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EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 011 – 2009

AN ORDER ESTABLISHING THE AMERICAN SAMOA FOOD POLICY COUNCIL, PROVIDING FOR ITS PURPOSE, DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND MEMBERSHIP.

Preamble

WHEREAS, "ASIASIGA: a Conference on Food Security in American Samoa" was held on February 18-19, 2009 at Lee Auditorium in American Samoa; and

WHEREAS, the general purpose of the conference was to explore issues raise awareness, and provide ideas and direction on the future food security and self-reliance in American Samoa; and

WHEREAS, the conference program included presentations, panels, displays and discussion covering a wide range of topics from agriculture, fisheries, climate change, plant genetic resources, forestry, biological controls, piggery management, quarantine, homeland security, ancient methods for emergency preparedness (masi Samoa), the LDS Welfare program, food imports, food policy councils, student instruction in agriculture, natural resources and life sciences; obesity in American Samoa, health fairs, food vulnerable groups such as the elderly and infants, and child-feeding; and

WHEREAS, the conference was attended by more than 200 conference participants which included representatives from all branches of government, experts from the region including the University of Hawaii, the Independent State of Samoa, and from the Secretariat of the Pacific Land Resources Division; community organizations, farmers, fisherman, homemakers, scientists, media persons, religious and cultural leaders, and individuals of different races and ethnicities; and

WHEREAS, the conference participants supported the establishment of a FOOD POLICY COUNCIL for American Samoa; and

WHEREAS, food security exists when all people, at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life; and

WHEREAS, the need to strengthen food security in American Samoa is essential given the territory's vulnerability to risk factor related to the territory's geographic isolation, the limited opportunities to expand export earnings, declining land available for agriculture, the price of oil, high food prices, dependency on imported food, population pressures, climate change, natural disasters, and the rise in non-communicable chronic diseases; and

WHEREAS, a broad, food systems perspective is needed to examine the variety of issues and the connections between them; and

WHEREAS, a territorial food policy that is designed to produce a safe, sufficient, and nutritious food supply must also balance economic, environmental, political and social considerations important to the people of the territory; and

WHEREAS, there is a need for a lead entity to give sustained attention to food and nutrition issues in a comprehensive manner.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, TOGIOLA T. A. TULAFONO, Governor of American Samoa, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of American Samoa, do hereby order the creation of the AMERICAN SAMOA FOOD POLICY COUNCIL.

Section 1. Purpose

The American Samoa Food Policy Council ("Council") shall advise the Governor on all aspects of the food systems in American Samoa. The overall objective of the Council shall be to advise on the critical issue of access to good nutrition for all the people of American Samoa under all conditions. The Council's advice shall include, but shall not be limited to, a discussion of the following items with a view to determining how they could contribute to improving the nutrition status of the people of American Samoa.

- 1. The territory's baseline agricultural and fisheries production output;**
- 2. The vulnerability of the territory to food and nutritional insecurity because of the many risk factors;**
- 3. The importance of food safety;**
- 4. The need to stockpile food supplies and seeds of essential crops;**

5. The need to identify gaps in the territory's emergency preparedness with respect to food security;
6. The importance of agro-biodiversity, traditional crops, cropping systems, and aquaculture;
7. The rates of non-communicable diseases in American Samoa and their link to food and nutrition;
8. Strategies to promote local foods and engage young people;
9. Strategies to expand education, training, and extension;
10. The importance of addressing the needs of food-insecure groups who are vulnerable;
11. The importance of trade and marketing infrastructure;
12. The importance of land management;
13. The importance, in connection with food security, of protecting and maintaining our natural resources such as water quality, soil conservation, forestry health, air quality, and coral reefs;
14. The necessity for agricultural and fisheries research;
15. The importance of educating local food growers in adhering to EPA approved/regulated soil and plants enhancement/enrichment products (fertilizers and pesticides);
16. The need to understand and describe American Samoa's current food system, how to critically assess it, and work to improve it;
17. An examination of the manner in which territorial and national policies may impede local individuals and businesses to engage in food production, processing, distribution, and marketing activities;
18. The need to understand the legal and policy frameworks that shape the food system, whether on a local, regional, national, or international level;
19. Strategies to promote public-private partnerships in strengthening food security;
20. Strategies for health-based pricing.

