

Shaping and Boosting the Economic Viability of a Royal Space for Agricultural and Livestock Production: the Royal Site of La Florida (1787–1814)

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The first years of Charles IV's reign (1788–1808) saw the creation of a new royal site. Given over to recreational uses and agricultural and livestock production, this estate also ensured territorial continuity between the royal properties of the Casa de Campo and the Monte de El Pardo.¹

The Royal Site of La Florida was the result of merging two large estates acquired by the monarch. The first was the Príncipe Pío hill (Montaña del Príncipe Pío), which was purchased from Prince Pío's heirs in 1792 using royal revenues; the second, La Moncloa, which was owned by Manuel Godoy, was exchanged for other royal land. As we shall see, they were joined by smaller adjacent properties such as the Granjilla (farm) of the Hieronymite friary and land belonging to the Duke of Alba and the Seminary of Nobles of Madrid, among others, and together spanned a total area of 526 hectares of land that was predominantly arable (just over 90%).² This expanse of land was located by the river Manzanares, which provided abundant water resources that were used to create vegetable gardens and orchards and cultivate produce that required irrigation, an aspect that will be discussed in greater detail in due course.

Despite the economic situation, further areas were incorporated into the royal patrimony during Charles's reign. There was an economic rationale behind all these new acquisitions: to obtain profits and revenues through agricultural, livestock and forestry exploitation rather than simply using these properties for the purposes of image and representation of the Crown or as hunting grounds. For example, Castellanos de la Dehesa, a single property (*término redondo*) belonging to the Marquis of Castellanos, and Cercado de San Sebastián with its mill were purchased on 12 February 1795 and

1 For the earlier evolution of this space see María Teresa Fernández Talaya, *El Real Sitio de La Florida y La Moncloa. Evolución histórica y artística de un lugar madrileño* (Madrid: Fundación Caja Madrid, 1999), 40–47; on the land incorporated then, 54–59.

2 Archivo General de Palacio (AGP), Reinados, José I, caja 66, exp. 11.

subsequently incorporated into San Ildefonso on 8 October of the same year.³ A few years later, between 1802 and 1805, the *soto* (riparian woodland) and castle of Aldovea and the *sotos* of Galapagar, Gordo, Vaciabotas and Quintana were acquired along with the depopulated areas of Daralcalde and Viveros and the *soto* of Mejorada and Baezuela. These were all incorporated into Aldovea and later became part of San Fernando, although they were often managed by the administrator of La Florida.⁴

Likewise, on 25 July 1804 the Coca pinewood, an important resin-producing area, was incorporated into the site of San Ildefonso, adding to the already significant forest mass of Riofrío, Pirón and Valsain.⁵ Important farming and pasture areas became part of Aranjuez not long afterwards: the *dehesa* (wood-pasture) of La Saceda, which belonged to the Madrid convents of La Victoria and Las Descalzas Reales; the *dehesas* of Híjar, Las Cabezadas de la Saceda and El Campillo, owned by the municipality of Yepes, were acquired on 15 June 1806; and the *soto* of Añover de Tajo, the *dehesa* of La Alhóndiga and the *quin-tos* (estates) of Valjuanote and Valquemado were acquired on 2 February 1808.⁶ In addition, the Sacedón baths were incorporated into the royal patrimony in 1802, being used for therapeutic-medicinal purposes and farming during the following years.⁷

Although it may seem contradictory, these acquisitions were made at a time of crisis when the traditional mechanisms for managing the royal finances were proving insufficient to sustain the Crown's expenditure, leading to the consideration of confiscatory measures. These measures culminated in the decrees of 19 September 1798, which were extended to the royal patrimony by means of a royal edict (*cédula*) of 21 October 1800 whereby it was agreed to sell off assets deemed unnecessary, and by a royal edict of 17 April 1801, where it was agreed to redeem the emphyteutic leases on royal properties. This meant, de facto, freeing up patrimonial assets. Both provisions were reinforced by another royal edict of 17 January 1805, based on the royal order of 6 November 1799.⁸ However, all the incorporations stemmed from economic concerns,

3 AGP, Administración General (AG), leg. 1283, exps. 12 and 13.

4 Félix Labrador Arroyo, "Entre la costumbre y la transformación: el Real Sitio de San Fernando (1790–1814)," in *Arqueología, Historia y Medio Ambiente: visiones cruzadas*, eds. Luis Alberto Polo Romero and Koldo Trápaga-Monchet (Madrid: Dykinson, 2019) 127–29.

