



**Representative
Lauren
Matsumoto**
Serving You in District 45

duction Tax Credit, please contact Shelly Choy at shelly.n.choy@hawaii.gov or visit hdoa.hawaii.gov for more information.

As always, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns about happenings in our community Call my office at (808) 586-9490, email me at RepMatsumoto@capitol.hawaii.gov, or visit RepMatsumoto.com.

Aloha Friends and Neighbors!

In this issue of the North Shore News, I'm sharing information on good agricultural practices at home and at the farm. Both at home and at the farm, be sure to wash your hands before and after harvesting your crops. Remember to wash your fruits and vegetables thoroughly to minimize chances of food-borne illnesses such as rat lungworm disease, e. coli, salmonella, or listeria. Keep your pets away from your growing areas as you don't want to disturb or contaminate your plants. Consider starting a compost bin at home with fruit/vegetable scraps, eggshells, grass and plant clippings, dry leaves, finely chopped wood and bark chips, straw, sawdust from untreated wood, and shredded newspaper.

In 2018, the legislature passed HB 1577, which was signed into law as Act 89, which established the Compost Reimbursement Program with the Hawaii Department of Agriculture. The purpose of this act is to appropriate funding to the Hawaii Department of Agriculture to establish and implement a compost reimbursement pilot program to assist farmers and ranchers in our state with affordable compost material. Farmers can download the application form from hdoa.hawaii.gov.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the United States Department of Agriculture, food waste is the second largest component that enters a waste stream and accounts for 25% of all materials sent to landfills.

Recycling food waste into compost has environmental benefits including improving soil health, increasing drought resistance, and reducing the need for supplemental water, fertilizers, and pesticides.

To learn more about the Compost Reimbursement Program, please contact Todd Low at 808-973-9607 or via email at todd.e.low@hawaii.gov or Liz Xu at 808-483-7104 or via email at liz.j.xu@hawaii.gov.

The Hawaii Department of Agriculture is also accepting claims for the Organic Foods Production Tax Credit. Producers, handlers, and handling operations that sell organic agricultural products and have applied for organic certification and whose gross income from the sale of organic agricultural products for the most recently reported fiscal year is no more than \$500,000 may apply for this tax credit. The deadline for submissions is March 31 of the year in which qualified expenses were incurred by the taxpayer in the previous taxable year.

For questions regarding the Organic Foods Pro-