

AN AGRICULTURAL STRATEGY FOR THE ARGYLL AREA

PROGRESS UPDATE

Theme 1: Information, Advice and Human Capital Objective : To improve information flow and communication and better equip farmers and crofters to make informed business decisions and in turn improve the profitability and sustainability of their businesses				
What needs to be done	How will this be achieved	Who has responsibility for the actions	When is the action most needed	Progress to Mid August 2006
1.1 Increase the understanding of Pillar I support post CAP Reform both at a farmer level and with the rest of the industry.	1.1.1 Encourage attendance of SEERAD/SAC/NFUS information meetings. 1.1.2 Facilitate the provision of business planning workshops for farmers and upstream/downstream companies to encourage review of options post CAP Reform.	Forum, SEERAD, SAC, NFUS and Crofting Organisations	2005-2006	
1.2 Make best use of Pillar II support through integrated rural development and greater appreciation and understanding of Land Management Contracts, Agri environment schemes including RSS and SFGS, impending changes in the Less Favoured Area Support Scheme and opportunities for diversification.	1.2.1 Facilitate information meetings/workshops on rural development, land management contracts, agri-environment opportunities and diversification. 1.2.2 Review historic uptake of RDR based schemes in Argyll area and benchmark against other areas. 1.2.3 Monitor RDR schemes uptake and establish net flow of funds (modulation versus support).	Forum & SEERAD	2005-2007	
1.3 Lobby on the proposed Rural Development Regulation (RDR), the Scottish Rural Development Plan (SRDP) and on the future introduction of Land Management Contracts (LMC) to allow the best interests of the Argyll area to be served.	1.3.1 Establish stakeholder group for the Argyll area on RDR and SRDP 1.3.2 Establish contact between RDR stakeholder group and SEERAD to allow appropriate representations to be made	Forum and other partners i.e. WHELK Leader +	2005-2006	1.3.1 ASDM worked with A&B Council, WHELK Leader, NFUS, CC and SNH to look at the options for a stronger Argyll approach to SRDP consultation, in particular the structure of the RPAC. 1.3.2 ASDM compiled the FORUM response which was commented on by forum members before submission on 29 June.
1.4. Improve information flow between organisations and businesses through greater co-operation and collaboration.	1.4.1 Encourage greater collaboration between the business support functions of the enterprise agencies and other business support providers. 1.4.2 Provide clearer sign posting of advice and support for rural businesses in the Argyll area through greater collaboration between advice and support providers. 1.4.3 Convene an Argyll 'Future of Farming and Crofting' Conference to discuss vision for the industry, gain acceptance for the strategy and facilitate co-operation and collaboration within the industry. 1.4.4 Publish quarterly Argyll agri-food newsletter that includes information updates and case studies of current initiatives and successful agri-food businesses and incorporate this into the implementation programme for this strategy.	Forum, Enterprise Agencies and business support providers	2006	1.4.2 Ring Argyll, NFUS and ASDM have been working together to create an online rural calander. The calander will also be published monthly in NFUS leader and hopefully in the local press. ASDM working with equivalent in borders to share IT resources. 1.4.4 The Argyll and Islands supply chain network proposals' first stage involves the set up of a local food web site, this will have the capability to include a newsletter. (Forum)

