

**Blanc Pignon
La Ruelle Es Ruaux
St Brelade
Jersey JE3 8BW
Channel Islands**

Tel: 01534 722993

3 September 2003

Mr J W Godfrey
Chief Executive
Royal Jersey Agricultural &
Horticultural Society
La Route De La Trinite
Trinity
JE3 5JP

Dear Mr Godfrey

Following our earlier correspondence, I have now had a chance to read Dr Bichard's excellent and sensible report.

As one of the options he puts forward – although of course not his preferred option (v. 7.3) is to keep the system as it is, there is no point in repeating what I then said.

As I write, I do not of course know what the Council will recommend, or indeed, as I rather suspect, it is too early to make a recommendation.

I say this because, first, there were a series of enquiries recommended by Dr Bichard, and several other factors which he was asked to exclude (v. e.g. 1.5, 2.8), but which he did, very sensibly, mention in passing.

The first surely must be the question of the derogation (1.3). If there is any "adulteration" (in which I include bringing back what is clearly provable local bloodlines) (v. e.g. 2.8, 4.1, 7.3, 7.4) what case has the Island to retain the present derogation? If the derogation is based on the breed being closed, would any change to this cause, ipso facto, the derogation to be ended.

I do not know how one could or should go about making enquiries, but it must surely be a major factor for consideration before a decision is taken.

...../ Second, there is

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Second, there is the attitude of the States, which will be influenced by the Public. I entirely agree with his remark that the Jersey Cow is integral to the Island's image. There are though very considerable pressures on the States, financially, and though everyone, I think, likes to see Cows in the field (or on the peg!), there are inevitably many people who would like to have cheaper milk, regardless of the consequences. If the herd is no longer "Island bred", is a likely consequence to be a removal of subsidy? Of course, it may happen anyway, but it is, I suggest, a factor to consider.

Third, is there any interest in asking the Zoo to take a look at the herd (v. my previous correspondence).

Fourth, if blood is to be brought in from outside, Dr Bichard recommends, indeed urges the Council to make further enquiries (v. 7.4, 8.2. 8.3) not least with regard to disease and purity of blood.

I am sure that breeders would wish to have this information to hand before going on to consider what should be the course of action if the decision is taken to open the Island's cattle to outside blood.

Fifth, (and subject to the above) given the way in which Jerseys have developed World wide (v. 4.1, 4.2, 4.3) it seems that it might be difficult to follow the Holsteins (v. 3.3, 10.7) and have a controlled system. It is easy enough, comparatively speaking, with a thoroughbred – there is no breed standard and it simply has to run faster than another horse over a given distance. It is perhaps not so easy in the circumstances which face the Island's breeders.

Sixth, the quest is for "efficiency" (v. 7.5). I read the report as indicating an animal which gives more milk (of whatever balance) for less feed and which lives a longer, healthier life (v. 6.4). Will not the desires and wishes of the J.M.M.B. have a major influence on what breeders need to produce (v. 6.3) as well as those of members of the Public? Has an indication of their view been given to the Council?

In passing, if animals become more "efficient" and their udders and legs stand up to it, it is perhaps a factor that – given that the derogation continues – the Island might need less cows than it does now. Against that, more land may be available much more cheaply, which may bring down feeding costs and stress. This, though, I am sure breeders already have in mind.

Please forgive me for raising these points, which I am sure the Council has well in mind. I raise them now, because I am sure that the decision – which may well be the/ right one – to bring

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right one – to bring in blood from outside will be irreversible, and should be a step to be taken only after the fullest consideration of the factors and caveats in Dr Bichard's report. Can you in fact, go further, at this stage, than have a proposition to make further enquiries along the lines suggested by Dr Bichard? If defeated this, of course, would maintain the status quo ante.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

P R Le Cras