

Guidelines

The temporary leasing of agricultural land to young farmers and farmers under Category Three (3), Four (4) or Five (5) of the farmer categorisation system, for a period of three (3) years, to be utilised for crop cultivation.



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DEFINITIONS

Agricultural land: Arable land that is suitable for growing crops.

Applicant: A farmer falling under category three (3), four (4) or five (5) or young farmer.

Application: A complete and duly submitted electronic request (Annex I) through the RAM online portal, together with all required documentation

Beneficiary: An applicant who has met all the requirements set forth in the application and is therefore eligible for the allocation of agricultural land under this scheme.

Farmer Categorisation System: The national system classifying farmers according to their level of agricultural activity and output, issued by the competent authorities.

Lease Agreement: An agreement signed between the Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta and the beneficiary containing provisions and conditions relating to the temporary allocation of agricultural land.

Monitoring: Regular examination of the agricultural land resources, standard output, results of interventions and achievements of the overall operational activity.

Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta (RAM): means the Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta as established by Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta (Establishment as an Agency) Order **Scheme:** The temporary allocation of agricultural land to young farmers or farmers falling under category three (3), four (4) and, or five (5) of the categorisations of farmers for the purpose of producing food crops over a three (3) year period.

Supporting Document: A mandatory document to be uploaded with the application, as provided by RAM, outlining farming history, operational data, and proposed land use.

Young farmers: registered farmers having less than forty-one years (41) of age who are actively engaged in agricultural activities. Proof that the young farmer is already actively engaged in the sectors needs to be provided during the application process.

2 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this scheme is to allocate agricultural land managed by RAM to eligible young farmers and farmers falling under category three (3), four (4) or five (5) of the categorisations of farmers for productive agricultural use.

The scheme aims to:

- Increase access to agricultural land for active farmers.
- Enhance agricultural productivity and ensure efficient land use.
- Support the growth and sustainability of young and established farmers
- Promote crop cultivation in alignment with national food-security priorities.
- Ensure that the agricultural land is utilised effectively and responsibly

Support under this measure will be granted through a formal approval process. The lease will be temporary and valid for a period of three (3) years.

3 ELIGIBILITY, CRITERIA ASSESSMENT & LAND AVAILABILITY

3.1 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

In order to be eligible under this scheme, the applicants must:

- Be classified under Category 3,4, or 5 of the Farmer Categorisation System or a Young Farmer.
- Be actively engaged in agricultural activity, demonstrated through documentation.

Submit all required documentation, including proof of farming activity

3.2 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Applicants will be assessed on a 120-mark scale across key areas including:

1. Farmer Classification Eligibility (30 marks)

The applicant must be officially classified under Category 3, 4, or 5 of the Farmer Categorisation System, or qualify as a Young Farmer in line with the applicable regulatory provisions.

- Full compliance with required category: **30 marks**
- Partial or unclear classification (subject to clarification): **15 marks**
- Does not meet classification requirements: **0 marks**

2. Proximity of Existing Agricultural Land to the Land Applied For (20 marks)

Priority shall be given to applicants who already cultivate or manage agricultural land in close proximity to the land being applied for. This is intended to promote operational efficiency, better land management, and consolidation of agricultural activity.

Applicants must provide verifiable details (such as site plans, official records, or maps) demonstrating the location of their existing agricultural holdings in relation to the land subject to the application.

- Land located in immediate proximity or adjoining the applied land: 20 marks
- Land located within the same locality or short distance: 10–15 marks
- Land located at a moderate distance: 1–9 marks
- No existing agricultural land in proximity: 0 marks

3. Completeness and Quality of Documentation (30 marks)

The applicant must submit all required documentation as specified in the scheme guidelines, ensuring accuracy, completeness, and clarity.

- All required documentation submitted, complete and clear: 30 marks
- Minor omissions or clarifications required: 15–25 marks
- Significant missing or unclear documentation: 1–14 marks
- Application incomplete or non-compliant: 0 marks

4. Active Engagement in Agricultural Activity (40 marks)

The applicant must demonstrate consistent and genuine involvement in agricultural activity through verifiable documentation. This may include production records, sales invoices, input purchases, farm registration details, or other relevant proof.