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<p>1.5 Increase the awareness and knowledge of health schemes and quality initiatives (including organic production systems) to make gains in relation to product quality and better meet market needs.</p>	<p>1.5.1 Support the promotion and delivery of existing health schemes in the Argyll area.</p> <p>1.5.2 Review the efficacy of existing quality initiatives in an Argyll context and identify opportunities for the development of existing and new quality initiatives in the beef, lamb and milk sectors appropriate to Argyll area.</p> <p>1.5.3 Establish current and future market needs for existing Argyll products and disseminate to the industry.</p>	<p>SEERAD, QMS, NFUS, Local Authority and Crofting Organisations</p>	<p>2006</p>	<p>1.5.2 Argyll and Islands supply chain network proposal's long term vision is to promote quality Argyll produce (Forum)</p> <p>1.5.3 Questionnaire of demanders of local produce being undertaken as part of the supply chain network proposal . This questionnaire will go out in late August. (Forum)</p>
<p>1.6 Maximise the options available for farm businesses post decoupling through supporting the adoption of new systems, techniques and technology and encouraging the further development of and involvement in the SEERAD and QMS Monitor Farms Initiative.</p>	<p>1.6.1 Encourage use of SEERAD Whole Farm Review Scheme.</p> <p>1.6.2 Support introduction of SAC/SAOS 'Profit without Subsidy' initiative through facilitating the provision of local workshops.</p> <p>1.6.3 Undertake research on alternative crop and livestock systems/enterprises appropriate to the Argyll area to determine whether there are real opportunities and if they can be realised in the Argyll area.</p> <p>1.6.4 Support the QMS Monitor Farm in Argyll to build and improve systems appropriate to the Argyll area, disseminate information and knowledge and supplement this with a programme of events through, for example, Island or sector interest groups.</p>	<p>Forum, SEERAD and QMS</p>	<p>2005- 2006</p>	<p>1.6.2 One Profit without subsidy training event held in June in Campbeltown (SAC)</p> <p>1.6.4 QMS Monitor Farm Saulmore running since 2004 on calltle policy and wormer trials, new QMS monitor farm the Plan Farm on Bute has held 2 well attended meetings. (QMS SAC)</p>
<p>1.7 Encourage creativity in the marketing of traditional and new agricultural products through, for example, direct marketing.</p>	<p>1.7.1 Evaluate the opportunities for direct marketing Argyll products through the commissioning and production of a report and the subsequent dissemination of its findings. If appropriate, promote direct marketing to fill identified market opportunities.</p> <p>1.7.2 Review products currently direct marketed in the area and provide additional business/marketing support to encourage their further development in light of the report findings.</p>	<p>Forum</p>	<p>2006</p>	<p>1.7.1 Argyll and Islands supply chain network proposal seeks to increase the opportunities for producers through cooperation. Questionnaire of suppliers of local food produce mailed to 114 producers and also available on ABC website. Press release week beginning 21 august(Forum)</p> <p>1.7.2 Questionnaire of food producers across the area being undertaken in August. Collaborative marketing proposed through Argyll and Islands supply chain network proposal (Forum)</p>

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<p>1.8 Boost the abilities and enthusiasm of the next generation of farmers using, for example, the monitor farms initiative and a young leadership programme.</p>	<p>1.8.1 Implement young leadership training and personal development programme to improve business management / leadership / entrepreneurial skills.</p> <p>1.8.2 Establish a mentoring programme that links experienced and established farmers and rural businessmen with young entrepreneurial farmers to provide guidance and support in their and their business' development.</p> <p>1.8.3 Support young farmers in the attendance of monitor farms initiative through, for example, a young farmer's day.</p>	<p>Forum and Enterprise Network</p>	<p>2006</p>	<p>1.8.1 ASDM is gathering views from young farmers across the area and will gather valuable data from the survey of food producers (Forum)</p>
<p>1.9 Encourage new entrants to farming through, for example, rural development measures.</p>	<p>1.9.1 Make representation to the Scottish Executive, COSLA, Enterprise Agencies, NFUS and others as appropriate for inclusion of an RDR based new entrants scheme.</p> <p>1.9.2 Develop and make available a toolkit and resource pack, using existing material where appropriate, for initiating and implementing new business ideas and monitoring and reviewing their progress.</p>	<p>Forum and Enterprise Network</p>	<p>2005-2007</p>	<p>1.9.1 NFUS response to SRDP</p>
<p>1.10 Encourage participation in training events and continued professional development and utilise existing training providers, the Rural Business Ring and distance learning initiatives.</p>	<p>1.10.1 Increase awareness of the funding opportunities for training through the Tier 2 LMC's through existing and new information channels.</p> <p>1.10.2 Support the Rural Business Ring and other appropriate organisations in the identification and prioritisation of training needs and in the delivery of courses to rural businesses.</p> <p>1.10.3 Increase awareness of the distance learning concept, encourage greater collaboration between existing knowledge transfer organisations such as SAC and UHI and promote the use of ICT such as video links to allow greater access to practical training, learning and specialist advice.</p>	<p>Forum, SEERAD, Enterprise Network and Training Organisations</p>	<p>2005- 2007</p>	<p>1.10.2 Colin Cameron (Ring Argyll) held a meeting in May with training providers in Argyll to identify overlaps and gaps in training.</p> <p>1.10.3 Forum continuing to encourage Agencies to use video conferencing for meetings to allow farmers in remote areas to attend.</p>

