

Rural Economy Strategy 2011-2015 White Paper



Sustaining and Growing The Rural Economy

Economic Development
Planning and Environment

States 
of Jersey

Policy PE 2

Rural skills, training, advice and education - Succession Planning

States of Jersey will look at overcoming some of the issues of recruitment and develop opportunities for new entrants including:

- Working with industry and industry representative bodies to offer work placements and promote opportunities in the sector to learners and their advisers
- Developing apprenticeships and access to other vocational and academic training and qualifications e.g. investigating opportunities for 16-18 year olds to attend agricultural college in the UK
- Mentoring support from those with extensive knowledge of the industry for new entrants; and
- Providing assistance in developing financial frameworks, such as share farming models, to allow existing, or new entrants the possibility of buying into current businesses
- An extensive review of existing trusts and funds to be undertaken to ascertain what is available, what the support can be used for and the criteria required

Access to the countryside

2.4 Rural businesses are increasingly receiving public support for maintaining and enhancing the rural landscape. The local population, businesses and tourists derive value from being able to access an attractive countryside. Therefore it is important to maximise the opportunities for public access. Approximately 50% of the Island is classed as agricultural land. However, current access provision is concentrated within coastal margins and some inland valleys, with limited routes across farmland.

2.5 There is sometimes conflict between ramblers, cyclists and horse riders due in part to the current network primarily designed for one group or another. In a small area like Jersey, it is not always possible to provide separate facilities for every individual user group. Provision for multiple users must, therefore, be a primary consideration.

ENVIRONMENT

3

Policy E 11

Disease free status and cattle exports

States of Jersey to continue to work in partnership with the livestock industry to achieve recognition of herd freedom from Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis, Bovine Viral Diarrhoea and Leptospirosis in order to promote disease free status and assist cattle exports.

Agricultural industry planning needs

Safeguarding the agricultural land bank

3.28 The appearance of Jersey's countryside is largely a product of human intervention, mainly through farming. Agriculture has been going through changes for several decades, due to changing technologies and economic forces. Tourism is targeting a 'greener' more discerning visitor and leisure and recreation are making new demands on rural areas. In addition there is increasing demand for land for housing, light industry, community or social uses which are also putting the agricultural land bank under considerable pressure. However, the ratio of land that comes into the land bank through transactions versus that which is lost through change of use is 10:1 (see Figure 9).

