States Assembly

Briefing Paper 7 | July 2026

Funding Agriculture and Fisheries

Overview

This briefing paper provides an overview of the background, history and current position relating to funding and support for the agriculture and fisheries sectors in Jersey. It also provides analysis of funding and support provided to agriculture and fisheries sectors in other jurisdictions.

Background and History

Agriculture: Key developments 2005-2020

On 21st June 2005, Jersey's Economic Development Committee presented a Rural Economy Strategy (the "RES") to the States Assembly. The 2005 RES set the policy direction for the funding and support provided to the agricultural sector in Jersey through the introduction of the Single Area Payment (the "SAP"). The SAP replaced a production led subsidy system and was designed to "underpin business activity in the countryside, promote market responsiveness and lead to increased self-reliance".

The SAP meant that funding was not linked to agricultural production but was based on the area farmed. The SAP was intended to be more compatible with World Trade Organisation commitments and "allow farmers' production decisions to be based on market influences".

On 14th February 2017 the Department of Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture and the Department of the Environment presented the 'Rural Economy Strategy 2017 to 2021' (the "Strategy"), which focused on economic and environmental sustainability in the countryside and introduced new policies to "keep pace with changes in the rural economy and promote growth in the sector".

A key change resulting from the Strategy was the evolution of the SAP into the Rural Support Scheme (the "RSS") to promote sustainable agriculture, by transitioning from "an area-based subsidy regime" toward a "streamlined, tiered Scheme based on the provision of public goods and services".

Fisheries: Key developments 2010-2020

Historically, Government support and interventions provided to the marine sector in Jersey have been integrated with support provided to the agricultural sector. On 14th October 2010, the Economic Affairs Scrutiny Panel's Rural Economy Strategy Sub-Panel presented a report to the States Assembly following its review of the Rural Economy Strategy 2011-2015 White Paper (the "RES").

Whilst the review largely focused on the agricultural elements of the RES, the Sub-Panel highlighted that it was "surprised to discover proposals covering fisheries and the marine environment". The Sub-Panel subsequently recommended that Jersey's marine and fisheries sector warranted its own comprehensive strategy.

Following the Sub-Panel's review of the RES, the Government published the 2013 Marine Strategy Consultation (the "2013 Strategy") that included marine resource management and economy recommendations. The 2013 Strategy intended to deliver on the recommendation made by the Sub-Panel by delivering on the following aims and objectives –

- Long-term protection of marine resources within Jersey's territorial sea.
- Sustainable development of Jersey's fishing and aquaculture industries.
- Fair access to (and use) of the marine resources by a diverse range of interests.

Following publication of the 2013 Strategy, the Government responded to a 2015 Freedom of Information request in relation to the Strategy's progress and highlighted that "further engagement with critical stakeholders was still required" and that a date for further publication had not been set.

However, in 2017 the Minister for the Environment launched a loan scheme intended to encourage more fishermen into the industry and investment in the marine sector. The loan scheme proposals aimed to reduce barriers to setting up for young people and to incentivise new entrants to make "a tangible and long-term commitment to fishing".

Agriculture and Fisheries: Recent history

In May 2022, the Council of Ministers presented two overarching policy documents that aimed to "guide and manage practical challenges" faced by the agriculture and marine sectors in Jersey. The result was the publication of the Economic Framework for the Rural Environment (the "REF") and the Economic Framework for the Marine Environment (the "MEF").

The REF made further revisions and updates to the RSS. The purpose of the REF was to provide a clear structure for Government interventions in the rural sector, to ensure these were "accountable, measured, valued and reported".

The proposals within the REF included five strategic component groups with the following areas of focus –

- Rural Governance
- Rural Support

- Land and Ecosystem
- Communication and Marketing
- Rural Development

The REF highlighted that following Brexit the UK was now “having to follow Jersey’s lead by developing new rural policy interventions in each devolved nation”. The REF stated the importance to Jersey of maintenance of equivalent Island based support regimes to help local agriculture remain competitive in these markets.

The REF was presented as a bridging strategy to the Rural Economy Strategy 2017 to 2021 to allow for continued development of rural policy with “social, economic and environmental sustainability at its core”.

The REF included a “suite of policies designed to provide appropriate financial support to the rural sector” and these included the financial support delivered through the Rural Support Scheme (“RSS”).