Theme 2: Broadening Income Sources				
Objective : To widen the income streams into farming and crofting households to lessen the dependence upon subsidies and reduce the business risks associated with low commodity prices				
What needs to be done	How will this be achieved	Who has responsibility for the actions	When is the action most needed	Progress to Mid August 2006
2.1 Encourage greater co-operation and collaboration between farmers and crofters in relation to machinery and labour utilisation and in tandem encourage the development of the Rural Business Ring.	2.1.1 Provide support to the Rural Business Ring and encourage farmer and crofter participation. 2.1.2 Support SAOS in the dissemination of the benefits of co-operation and collaboration through the preparation of Argyll case studies. 2.1.3 Facilitate partnerships between organisation to support the Rural Business Ring and diversification activity in the Argyll area.	Forum, Enterprise Network, SAC and SAOS	2005-2007	2.1.1 RBR continues to grow in membership, but still requires ongoing support from the Forum Membership. Development of the Rural Calander will increase use of the website. 2.1.2 Argyll and Islands supply chain network proposal evidences the opportunities for cooperation (Forum)
2.2 Utilise newly introduced flexibility in the Agricultural Holdings Legislation and Local Plan to encourage sustainable diversification activity.	2.2.1 Prepare and disseminate information leaflet explaining the key changes to the Agricultural Holdings Legislation and the opportunities that it can bring. 2.2.2 Promote the concept of an Estate and Farm Development Plan to aid the planning process for diversification applications.	NFUS, SRPBA, SAC and the Local Authorities	2005 -2006	
2.3 Promote the development of new skills and trades for those farmers and crofters engaged part-time on the land.	2.3.1 Identify skills gaps in the area. 2.3.2 Disseminate information on skills gaps and identify opportunities. 2.3.3 Facilitate the Rural Business Ring to provide supplier/demander information for services outwith agriculture.	Forum with SAC, LANTRA and Rural Business Ring	2006-2008	2.3.1 Survey of food producers will allow the identification of skills gaps in this sector. (Forum) 2.3.3 Colin Cameron (Ring Argyll) held a meeting in May with training providers in Argyll to identify overlaps and gaps in training.
2.4 Develop linkages between food, fishing, tourism, natural environment and sporting activities.	2.4.1 Initiate an Argyll 'Agriculture, Food and Tourism Fair' to encourage greater collaboration between individuals and better linkages with the public.	Forum	2005-2006	2.4.1 ASDM exploring opportunities for local produce to be incorporated into existing events/festivals. Compiled a list of events and key contacts to be approached. Farmers Market group has been approached to supply local food at next years Tarbert seafood festival. ASDM and ABC helping Argyll Country markets to organise a 'Raising the Profile of Local Food Markets' event in Lochgilphead on the 9 th September.
2.5 Exploit opportunities centred around recreation and leisure.	2.5.1 Initiate Argyll 'Leisure and Recreation Fair' in tandem with the Agriculture Food and Tourism Fair.	Forum, Council Access Officers, Visit Scotland and NFUS	2006	As above
2.6 Identify opportunities for renewables on and off the land	2.6.1 Commission research into the on-farm and off-farm opportunities of renewables	Enterprise Network and ALenergy	2005- 2006	???

