



For Immediate Release

Contact: Liam Kernell
Director of Communications, The Kohala Center
lkernell@kohalacenter.org
808-887-6411

Beginning Farmer-Rancher Development Program seeks new farmers *Course aims to help new producers succeed and improve local food security*

KAMUELA, Hawai‘i—January 2, 2018—The Kohala Center will offer its eighth Beginning Farmer-Rancher Development Program starting on Saturday, January 13 in Honoka‘a. Hawai‘i Island residents interested in learning what it takes to be a successful farmer or rancher are encouraged to apply for the nine-month course.

Course sessions are held every other Saturday through September from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Classes will meet primarily in Honoka‘a but will rotate between training sites in Hāwī, Kailua-Kona, and Ka‘ū to encourage participation from multiple regions of Hawai‘i Island. The program provides 188 hours of coursework, on-farm demonstrations, workshops, field trips, and online resources.

Since 2013 the program has graduated more than 150 students, who receive classroom and hands-on instruction on topics such as soil fertility management, tropical crop production, livestock production, business planning and financing, and agricultural product marketing. Tuition is \$250 for the full program and scholarship assistance is available.

Although no previous farming experience is required, preference is given to applicants who have taken steps to become agricultural producers and would benefit from a comprehensive curriculum. Students who successfully complete the program will be eligible for assistance in securing farm leases and capital to successfully produce, market, and distribute their crops. The program is sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture.

More information about the program is available online at kohalacenter.org/farmertraining. The deadline to apply is January 12.

About The Kohala Center

Founded in the year 2000, The Kohala Center (<http://www.kohalacenter.org>) is an independent, community-based center for research, conservation, and education. We turn research and ancestral knowledge into action, so that communities in Hawai‘i and around the world can thrive—ecologically, economically, culturally, and socially.