In addition to the RSS, the Agricultural Loans Fund was established in 2024 with £10 million of funding made available to agricultural businesses aiming to make long-term investments. The establishment of the Agricultural Loans Fund aimed to “make it easier” for agricultural businesses to “develop and continue to be protectors of Jersey’s natural environment”.

In relation to fisheries-specific support, the MEF represented a response to economic shocks caused to Jersey’s marine sectors resulting from the UK’s withdrawal from the EU. In 2021, a Marine Economy Advisory Group (the “MEAG”) was established to “bring together Jersey's commercial fishermen, aquaculture producers and merchants, to work together on an overarching marine economy strategy”.

Following establishment of the MEAG in 2021, the proposals within the 2022 MEF set out five strategic component groups with the following areas of focus -

- Marine Governance
- Marine Support
- Resources Management
- Communication and Marketing
- Marine Development

The MEF highlighted that the policy development approach for the marine sector, led by the Department for the Economy, followed significant stakeholder and ALO consultation and provided a “dynamic management tool” to directly address issues affecting the fisheries and marine sectors as set out by The Economic Council in a report published in December 2020.

Following presentation of the MEF, the Government announced the launch of a ‘Marine Sector Support Scheme’ in 2023 (the “Marine Scheme”). The Marine Scheme allocated £300,000 of funds to provide support to the marine sector to manage increasing costs as well as “encouraging businesses to become more environmentally friendly and efficient”.

However, the establishment of the Agricultural Loans Fund in 2024 raised concern that the agricultural-centric nature of the proposals could potentially exclude the marine sector from funding and support.

The proposals were scrutinised by the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel and in Comments presented to the States Assembly on 5th September 2024, the Panel stated that it was broadly supportive of the proposals. However, the Panel also highlighted the prescriptive nature of the proposals, and that these could "preclude loans to support marine based ventures" due to the "need for the relation of the loans to agricultural land".

Current Position

There are currently a number of funding and support options available to businesses operating within the agricultural and marine sectors in Jersey. The non-profit initiative Farm Jersey sets out a list of all grants available to rural and marine enterprise through its 'Grant Finder', which includes a mix of current Government and charitable funding and support.

Rural Support Scheme

The funding available from the RSS opened as of January 2026 for "activities undertaken in 2025". The RSS supports farms and smallholders, through the provision of four tiers of payment available to agricultural businesses –

- Tier 1: Quality accreditation and farm management planning.
- Tier 2: For payments linked to livestock numbers and land use.
- Tier 3: Support provided for economic, environmental and social performance (training, local produce etc.).
- Tier 4: Project grants delivered for capital investments.

Better Business Support Package

The Better Business Grant comprised £5.3 million of funding allocated to Jersey Business to assist business sectors in Jersey to enhance productivity and invest in employee training. In addition to the £5.3 million available through the Grant in 2024, the Better Business Support Package allocated £1.1 million of assistance for the rural and marine sector. This support was made available as a "top up to the existing credit-based support schemes".

Agriculture and Fisheries (Loans) (Jersey) Law

On 10th February 2026, the Agricultural Loans Fund was updated by the Minister for Sustainable Economic Development, through the Draft Agriculture and Fisheries (Loans) (Jersey) Law 202- (the "Law").

The updates to the Law provided a number of key changes that included establishment of the previous Agricultural Loans Fund to provide loans to both the agricultural and fisheries industries, re-established the Board under the Agriculture (Loans and Guarantees) (Jersey) Law

1974 and renamed the Board as the Agriculture and Fisheries Loans Board as well as providing for the proceedings of the Board.

The applications received for support and funding provided through the Agriculture and Fisheries Loans Fund are managed and administered by Jersey Business.

Other funding and support options in Jersey

In addition to the RSS and the Agriculture and Fisheries Loans Fund, there were a number of other funding and support options. These currently include –

- Howard Davis Farm Trust: Supports training, research and projects in agriculture, horticulture and environmental protection across Jersey.
- Jersey Community Fund: Support may include projects related to biodiversity, education or food-security projects.
- Jersey Funders Group: Directs applicants to relevant funding partners and eligible projects include businesses promoting community food production, farming education, sustainability or wellbeing.
- King's Fund for Agriculture: A bursary scheme that provides support to Jersey residents studying agriculture or horticulture with awards covering up to 100% of tuition and living costs, encouraging entrants into the sector and supporting local food security.