- Strong and consistent evidence of active farming: 40 marks
- Moderate evidence, with some gaps: 20–30 marks
- Limited or insufficient evidence: 1–19 marks
- No evidence provided: 0 marks

No minimum score is required to qualify. Clear documentation needed for each category. Tie-breakers are based on closest actively cultivated land to the proposed parcel, experience, larger cultivation area, and earlier submission.

3.3 LAND AVAILABILITY

Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta will publish an updated list of available agricultural parcels which are managed and administered under its administration. The approval for the leasing of agricultural land is granted to the applicants subject to:

- Availability of the agricultural land.
- Compliance with eligibility and scoring thresholds.

4 APPLICATION PROCESS

4.1 SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications may be accessed through the Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta's webpage <https://ram.gov.mt/temporary-leasing-of-agricultural-land-farmers-categories-3-4-5-and-young-farmers/>.

4.2 RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Upon Submission, applicants will receive an automatic acknowledgement of receipt. This acknowledgement does not constitute confirmation of eligibility or completeness. Furthermore, the issuance of an acknowledgement does not mean or imply that the applicant has submitted correctly all the necessary documentation.

The application may be refused and returned to the applicant following the issuance of the acknowledgement email.

4.3 CORRECTNESS OF APPLICATION

Interested applicants must submit a complete application form along with the required documents. For an application form to be eligible, the following conditions shall be met:

- All fields in the form must be correctly filled in with the relevant details, and
- All requested documentation is duly attached.

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in the application being deemed ineligible. Upon receipt of an application, Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta shall conduct a preliminary assessment to verify the applicant's eligibility. Should any clarifications or additional documentation be required, the applicant will be formally notified and granted a period of three (3) working days to provide the requested information.

Failure to submit the necessary clarifications or documentation within the stipulated timeframe may result in the application being deemed ineligible and consequently rejected.

4.4 APPLICATION AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Applications must include the following:

- Farmer Categorisation Certificate – Category 3, 4 and Category 5 of the categorisation of farmers
- Proof that the young farmer is registered as a farmer
- Project proposal detailing cultivation plans and sustainability measures
- Confirmation of active farming that the farmer is currently operating a parcel within the same proximity of the land applied for.
- Supporting documentation
- Supporting documents are outlined below:
 1. Signed true copy of the identification document i.e. passport and/or identity card of the applicant/s.
 2. Supporting Document. This template is provided by the Agency and is downloadable through the Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta's webpage: <https://ram.gov.mt/temporary-leasing-of-agricultural-land-farmers-categories-3-4-5-and-young-farmers/>
 3. Documentary evidence in support of any claims mentioned in the application or in the supporting document which includes any proof of evidence, quotations of any operational cost and capital investment, amongst others.

The Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta reserves the right to request additional information which is not included in this Guidelines at any stage of the application.

5 DURATION & TERMS

Beneficiaries shall enter into a Lease Agreement with Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta for the sole purpose of cultivating food crops on designated agricultural land. The lease shall be granted for a fixed term of three (3) years, in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in the Lease Agreement and relevant legislation.

The rent of the lease will align with Valuation of Agricultural Land Regulations (SL 199.02).

6 RESPONSIBILITIES, LIABILITIES AND TERMINATION

The responsibilities and liabilities of the beneficiaries will be outlined in the Lease Agreement, which forms an integral part of the land allocation process. Beneficiaries are required to review and comply with all terms and conditions contained therein.

Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta (RAM) reserves the right to terminate the Lease Agreement in the event of non-compliance, breach of any condition, or failure to fulfil the obligations set forth.

If the beneficiary voluntarily withdraws before the three-year term, RAM shall repossess the land and may assign it in accordance with its procedures.

