

JERSEY POTATO EXPORT MARKETING BOARD

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Agri-Environment Scheme Submission to the States of Jersey Shadow Scrutiny Panel Inquiry

This submission is made by the Board of The Jersey Potato Export Marketing Scheme, which was brought into being on 18th December 2001 by an Act of the States of Jersey under the Agricultural Marketing Law.

- 1) The Agri-Environment Scheme was based on the Agriculture & Fisheries Committee Policy Report 2001 which was submitted to the States on 25th July 2002.
- 2) This Policy Report can be summarised as:
 - Recognising that the Jersey agricultural industry was moving into crisis and that States assistance was required immediately and for a few years.
 - Noting that healthy agriculture is required for growers to continue as stewards of the environment.
 - Suggesting that assistance should be progressively reduced after an initial period.
 - Initiating the new Market Support Scheme.
 - Proposing that support would move to protection of the environment.
 - Introducing an agri-environment scheme.
 - Recommending that this dovetail with the draft Island Plan.
 - Proposing extra funding for first few years, to ensure the policy is properly and fully implemented.
 - Suggesting that responsibility will be passed to the agricultural industry.
 - Confirming that it was not intended that the agricultural industry would drift unnoticed into economic crisis.
 - Recognising that the costs for implementing this policy would still not reach the relative levels of industry support that were paid in 1993.
 - Reconfirming that the States gave an undertaking to the agricultural industry at the time of accession of the UK into the EU (1972) that the Jersey industry would not be disadvantaged – and commenting that this has NOT been honoured.
- 3) The Important Issues.

- The Policy Report was adopted in the States, in spite of the fact that the main requirement was for additional early funds to be made available.
 - However, NO new funding was ever provided so none of the policy proposals have been implemented, except for the re-organisation of existing support funds into the Market Support Scheme, but this was done through an under-briefed award panel so that that the essential core crops suffered reduced marketing support in order to partially satisfy many new support demands. After one year this Scheme was abandoned.
 - The Jersey agricultural industry is now well into financial crisis.
 - Many growers have gone out of business in the last few years.
 - More growers will continue to go out of business.
 - There are very few young growers wishing or able to enter the industry.
 - Very few young growers will attempt to come into the business in future.
 - Industry collapse is well under way.
 - A ruthless monopoly business already being established is bringing further economic crisis to those who do not conform to it's dictates.
 - States policies are now overturned and the sole focus is on saving money.
 - There is no proper agricultural representation in EDC or within the States.
 - There is no active States support for agriculture in evidence at all.
 - And not even any evident interest in preserving the environment.
 - The Policy has collapsed before it had even started.
 - There has been no maintenance of the pledge for Jersey not to be disadvantaged since UK joined in EU.
 - There is no likelihood of any change in the situation.
- 4) The Board's submission is that the States have failed the agricultural industry in it's time of need, through the passage of a new policy without heeding the requirement to fund it as recommended, and one year later in practice abandoning the policy completely.

Signed for The Board

Martyn Anderson
Senior Executive.