Funding and support in other jurisdictions

Jurisdiction	Agriculture	Fisheries
Isle of Man	The Agricultural Strategy 2024 (the "IoM Strategy") sets out key Government actions to support the agricultural sector, and these include support for modernising farming equipment and improving production techniques, and "grants, training and marketing to help farmers diversify and reach new markets". The IoM Strategy aims to ensure that – • Agriculture "continues to form a bedrock" for the Isle of Man in the future and for the benefit of future generations. • Isle of Man landscapes and the environment are enhanced. • The response of the Isle of Man to climate change "plays a key role" in	The current fisheries policy of the Isle of Man is governed by the Isle of Man Fisheries Statement (the "Statement") issued in 2023. The Statement aims to – • Protect and recover fish stocks. • Reduce the adverse effects of fishing on the marine environment. • Support a "modern, resilient, and environmentally responsible seafood industry". • "Adopt an 'inshore' approach" to fisheries management. The Statement committed to a review in 2029 of funding allocated to the Agriculture and Fisheries Grant Scheme.

<table>
<tr><th>Jurisdiction</th><th>Agriculture</th><th>Fisheries</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>social, economic, health and environmental future development.

However, the IoM Strategy did not include dedicated annual funding or a ring-fenced budget.</td><td>However, the Statement did not include dedicated annual funding or a ring-fenced budget.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Guernsey</td><td>No overarching strategic focus on agricultural support but sectoral support, with recent focus on the dairy farm industry.

In January 2025 the Committee for the Environment and Infrastructure allocated £2.35 million in dairy farm support, to be provided by 2026.</td><td>A subsidy, grant or loan scheme does not appear to be available to Guernsey's fisheries sector, such as those provided by Jersey's Marine Support Scheme and the Agricultural and Fisheries (Loans) (Jersey) Law</td></tr>
<tr><td>European Union</td><td>The EU's Common Agricultural Policy ('CAP') applies to the EU's 27 Member States. The CAP is managed and funded at the EU level from the resources of the EU budget. The CAP provides direct support for the agricultural sector on a substantial financial and geographical scale, with the aim of –

• Supporting farmers and improving agricultural productivity.
• Safeguarding EU farmers' living standards.
• Addressing climate change and managing resources sustainably.
• Maintaining rural areas and landscapes across the EU.
• Promotion of jobs in farming and agri-food industries.

The CAP was allocated €387 billion for the period 2021- to 2027.</td><td>The EU also administers a Common Fisheries Policy ('CFP'). The CFP originally formed "part of the CAP" and aimed to: "Increase productivity, stabilise markets, provide a source of healthy food and ensure reasonable prices for consumers"

In 2023, the European Commission presented a package of measures to improve the sustainability and resilience of the EU's fisheries and aquaculture sector. The proposals were made up of four elements –

• Communication on the functioning of the CFP.
• Protection of marine ecosystems.
• Energy transition in the EU fisheries and aquaculture sector.
• Common market organisation.

The European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund supports the implementation of the CFP and was</td></tr>
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Jurisdiction	Agriculture	Fisheries
		provided with €6.108 billion for the period 2021-2027.
England	Following the UK's withdrawal from the EU in 2020, England's Agricultural Transition Plan 2021 to 2024 set out the transitional period for agricultural policy in England through to 2027. The aim of the Plan was to reduce BPS payments gradually over time and allow existing agri-environment schemes to be reviewed. The transitional process has continued with support for farmers and land managers provided through 'Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes', enabling three new funding schemes available to farmers and land managers – • Sustainable Farming Incentive: offering "optional actions" that farmers can be paid for; • Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier: for actions with a "greater environmental focus and longer funding periods"; and • Landscape Recovery: with focus on "long-term collaborative projects amongst various landowners and stakeholders". **For the period 2021 to 2025 the Agricultural Transition Plan committed to maintaining funding at a level of £2.4 billion a year over that period.**	Following Brexit, the 2020 UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement was "extended to fisheries and provided mutual access for UK and EU fishing vessels in each other's waters until June 2026. In June 2026, the British Government announced the launch of the Fishing and Coastal Growth Fund ('Fund') which aimed to "modernise the fishing and seafood sector, build resilience, and support coastal regeneration". **The Fund was established with £360 million available to invest in fishing and seafood businesses and coastal communities across the UK.**

Jurisdiction	Agriculture	Fisheries
	On 24th June 2026, the UK Government published the '[Farming Roadmap 2050: Growing England's Future](#)' which committed to an increase in the total budget for ELM schemes of up to £2 billion a year by 2029.	