



Today, the president and councillor of agriculture, livestock and fishing of the Formentera Council, Jaume Ferrer and Santi Juan, signed off with president and director of the Farmers' Cooperative of Formentera, Jaume Escandell and Carlos Marí, on the initiative known as 'cultiu de terres', the untilled land use project coordinated by the two groups.

The signature of the measure came on the first official work day for new cooperative chief Marí, a full-time employee of the association who will take charge of the land use and other projects. As of today, Director Marí will tend to public inquiries from his office, temporarily-located at the Centre Gabrielet in Sant Francesc Xavier.

The untilled land use project consists in the temporary cession to the Farmers' Cooperative (for periods of either three or five years) of farmable parcels of land whose owners do not actively labour them. The cooperative works the borrowed terrain in order to commercialise the harvest reaped, the profits of which go to the association's own benefit. Landowners, in turn, receive the benefit of a more fertile plot with improved appearance.

Among the Formentera Council's different objectives for the project are an increased agricultural productivity, revaluing of the agricultural activity, beautification of Formentera countryside, revitalisation of the farming profession and an improved capacity for local self-sufficiency.

Under the terms of the initiative, the Council will supply the funding (€95,000) and the cooperative will provide the materials, labour and technical expertise necessary for the project. With a June deadline on completion of the industrial space to be used by the Farmers' Cooperative, the Formentera Council will offer the group office space in order to tend to public inquiries vis-à-vis cultiu de terres.

Jaume Escandell: “Today is a very important day for the Formentera countryside”

Formentera Council president Jaume Ferrer explained that the signatures formalised a project that was a long time in the making. “An incredible amount of work has been put into this project by the Council and the Farmers' Cooperative. It included not just a great deal of legal legwork, but also the task of formalising the idea and convincing people that it was really possible”. Ferrer said that as of today landowners could cede non-laboured agricultural properties to the cooperative.

For his part, Farmers' Cooperative president Escandell remarked: “This is a very important day for the cooperative and the Formentera countryside. In broad terms, the project means a recovery of the land”.

Last Tuesday, the Formentera Council spearheaded a census of untended local land and offered up its own contribution to the project: Ca Ses Ferreres, a farmable terrain of some 10,000 square metres located in La Mola. Last Thursday, participants at the plenary meeting of the Council voted unanimously to request the cession by the Govern Balear of the farmable portion of the Can Marroig terrain, one of the largest on the island.