



Today Ana Juan, President of the Consell de Formentera; Miquel Mir, Balearic Minister of Environment; Josep Marí, Councillor of Rural Affairs; Carlos Marí, Manager of the Formentera Farmers' Co-operative (*Cooperativa del Camp, CCF*); and Llorenç Mas, General Director of the Balearic Office of Natural Spaces and Biodiversity, paid a visit to the Can Marroig estate. At the meeting, the CCF's fig tree planting project was presented.

President Juan praised the CCF for enabling recovery of a traditional agricultural in a protected area and "one that will see our homegrown produce return to local markets".

Carlos Marí offered an overview of the project, which has seen CCF workers line two hectares of Can Marroig with 675 trees, including 12 varieties, for staggered fig production throughout the season. "We hope to start harvesting the first figs in June", confided Marí, describing it as "an intensive plantation tailored for maximum yield".

"When the farm is at full capacity we expect annually to harvest eight tonnes of figs for the local market. Fresh figs will be sold, but we will also try to recover and promote dried figs, including *x ereques*

", Marí added, referring to a type of fig which is dried using a technique unique to Formentera. Finally, CCF representatives applauded students of the training workshop held recently in Can Marroig and Ibanat workers for their help with planting.

Minister Mir highlighted "the recovery of one of the traditional uses of an iconic public estate thanks to collaboration between administrations and entities". "We often think of forest management as a tool that functions exclusively to prevent fires, but it is also a way to recover land and make it richer and better equipped to face the climate emergency", he added.

Collective planting plan

The Agricultural and Fishing Guarantee Fund of the Balearic Islands (*Fons de Garantia Agrària i Pesquera, FOGAIBA*) has granted a subsidy of €9,990 to the plantation, a project which is included in the collective replanting plan which the CCF oversees with help from a dozen members. CCF representatives

explained that the 2021-2022 plan involves planting about 4,000 trees, particularly olive and fig trees, with funding support from FOGAIBA.

Supporting the CCF

Councillor Marí pointed out that, since March 2015, when the CCF was reactivated, the Consell de Formentera has subsidised operations with yearly concerted action agreements; in 2022 the grant totalled €130,000. Taken together, concerted action agreements between 2015 and 2021 amounted to €751,413. The Consell de Formentera also built the CCF's warehouse space, and more recently has provided a grain storage and conservation station as well as the machinery required to work the land turned over for the Farmland Reserve (*Fons de Terres de Cultiu*), which today encompasses 279 hectares donated from 120 individuals.

As Councillor Marí put it, "the aim of all the operations we support is to recover the primary sector and maintain Formentera's historic landscape by continuing to promote local agriculture". He praised "all the work done" in that regard.

Hand-off agreement

In May 2016, the Consell, Govern balear and Balearic Nature Institute (*Institut Balear de la Natura, IBANAT*), which holds the title of Can Marroig, signed an agreement clearing the decks for the return of agricultural activity to the estate, and in May 2021 the arrangement was renewed for five more years. The concerted action agreement allows the CCF to use Can Marroig's twelve hectares of arable land for farming.

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