including biomass, energy crops, and wave, hydro and wind energy generation.	in the Argyll area and the steps necessary to facilitate an increase in the levels of renewables.			
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Theme 3: Adding Value to the Local Food Chain				
Objective : To encourage farmers and crofters to take a more active role in the local food chain and aid the development of added value opportunities				
What needs to be done	How will this be achieved	Who has responsibility for the actions	When is the action most needed	Progress to Mid August 2006
3.1 Encourage greater sustainability within livestock production systems.	3.1.1 Identify opportunities for new systems, new partnerships and greater retention of stock within the Argyll area in store, finishing and breeding systems. 3.1.2 Promote better marketing and improved linkages within each of the systems. 3.1.3 Learn from other areas of Scotland, UK and abroad that have managed to overcome similar issues.	Enterprise Network, Local Authorities and Forum partners	2005-2007	3.1.1 Argyll and Islands supply chain network proposal highlights examples where producers have finished animals on non conventional systems. i.e. 3yr old wedder, 30 month beef. NFUS, QMS and FWAG are organising a series of events across Scotland to explore opportunities. Argyll event to be held at Bragleenmore on 23 August. 3.1.2 Argyll and Islands supply chain network proposal seeks to improve the linkages and marketing for local food producers. (Forum) 3.1.3 Examples from other areas are demonstrated in the Argyll and Islands supply chain network proposal ((Forum))
3.2 Maintain and grow the market share and market penetration of existing local processors.	3.2.1 Complete a resource audit of existing local processors and quantify the extent of the existing market. 3.2.2 Identify areas of commonality and synergy that will introduce efficiency gains and increase effectiveness. 3.2.3 Assess opportunities for new markets and develop strategies to exploit these including local procurement and community supported agriculture. 3.2.4 Assess the opportunities for PDO's and PG's within the Argyll area.	Forum with Enterprise Network and Local Authorities	2006-2007	3.2.1 Surveys of those involved in the supply chain to be completed in August. (Forum) 3.2.2 Argyll and Islands supply chain network proposal evidences the opportunities for efficiency gains in cooperation (Forum) 3.2.3 Meetings held with ABC procurement personnel and ASDM. ASDM attending meetings of A&B Food and Health Group and pushing local food for local schools. Pam Rodway, Food For Life Coordinator to give a presentation at the next meeting on 24 th August. 3.2.4 ??
3.3 Encourage the formation and establishment of new, locally based small scale food processors.	3.3.1 Build a pack for existing and new small-scale food processors to help them to think and plan their business idea and assist with implementation and review of progress. 3.3.2 Identify existing small-scale food processors and provide a forum for them to meet, share experiences, discuss ideas and seek support and advice.	Forum with Enterprise Network and Local Authorities	2005-2007	3.3.1 Argyll and Islands supply chain network proposal demonstrates possible ways to improve the help delivered to producers, through various facilitation options(ASDM) 3.3.2 ASDM has compiled a list of small scale producers, has visited many of them. Now conducting a detailed survey of 114 producers by mail, survey also available at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk . The Argyll and Islands supply chain network proposal demonstrates how forums can be established in at least 8 key areas across Argyll
3.4 Encourage slaughtering/proce	3.4.1 Audit slaughtering and processing facilities within the Argyll area and	Enterprise Network , Local Authorities and	2005	3.4.1 AIE research into mobile slaughtering facilities available on AIE web site.