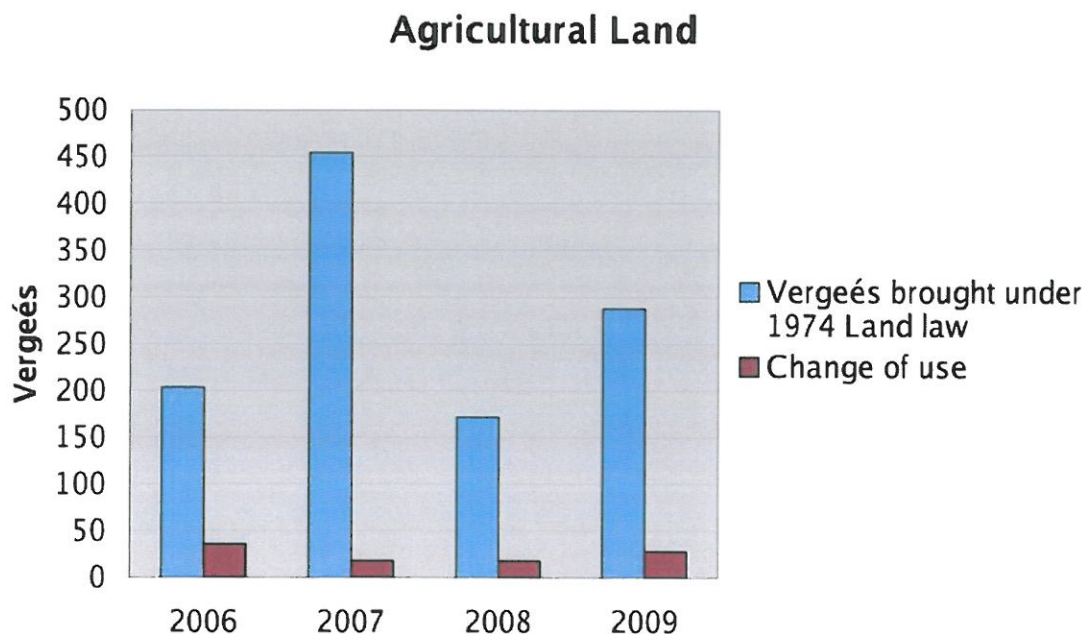


Figure 9 Agricultural Land controlled under the Agricultural Land (Control of Sales and Leases) Law, 1974 from 2006-2009.

ENVIRONMENT

3.29 Currently only about 50% of agricultural land is subject to the [Agricultural Land \(Control of Sales and Leases\) \(Jersey\) Law 1974](#). Under this law "agricultural land" means land, including land under glass, used or capable of being used for any purpose of agriculture or horticulture, but does not include any dwelling house or outbuilding. Therefore, land use is determined by Planning Legislation, on around 18,500 vergées where there is no requirement for it to be occupied by an agriculturalist or a smallholder.

3.30 Land owned by the States, the Crown and the Parishes is exempt from the [Agricultural Land \(Control of Sales and Leases\) \(Jersey\) Law 1974](#).

3.31 It is therefore essential that the [Agricultural Land \(Control of Sales and Leases\) \(Jersey\) Law 1974](#) is properly enforced. The [Agricultural Land \(Control of Sales and Leases\) \(Jersey\) Law 1974](#) allows for the imposition of conditions regarding the use and occupancy of agricultural land which protects agricultural land and restricts occupancy though these conditions can be amended by the Minister.

3.32 This is important in order to:

- Maintain a viable agriculture industry
- Keep brown cows in green fields
- Allow legitimate diversification
- Underpin the Rural Economy (supports local industries)
- Protect the countryside
- Provide environmental benefits
- Support tourism

3.33 However, planning and land control need to be flexible enough to allow the industry to adapt to the needs of their customers in order to remain competitive, but robust enough to prevent the erosion of a valuable and finite resource. The call for no future development on agricultural land may be counter productive, as agricultural or rural businesses may need to invest in further infrastructure to meet customer demands in the future.

3.34 The argument that allowing a free market for land use will enable the land to be put to its best economic use is considered unrealistic in Jersey and it is felt that this could result in land being removed from the agricultural land bank.

3.35 Changes within the industry in recent years, has seen an increased demand for land for potato production, dairy farming and other agricultural activities. (What constitutes an agricultural activity has been defined following advice from the Solicitor General and as such commercial liveries and orchards are recognised agricultural activities). Therefore, in order to retain land for commercial agriculture:

ENVIRONMENT

3

Policy E 12

Safeguarding the agricultural land bank - Maintenance of the Agricultural Land (Control of Sales and Leases) (Jersey) Law, 1974

The [Agricultural Land \(Control of Sales and Leases\) \(Jersey\) Law 1974](#) will be maintained in its present form to regulate the use of agricultural land.

Policy E 13

Safeguarding the agricultural land bank - Enforcement of the Agricultural Land (Control of Sales and Leases) (Jersey) Law, 1974

The [Agricultural Land \(Control of Sales and Leases\) \(Jersey\) Law 1974](#) will be enforced through the Land Controls and Development Section, through routine monitoring of land use with appropriate action being taken where the law is not being complied with. In addition, the criteria for smallholder and bone fide agriculturalists will be reviewed including the right for ex bone fide and smallholders to continue to occupy agricultural land.

Policy E 14

Ensuring land is retained for commercial agriculture

The States of Jersey will review the range of agricultural conditions which can be imposed under the [Agricultural Land \(Control of Sales and Leases\) \(Jersey\) Law 1974](#) (a, b, c, d, e, f, g and h) to ensure that land is retained for commercial agriculture where the need can be demonstrated.

