

BUDGET 2003: AMENDMENT (P.212/2002) - AMENDMENT (P.212/2002 Amd.)- COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 3rd December 2002
by the Agriculture and Fisheries Committee**



STATES OF JERSEY

STATES GREFFE

150

2002

P.212 Amd.Com.

Price code: A

Comments

The Agriculture and Fisheries Committee supports the continued provision of school milk because of the short and long-term health benefits and because it encourages the consumption of liquid milk at an early age, which benefits the dairy industry in the Island.

The Committee also supports the funding of school milk by the States because it helps to establish a healthy lifestyle in young people, with long-term benefit to individuals and to the Island economy. The Committee sees no reason why Agriculture should not take responsibility for administering the support in future, but points out that it would be essential to increase the Committee's budget by the corresponding amount.

The Committee does not support the Amendment - that the funding of school milk should be taken from the fund available in its budget to support marketing initiatives. The policies approved by the States in July 2002 included a new method of allocating the fund, by means of a Marketing Support Scheme, under which farmers, growers, fishermen and organisations may apply for support funding by submitting a Marketing Development Plan. The deadline for applications for 2003 has passed and the fund is significantly oversubscribed. Bids totalling £2.75 million have been received whereas the available fund is about £1.3 million. No bid was received in connection with funding school milk provision. It is the Committee's opinion that this would not in any case have constituted a marketing initiative. School milk is primarily a health measure. A Panel is already undertaking its task to review applications and make recommendations to the Committee. Recommendations will be provided early in December with a view to applicants then being notified of the outcome. The Panel comprises Advocate Michael Clapham, Bob Henkhuzens, John Taylor, Timothy Crowley, Jonathan Jones and Connétable Ken Vibert of St. Ouen.

The Committee considers that the amendment would effectively reduce the fund available for marketing at a time when the agricultural industry is experiencing poor returns in all sectors, desperately needs to improve both the level and standard of its marketing effort. The Committee has proposed that the fund available to support marketing initiatives be increased, not decreased. The Committee therefore recommends that the House rejects the amendment.