Section 2. Membership

The Food Policy Council shall have the membership and operational powers and functions set forth below.

1. The Food Policy Council membership shall include at the Governor's discretion, the directors or their official designees from the American Samoa Community College (represented by the Director of the Land Grant Program), the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources, the Department of Health, the Department of Commerce, and the Governor's Senior Policy Advisor.

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Within the Council, there shall be working groups. There are:

- A. The Basic Food Supplies group shall focus on the contributions of agriculture, fisheries, and food imports to the nutrition of the people of American Samoa.
- B. The Nutrition and Health group shall consider ways in which diets could be modified to improve people's health.
- C. The Special Needs group shall consider the needs of infants, people with low income, people who are disabled, and the elderly. It would also give attention to the needs of people in schools, hospitals, and prison.
- D. The Food Safety group shall monitor and propose means for improving food safety in all contexts including stores, markets, restaurants, and homes.
- E. The Emergency Preparedness group shall focus on food and nutrition issues under possible future changes in conditions, including changes in the physical, economic, and political environments.
- F. The Legislation group shall work with all the other groups in the preparation of comprehensive laws and regulations regarding food and nutrition. It shall establish a clear framework of rights, obligations, and accountability.
- G. The Monitoring and Reporting group shall support each of the groups in preparing their reports including recommendations, the status of implementation of the recommendations, and describe their impacts.

Each group's jurisdiction may be construed broadly enough to allow for the inclusion of other issues related to the group's purview and to ensure that each issue is properly addressed. Members may be drawn from the community in accordance with any special interests. Temporary working groups may be created to deal with specific issues.

Section 3. Duties and Responsibilities

- A. The Council's Chair shall be the American Samoa Community College Director of Land Grant with coordinating responsibility provided by the American Samoa Community College.
- B. The Food Policy Council shall elect a Vice-Chair.

1. All government departments and agencies shall provide
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CITY OF NEW YORK

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IN WITNESS WHEREOF

- C. All government departments identified in Section 2 shall provide adequate and cooperative staff support to the Council.
- D. The Council shall ensure that it provides an effective forum for diverse stakeholders to work together to create positive changes in American Samoa's food system by: seeking common purposes, fostering collaborative decision making, sharing information whether in printed or electronic formats, adopting integrated approaches to local issues, and maintaining appropriate cultural sensitivity.
- E. The Council may invite presentations and commentary from community representatives, experts, consultants, and hold public hearings on food policy matters.
- F. The Council shall issue advisory reports to the Governor, upon request by the Chief Executive and no less than twice a year, on the first Monday of every June and December.
- G. The Food Policy Council shall issue, on behalf of the Governor's office, an annual summary to the American Samoa Legislature and American Samoa Judicial Branch. The Food Policy Council will, as needed, liaise with the Legislative and Judicial branch.
- H. The Council shall develop and adopt procedures for the appropriate conduct of all matters related to the purposes, duties, and responsibilities of the Council.
- I. The Food Policy Council shall identify the specific roles that non-governmental organizations, private sector entities, and community entities can play in partnership with the Government with respect to the design, implementation, and evaluation of policies and strategies.
- J. The Food Policy Council shall explore cooperation with regional, national and international organizations in support of Council goals.
- K. The Food Policy Council shall evaluate its progress each year to determine its effectiveness at meeting its stated purposes, duties, and responsibilities.

Section 4. Effective Date

This Executive Order becomes effective immediately.

Dated: 10/22/09


TOGIOLA T. A. TULAFONO
Governor of American Samoa

Distribution: As per standard list