Policy E 15

Safeguarding the agricultural land bank - Ensuring all land not subject to the Agricultural Land (Control of Sales and Leases) (Jersey) Law, 1974 is incorporated under the Law

The States of Jersey will investigate the possibility of extending The [Agricultural Land \(Control of Sales and Leases\) \(Jersey\) Law 1974](#) to incorporate all agricultural land currently not subject to the 1974 Law.

ENVIRONMENT

Land Classification

3.36 There is no official classification of the Island's soil and agricultural land, other than a subjective "poor" or "good" to identify the most productive agricultural, environmental and amenity areas.

3.37 This will be an important tool which can be used to identify land suitable for commercial agriculture and used to determine the imposition of appropriate conditions under the [Agricultural Land \(Control of Sales and Leases\) \(Jersey\) Law 1974](#).

3.38 Of equal importance is that it will provide an additional level of protection for agricultural land which is not subject to the [Agricultural Land \(Control of Sales and Leases\) \(Jersey\) Law 1974](#), by classifying all agricultural land, thus giving some protection against further domestication and building applications.

3.39 The land classification system will also identify and allow the protection of the most vulnerable and valuable environmental and amenity areas, helping target Countryside Renewal Scheme components and provide an essential reference for future land use planning.

Policy E 16

Land classification scheme

States of Jersey to develop and implement a land classification scheme for all agricultural, environmental and amenity land.

New agricultural buildings and extensions, change of use, horticultural structures and strategic planning⁽⁶⁴⁾

3.40 Currently there is no strategy identifying the future infrastructure needs of the rural sector. However, the Agricultural Buildings Capacity Study provides information on agricultural buildings and their use.

64 [Draft \(Jersey\) Island Plan has a strong presumption against proposals for new agricultural buildings, extensions and horticultural structures in Policy ERE 6 New Agricultural Buildings, Extensions, and Horticultural Structures unless it can be demonstrated that the proposed development will contribute to the viability of the agricultural industry.](#)

ENVIRONMENT

3

3.41 As part of the Rural Economy Strategy 2005, a web page allowing businesses to advertise for sale or lease of any agricultural land or buildings that they no longer require is now available at www.gov.je⁽⁶⁵⁾. This web page allows the industry to provide information on the availability of agricultural buildings and land continuously for a three month period. This will help identify existing, but vacant, premises which may meet an existing business requirement without the need to construct a new agricultural building. Posting vacancies on the site is voluntary but it addresses concerns that the current practice of advertising in the Jersey Evening Post for three nights within a three month period is insufficient for both landlord and possible tenants.

Policy E 17

New agricultural buildings

Maintain and expand the agricultural buildings capacity database and identify short/medium and long-term strategies for development of the Rural Sector in consultation with the industry.

Derelict and redundant glasshouses⁽⁶⁶⁾

3.42 Due to decisions taken by the industry and supported by the Rural Economy Strategy 2005, a number of glasshouses are now empty giving rise to potentially redundant sites. There are also areas of dilapidated glass which are seen as having potential for development. Therefore, it is essential that before glasshouses are allowed to be removed or developed, consideration should be given to the needs of any future rural economic enterprises.

Policy E 18

Modern glasshouses

Modern glasshouses should be (in order of priority):

- Kept as production units
- Be given planning permission for other agricultural use
- Be returned to a green field site

65 <http://www.gov.je/Industry/FarmingFishing/LandControl/Pages/Agriculturallandandbuildings.aspx>

66 [Draft \(Jersey\) Island Plan Policy ERE 7 considers derelict and redundant glasshouses.](#)

ENVIRONMENT

Policy E 19

Derelict or non-viable glasshouses

Derelict or non viable glasshouses should be (in order of priority):

- Be given planning permission for other agricultural use
- Considered for partial development to fund the cost of returning to a green field site
- Be returned to a green field site