5 AGP, AG, leg. 359.

6 AGP, AG, leg. 1274, exp. 3bis.

7 Aurelio García López, *La Isabela y Baños de Sacedón* (Guadalajara: Bornova, 2003), 38 and 83.

8 Miguel Artola, *La Hacienda del Antiguo Régimen* (Madrid: Alianza, 1982); Fernando Cos-Gayón, *Historia jurídica del Patrimonio Real* (Madrid: Imprenta de Enrique de la Riva, 1881); Marta Frieria Álvarez, *La desamortización de la propiedad de la tierra en el tránsito*

as these assets had an agricultural, livestock or forestry value. This economic aspect of the royal patrimony had begun to gain importance during the reign of Charles III thanks to the influence of Enlightenment ideas.

1 Shaping the Royal Site of La Florida (1787–1807)

The process of configuring this new space began in 1787 when the 8th Duchess of Alba sold part of the land of the Principe Pío hill to the king. This area, which stretched down from the San Vicente city gate and included buildings and land in the Leganitos district, was acquired for the sovereign with the intention of building the royal monastery of San Pedro de Alcántara there. Land belonging to the Duke of Osuna and small private individuals was also incorporated around this time. In the end, however, the monastery project was not realized.⁹

The purchases continued nonetheless, now with the aim of creating a new Royal Site. On 7 July 1792 the Princess of San Gregorio sold the Crown the country estate of La Florida and the Príncipe Pío hill for 1,900,000 *reales*. The money was deposited with the Diputación de los Cinco Gremios de la Villa de Madrid (the association of the five major guilds of Madrid) for 4 years with a return of 3%. A few days later, on 26 July, the Crown acquired the horticultural land and house of La Junquera and Romanillos, which belonged to Doña María Pérez de Castro, for 370,000 *reales*. In addition, at the end of the year, on 17 December, a portion of land 8½ *celemines* in size located in the area where the chapel of San Antonio was being built was acquired from the Hieronymite friars of Madrid.¹⁰

As part of this purchasing process, the royal treasury allocated a monthly sum of 50,000 *reales* (600,000 *reales* yearly) to works, beginning on 1 January 1792. A general plan showing the land purchased by the king from the Marquise of Castel Rodrigo (*Plan general que muestra el terreno que compró el rey a la marquesa de Castel Rodrigo ...*) was likewise drawn up by José de Merlo and Manuel de la Ballina.¹¹ However, due to the Crown's economic straits, a

del Antiguo Régimen al Liberalismo (La desamortización de Carlos IV) (Gijón: Caja Rural de Asturias-Fundación Foro Jovellanos del Principado de Asturias, 2007), and Encarna García Moneris and Carmen García Moneris, *Las cosas del rey. Historia política de una desavenencia (1808–1874)* (Madrid: Akal, 2015), 169.

9 Rosario Die Maculet, "Lejos de la Corte. El destierro alicantino de la princesa Pío en la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII," *Revista de Historia Moderna* 30 (2012): 85.

10 AGP, AG, leg. 1257, exp. 13, leg. 1258, exp. 1 and Fernández Talaya, *El Real Sitio*, 16, 47, 59 and 114–19.

11 Fernández Talaya, *El Real Sitio*, 59–60.

TABLE 9.1 Income and expenses of La Florida from 1794 to 1802

Period	Income	Expenses
April 1794–February 1795	275,000	275,079 <i>reales</i> and 32 <i>maravedíes</i>
May 1795–April 1796	350,000	357,926 and 29
May 1796–April 1797	300,000	418,883 and 18
May 1797–April 1798	300,000	327,705 and 26
March 1798–April 1802	1,200,000	1,509,784 ½