ssing joint ventures.	identify how a more effective and efficient production, slaughtering and processing cluster and infrastructure can be developed.	QMS		
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What needs to be done	How will this be achieved	Who has responsibility for the actions	When is the action most needed	Progress to Mid August 2006
3.5 Encourage the development of local supplies of fruit, vegetables and other products.	3.5.1 Assess the feasibility growing non-supported and novel crops in the Argyll area. 3.5.2 Determine the existing and future market requirements and assess if these can be met. 3.5.3 Examine the market and distribution structure needed to support any development in this sector.	Forum and the Enterprise Network	2006-2008	3.5.1 Now conducting a detailed survey of 114 food producers by mail, survey also available at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk . (Forum) 3.5.2 Survey of demanders of local produce to be conducted in late August /September (Forum) 3.5.3 As above. The Argyll and Islands supply chain network proposal suggests routes for improving marketing and distribution structures(Forum)
3.6 Undertake market research in relation to Argyll area and its products to better understand market requirements and potential for niche Argyll products.	3.6.1 Commission independent research to aid the understanding of existing and potential Argyll products. 3.6.2 Assess the Orkney model and any other suitable examples and decide what components are applicable to the Argyll area and test the feasibility.	Forum and the Enterprise Network	2005-2006	3.6.1 Forum carrying out supply and demand research. (Forum) 3.6.2 ASDM has assessed what has gone on in other areas to produce the Argyll and Islands supply chain network proposal.
3.7 Create and develop links in the food chain so added value opportunities can be exploited.	3.7.1 Facilitate greater collaboration and co-operation within the Argyll area food chain from the producer to the processor and to the consumer. 3.7.2 Provide a forum that allows producers and processors to meet and seek ways to work together to survive in competitive markets, retain customers and increase efficiencies.	Forum, Enterprise Network, Highlands and Islands Food Network and Local Authorities	2005- 2006	3.7.1 The Argyll and Islands supply chain network proposal, Food Event in Lochgilphead (HILFN to attend), surveys. (Forum) 3.7.2 The Argyll and Islands supply chain network proposal addresses this. (Forum)
3.8 Link food and tourism so each complements and sells the other.	3.8.1 Develop an Argyll food trail leaflet for residents, tourists and visitors to the area that establishes better links between producers and consumers and between food producers in the area.	Forum, Visit Scotland and the Enterprise Network	2005-2006	3.8.1 The Argyll and Islands supply chain network proposal highlights the need for at least 8 facilitated fora across argyll to achieve this cooperation. (Forum)

Theme 4: Building a Better Infrastructure
Objective: To develop an agriculture and public infrastructure that is compatible with a competitive agricultural sector

What needs to be done	How will this be achieved	Who has responsibility for the actions	When is the action most needed	Progress to Mid August 2006
4.1 Provide input to the local transportation strategy that is sympathetic to the needs of agriculture and crofting.	4.1.1 Foster partnership between all vested parties and work with other industry organisations to represent the views and needs of agriculture and crofting.	Forum	2007	
4.2 Provision of affordable rural housing to encourage retention of locally based labour pool with a range of core skills.	4.2.1 Raise awareness of policy developments in relation to housing policy, provide input and determine how the farming community can contribute to the availability of locally affordable housing.	Forum, Local Authority , Local Housing Associations , FC , Communities Scotland	2005- 2006	
4.3 Implement measures within current and future subsidy schemes that support the development of appropriate farm and wider rural infrastructure.	4.3.1 Make constructive representation to SEERAD for the inclusion of infrastructure measures within the SRDP that allow the development of on-farm and processing infrastructure that is compatible with a competitive infrastructure.	Forum, NFUS and Crofting Organisations	2005- 2006	4.3.1 Forum SRDP consultation response highlighted the four themes of the strategy including infrastructure(Forum)
4.4 Enter into dialogue with livestock auction market companies to better understand critical mass required to support market infrastructure and requirements.	4.4.1 Facilitate a meeting with auction market representatives to better understand the issues affecting the sector.	Forum	2005- 2006	
4.5 Develop a sub-strategy for the Argyll area in relation to processing red meat and dairy products that secures maintenance and sustainability of such facilities.	4.5.1 Identify fragile sectors and areas through sectoral reviews. 4.5.2 Establish industry working groups to develop risk management strategies.	Forum, NFUS and Crofting Organisations	2005- 2006	

4.6 Improve IT infrastructure in rural areas.	4.6.1 Identify and quantify benefits being accrued through improved infrastructure and use this information to make appropriate representation for improved services and facilities.	Forum, <u>Local Enterprise Company</u>	2005- <u>2006</u>	
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