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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SEED INDUSTRY RESPONSE TO THE RELEASE OF THE KAUAI JOINT
FACT-FINDING GROUP COMMITTEE DRAFT REPORT**

***Please attribute the following statements to Bennette Misalucha, Executive Director,
Hawaii Crop Improvement Association (HCIA).***

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association acknowledges the work that the Joint Fact-Finding Group put into its report, which validates the responsible and safe practices of our state's agriculture industry and the professionalism of its employees.

The report should reassure residents of Kaua'i that there are no serious environmental or human health concerns connected to the use of pesticides by seed companies. The JFFG found that Kaua'i seed companies and Kauai Coffee Company use of agricultural chemicals cause no negative impacts on the health of our community.

The report clearly states: "*The information we assembled does not show that current pesticide use by seed companies and Kauai Coffee plays a role in adverse health on Kaua'i.*" (p9). Furthermore, "*there is no statistically significant evidence that shows causality between seed company pesticide use and harms to Kaua'i's flora and fauna.*" (p8).

Agricultural chemicals go through many years of studies before they are authorized for use in the field. When these products are properly used, there are no significant negative impacts.

And that's what the study group found. **The JFFG reported no evidence of harm to humans from agricultural pesticides (p9), no evidence of higher birth defect rates on West Kaua'i (p57), no evidence of higher cancer rates (p63,64), no evidence of harm to wildlife (p8), no evidence of harm to bees (p35), and no pesticides in pollen (p49).**

Despite finding no evidence of harm to humans or the environment, the report calls for significant spending increases and vastly expanded regulatory measures by multiple state agencies.

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Our view is that while focused and comprehensive regulation is important, the report's unsystematic approach is not based on scientific findings, and will create substantial additional costs for taxpayers and consumers.

The JFFG's role was agreed upon by all parties and formalized in a charter. The group's job was to try to establish the facts around pesticide use on Kaua'i by seed companies and Kauai Coffee, not to express the opinions or pursue the individual agendas of its members. Yet the draft report continually raises unfounded and unsubstantiated fears about chronic exposure and chemicals in general, and it glosses over the fact that pesticide levels on the island fall well below — sometimes hundreds of times below — the very strict safety limits set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The Hawaii Crop Improvement Association and its member companies believe revisions to this report are necessary, and will be providing additional information to the JFFG during the comment period.

About Hawaii Crop Improvement Association

HCIA is a Hawaii-based non-profit trade organization that promotes modern agriculture to help farmers and communities succeed. Through education, collaboration and advocacy, we work to ensure a safe and sustainable food supply, support responsible farming practices and build a healthy economy. Our vision is to grow the future of worldwide agriculture in Hawaii. In 1971, Dr. James Brewbaker founded HCIA on Molokai as an offshoot of the Corn Research Program at the University of Hawaii College of Agriculture.

Today, HCIA represents the agricultural seed industry in Hawaii. Its member companies include BASF, Dow AgroSciences, DuPont Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Monsanto and Syngenta, which farm on Oahu, Kauai, Maui and Molokai. Each serves as responsible stewards of Hawaii's natural resources. Collectively, the companies employ approximately 1,400 people with living wage jobs in rural communities. Visit www.BetterCropsHawaii.com.

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