
    ▪ Process requires multitude of studies–cultural/historical/environment
    ▪ Costly process therefore producing for residential very high
    ▪ No infrastructure where built
  o Recommend abilities to slice out slivers
  o Problem with the EIS or EA process is that ag feasibility analysis will frequently say conversion of particular land will have little impact on agriculture. over time, the cumulative impact of conversions adds up. (e.g., in recent boundary amendment, a consultant stated that land constituted 40% of
prime ag land on Oahu, but that it would have no significant impact on agriculture

- Ewa – surrounded by subdivisions
- Examine the co-existence of agriculture and urban activities
  - We tend to think that agriculture and urban are incompatible but
    - Many countries co-exist well but not us
    - More populated we become, we need to think of how to promote compatibility

**Important Agricultural Lands**

How to protect agricultural lands
- 5 year boundary review might be useful tool for this
- How to ensure that evaluated/criteria to be meeting current needs and ensuring that it is keeping the vision for agriculture

Current land uses contribute to piece meal loss of agricultural land
- Counties – petition for State review
- Regional comprehensive planning → Ewa Plains - 30 years
  - Movement of agriculture → counties

**Current land use process: systems in place**

- County
  - General Plan/Community Plan/zoning
  - Evaluation of agricultural lands
  - If doing the process, if want to preserve what tools are available to implement?
- Regulatory structure
  - Tools available
  - Under current process – in order to supply demand for housing
    - 1 acre agriculture is created to allow for housing that is more affordable
    - If no agriculture for 20 years – lousy agriculture lands/let them build affordable housing
    - Current process takes too long to go with the State process
      - when completed no one would be able to afford
      - made affordable for local families
      - 15 acres subdivisions are different

Agriculture Lands 1.5-2 million

- lands in agriculture – more critical for
- refine agricultural lands
  - what else are we giving up?
  - Refine prime/important →
    - State land
    - County
  - Can some regulatory step be eliminated?

Enterprise Honolulu
“Criteria/Qualifications” 5/2/03
• Footprint- consider strategic lands smaller than what may be in Ag District now
  o How then do we move out of agricultural lands?
  o Once done, some are no longer prime
  o Is there a simpler process – to move to rural or urban?
  o Can it be tools?
    ▪ More restrictive conservation
    ▪ Some of lands existing to urban/ could go to urban or rural
    ▪ Other mechanisms
  o Recommend a policy issue on how to designate lands and to change how to move lands more easily
    ▪ What tools – agricultural
      1. change how regular system works (recommend policy)
      2. subcommittee – jurisdiction working on these
  ▪ What if we determine agricultural viability or importance of different locations as proposals come through the regulatory process?
    • look at specific situation
    • make a determination
    • consideration to land owners
• Problems with this “ad hoc” approach to identifying important ag lands:
  • Doesn’t allow State to do long-range strategic planning about how and where to allocate ag support services, ag resources, or even ag land compensation
  • Not able to anticipate how and where State or county resources to be deployed
  • Developer has already made investments in proposal

Similarly, in Ewa where it is State and County policy to develop urban center, then State has to mobilize and ensure that resources and supports are there to make this happen in an orderly manner as planned

Some of the outcomes would like to see:
  Focus on lands for potential agriculture
  State makes commitment to help subsidize the infrastructure
  Release lands for urban/rural relocation requirements for change
  WE NEED OTHER TOOLS