7 CONTROL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS

7.1 CONTROLS AND PENALTIES

Applicants must note that by submitting the application they are agreeing to undertake an obligation for the relevant checks and controls by the respective Authorities including the following:

- a. The Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta, within the Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Supply (MAFF).
- b. The Department for Agriculture within the Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Supply (MAFF).
- c. Internal Audit and Investigations Department (IAID), Office of the Prime Minister (OPM).

The following sections are intended as a guide on applicable checks and controls.

7.2 ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS

Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta shall carry out several administrative checks on the submitted applications and on beneficiaries, including checks related to overall farming activity and financial performance. These checks include, but are not limited to;

- Processing of applications submitted by applicants;
- Verification of the accuracy and completeness of the information provided in the application;
- Verification that approved applications and proposals are implemented during the three (3) period;
- Verification of the accuracy and completeness of the post-documentation for a three (3) period.
- Any other checks that are deemed necessary throughout the application process and the three years.

7.2.1 Spot Checks

Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta shall carry out regular on-the-spot checks, as required, to ensure that on all the parcels are being cultivated in accordance with the proposal submitted with the application and as approved.

Applicants may be given advance notification of between one (1) and three (3) working days prior to an on-the-spot check to ensure that all relevant documentation is made available by the beneficiary during the inspection. Notwithstanding the above, Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta reserves the right to carry out unannounced on-the-spot checks on all beneficiaries' parcels without prior notification.

In the event that the beneficiary refuses to allow the competent authorities listed in Section 6.1 to carry out the required inspections and controls; submits false, misleading, or tampered documentation in order to obtain support; fails, through negligence, to provide the necessary information; does not comply with corrective instructions issued by Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta; or otherwise breaches any obligations set out in these guidelines, RAM reserves the right to terminate the Lease Agreement with immediate effect and repossess the agricultural land.

Furthermore, should the beneficiary voluntarily terminate the Lease Agreement prior to the completion of the three (3) year lease period, the land shall be repossessed by RAM. Any remaining lease term may be reassigned in accordance with RAM's internal procedures and the applicable regulations.

8 ANNUAL REPORTS

Beneficiaries must submit an annual report to the Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta for a three (3) year period. This report should be an updated version of the Support Document provided by the Agency for the three (3) year period.

Failing to submit the above report is considered as a breach to the terms and conditions, and the Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta may take the necessary actions to recover the agricultural land.

9 DATA PROTECTION

The Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta carries out its functions in accordance with the applicable laws and in line with standing good practices.

In line with Article 13 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (hereafter 'GDPR'), the Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta is hereby providing you with the following information:

- The "Controllers" and the "Data Protection Officer" are the Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta within the Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Supply which can be contacted on the email address ram.maff@gov.mt
- The general purpose of processing your personal data is to implement the measures under the Common Agricultural Policy in accordance with Title III of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and related EU and National Law¹, more specific policies are dependent on the measures concerned and may be found specified further down.
- The recipient of your personal data is the Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta within the Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Supply. The category of recipients of your personal data is public authorities including also Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies;
- Your personal data shall be retained for as long as legally required or reasonably necessary to satisfy the declared purposes and any legal obligations and, or claims that might possibly arise from your relationship with the Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta, or otherwise according to the Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta's Data Retention Policy provided with this declaration;
- You have the right to request from the Controllers access to and rectification or erasure of personal data or restriction of processing of personal data concerning yourself or to object to processing as well as the right to data portability, according to law;
- You have the right to lodge a complaint with the Office of the Information and Data Protection Commissioner, or any other supervisory authority, if applicable in accordance with the Regulation.

The processing of personal data shall be conducted according to the GDPR and the Data Protection Act.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT:en:PDF>

10 DISCLAIMER

The Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta may periodically update and amend these Guidelines

Such amendments, once issued, may be applied retrospectively and shall be considered binding upon all applicants and beneficiaries, as deemed necessary by Rizorsi Agrikoli Malta for regulatory or administrative purposes.

11 CONTACT DETAILS

For more information regarding the scheme, kindly contact:

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