

From: [Megani Wells](#)
To: [DBEDT LUC](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Food Security and Waiehu threat
Date: Tuesday, November 15, 2022 11:45:36 AM



As an alarmed farmer in the area, I am aware that 238 acres of prime agricultural land near me, which is already designated as one of the best-growing areas in the entire state, is foolishly being slated to be rezoned for housing. (See the link below of designated prime lands) It is foolish to cut down the 20,000 mature-producing macadamia nut trees already growing on this property for houses when we have areas in the central valley much more suited to low-income housing development. My area, Wahiehu-Waihee, is the most fertile growing land in the state, and we need it to stay in food production for the benefit of future generations.

Here is the map information on the land we are trying to save for food production that is in jeopardy. <https://qpublic.schneidercorp.com/Application.aspx?AppID=1029&LayerID=21689&PageTypeID=4&PageID=9251&KeyValue=330020310000>

According to the assessment of my crop insurance on my nearby 34 acres of mac nuts, the trees on this 238-acre property are valued at approx. \$5 ML and are in their early prime and can produce food for our island for another 150+ years, according to the Macadamia Nut Association. See these links about how important this area is for food production.

<https://www.mauinews.com/news/local-news/2022/03/county-working-to-identify-map-important-agricultural-lands/>
<https://pacificcartography.mysocialpinpoint.com/maui-ial-mapping-project/map#/>

Since our island only has one week's worth of food at any given time, these important food-producing lands must be saved from residential development.

Please contact me if I can be of any further assistance. I will also send you the evaluation done by my crop insurance provider showing what they valued my mac nut trees at if that proof is helpful. Also, I am requesting that John Varel from Waihee Plantation (The largest mac nut operation on Maui) authorize me to show his real estate offer in 2018 to purchase these 238 acres with the hope of harvesting the mac nut trees on the property. His offer was rejected with the reason stated as the plan to price and market the property as a 466-house residential project.

The developer using the excuse that the land has not been used for AG is a false assertion. The ONLY reason its not being used for AG is the attempt to make it into housing and turning away efforts that have been made to harvest the crop. The lack of AG use is not the cause, the development attempt is the cause of the nuts not being harvested and being left to rot on the ground for what now over a decade. Even with the lack of care, the trees are healthy and continue to produce abundantly.

John Varel, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RscTQwygUnU> (FYI, He decided not to do any farm tours) who maintains and harvests, and processes my 34 acres of mac nuts, needs more mac nuts to help his operation become more viable. He has to hire a huge staff during harvest and then keep them working all year to have them available for the next harvest season, which is from about August to February. This 238-acre property is close enough to his

processing plant to make it feasible to add to his operation. Not sure of the exact amount, but I am estimating that the 238 acres crop might be as much as 90,000 pounds of food for Maui residents. Mr. Varel shared with me that he has been short as much as 10,000 lbs of nuts just to fill his existing Maui customer's orders.

Please let me know how I can further assist in protecting this important food resource for our island.

Thanks so much,

Warmest Aloha,

Megan Wells- Breath of Heaven Farm

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