



Manx NFU Information for Prospective House of Keys Candidates

Issued August 2016

Brief synopsis of Manx Agriculture

- There are currently approximately 400 farm businesses which operate under the Agricultural Development Scheme on the Island (awaiting 2016 census figures).
- Those farmers manage 70% of the Island's land and provide the bedrock for the Island's food and drink industry which has an estimated value of £75million and directly employs around 1300 people (Nov 14 Food Matters Strategy).
- Primary food grown and reared on the Island includes barley, feed wheat and milling wheat, oats, oilseed rape, lamb, beef, pork, goat, free range eggs, vegetables, milk and associated dairy products – there are also currently trials of rye and malting barley being grown. There is also acclaimed pedigree livestock being exported for breeding.
- Local primary production and local processing provide a 'multiplier effect' for the Manx economy which results in much greater overall benefits compared with imported goods.
- An average Manx family farm engages the services of approximately sixty other Manx businesses.
- There are three principal processors of primary produce; Laxey Glen Flour Mills which is Government owned, and IOM Meats and IOM Creamery which are both farmer cooperatives although IOM Meats receives a subvention from Government. The Manx NFU is supportive of all three processors provided they are able to pay competitive returns to farmers on a sustainable basis.

Structure of the Manx National Farmers' Union

The Manx NFU has over 200 individual farm business members in addition to individual members, representing the vast majority of commercial farms and directly related businesses on the Island.

We hold monthly Branch meetings between October and April at each of the Northern, Central and Southern Branches. Delegates from each of the Branches are elected to various commodity committees and attend Council meetings where agenda items are brought forward and discussed on a monthly basis. The Manx NFU employs a full time General Secretary and part time assistant, all other posts are filled by volunteers.

Manx Agriculture's Trading Position with other countries

The Isle of Man is in a Customs Union with the UK and currently, through Protocol 3, is part of the EU's Customs Union. Goods pass freely between the Isle of Man and the UK in trade, and onwards to the EU.

For this reason, the Common External Tariff is applied to goods imported into the Isle of Man from outside the EU.

UK companies currently have preferential access to many external markets thanks to EU trade agreements covering 53 markets, combined with the 27 other countries in the Single Market, and the countries in the EU Customs Union and EFTA, this is effectively more than 80 trade deals – covering over a third of the world's economy.

In the light of the Brexit vote;

1. It is likely, depending on negotiated trade arrangements, the Isle of Man would/will still have to broadly comply with regulation eg; animal welfare, animal health, plant health, food legislation, feedstuffs legislation, veterinary health
2. The Isle of Man will need to be in line with agricultural policy of neighbouring jurisdictions although there is currently NO environmental support in the Isle Of Man. Whatever agricultural policy is adopted, agriculture in the IOM cannot afford to be disadvantaged any further, it is difficult now to compete with imports due to;
 - Economies of scale
 - Size of fields/prevalence of hedges
 - Imports reared/grown/processed to lower standards
 - Imported inputs eg; fertiliser, seed, feed, fuel – all subject to significant extra transport costs
 - Food imported by national supermarkets does not include transport costs
 - Power and promotional activity of multinational supermarkets
 - Huge Margins being demanded by supermarkets – unfair and not a transparent supply chain



Manx NFU aims for Agriculture on the Isle of Man

To maintain support to farm businesses at least equivalent to that presently provided by the EU – or Manx agriculture will be at a competitive disadvantage to neighbouring jurisdictions and vulnerable to low cost, low quality imports.

To retain the best possible access to European markets and to continue/secure additional trade agreements outside the EU – we would like to explore market opportunities with Norway with whom the Island has strong cultural connections

Action to ensure Manx production and food security is not undermined by lower standard imports which have not been produced to the same quality standards or animal welfare standards.

Actively promote that as much Manx produce as possible is procured by Government organisations – basic contracts on a reasonable scale can ensure the viability of small scale producers and processors helping to secure a viable and sustainable Manx agriculture. By leaving the EU, public bodies should be less ham-strung in being able to specify the supply of Manx produce to feed hospital patients, school children, prisoners etc.

Implement, enforce and promote a Manx provenance label to ensure that consumers who choose to buy Manx, are being sold quality Manx produce.

Ensure that future farm support continues to be targeted at active farmers - those who take the financial risks and engage in agricultural activity.

Achieve and promote Isle of Man as a high herd health Island – leading to increased high value market opportunities through the eradication of animal disease.

Secure policies to improve the efficiency, competitiveness and sustainability of Manx farming, linked to a better operating and fairer food supply chain

Acknowledge the value of having a secure, safe local food supply but recognise that agriculture needs to be profitable and able to invest, in order to deliver food security.

IOM Government needs to develop an Agri-renewable Strategy to address the ever real threat of climate change and to provide agricultural businesses with a diversified income source through the production of renewable energy.

Increase tourists to the Island particularly using the Biosphere Reserve Isle of Man status which acknowledges and recognises the role agriculture has played and continues to play in managing our countryside

Increase knowledge and education opportunities for young people interested in entering the agricultural industry.

Ensure that the role farmers play as custodians of the countryside is recognised and more promotion of our unique environment which has evolved through generations of farming activity, is made through tourism especially since the award of UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man.

If you would like any more information about the Manx National Farmers' Union's views, or to understand in more detail any of the issues we have raised, please feel free to contact officers or officials;

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