SOURCE: AGP, AG, CAJA 10383, N.D., AND CAJA 10,404, EXPS. 10, 19, 21 AND 23

royal decree of 1 March 1793 halved the allocation to 300,000 *reales* per year (see Table 9.1). This amount failed to cover the ordinary expenses of the wages of the people employed in the tasks of gardening, farming, caretaking, management of works and stables; the gratuities, uniforms and privileges that the king had awarded to employees; the lighting of streets belonging to the Casa del Duende; aid and bonuses granted by royal order; land leases; masses held at Nuestra Señora del Puerto; and notarial and ordinary expenses relating to stables, livestock, tack and carriages.¹²

The purchases continued during the following years as they exceeded the amounts allocated. On 22 February 1795, the *huerta* (horticultural land) of La Moncloa, located on the road to El Pardo, which Manuel de Godoy had acquired not long earlier, in 1792, in exchange for two country houses in Aranjuez (the Cortijo del Rey and the Cortijo de Canosa), was incorporated into La Florida. A few months later, on 25 April 1795, the Granjilla, on the road to El Pardo, San Bernardino and Tejares, among others (see Table 9.2), were acquired from the Hieronymites; they spanned an area of 747 *fanegas* and 140 *estadales* and were valued at 1,679,508 *reales* and 28 *maravedíes*, including the part that the monarch took on 12 February 1793.¹³

12 AGP, AG, caja 10404, exp. 5.

13 Fernández Talaya, *El Real Sitio*, 49. It was acquired in exchange for 4 *censo*s at an interest rate of 3%: an annuity of 15,000 *reales* payable by the Principality of Asturias on 500,000 *reales'* capital; an annuity of 18,000 *reales* payable by Valdecorzana on 600,000 capital; an annuity of 6,300 *reales* payable by the Marquise of Hinojosa on 270,000 *reales'* capital; and an annuity of 13,500 *reales* payable by the Marquise of Guadalcazar on 450,000 *reales'* capital. They had also been offered the option of being paid in the form of buildings in Madrid or country estates in Valdemoro. AGP, AG, caja 10404, exp. 15.

TABLE 9.2 Land previously owned by the Hieronymites that was incorporated in 1795^a

Horticultural and other land belonging to the Hieronymites	598 <i>fanegas</i> and 10 <i>celemines</i>	859,091 <i>reales</i> and 24 $\frac{2}{3}$ <i>mrs</i>
Farmhouse		391,547 and 8
Pipes, mines, manholes and reservoir		48,095
Casilla de los Huertezuelos		4,144 and 8
Pipes, mines and other		9,263
Casa del Pastor		36,798
Casa Nueva, beside San Antonio		38,114 and 8
Casa de la Huerta Grande		59,499
Casa del Lavadero		12,960 and 17
Total		1,459,512 and 29 $\frac{2}{3}$ <i>mrs</i>

a The land incorporated in 1793 is not included

SOURCE: AGP, AG, CAJA 10404, EXP. 16

Additional incorporations (see Table 9.3) were 9 *fanegas* and 6 *celemines* of land belonging to the Marquise of Castejón in the Migas Calientes botanical garden; 2 *fanegas* and 9 *celemines* of the *huerta* of Los Almendros belonging to the Count of Noblejas; the 3 *fanegas* of the *huerta* of Belén, owned by Don Fernando Ruiz de Alarcón; another 13 *fanegas* belonging to Don Juan Palas; 6 *fanegas* of land acquired from Don José Rivera; 9 *fanegas* acquired from the community of San Martín, 7 from Don Juan Facundo Caballero, as well as from the heirs of Don Bartolomé Valero, 4 *fanegas* from the abbot of Vivanco, 1 *fanega* from the nuns of Santo Domingo and 8 from Don Juan Albalá, among others (see Table 9.3). All this amounted to an outlay of almost 622,900 *reales* in the form of *censos* (annuity payments), cash or *fanegas* of the Dehesa de Amaniél, an area of wood-pasture land owned by the monarch.¹⁴ The incorporations were constant and gave shape to an enclosed space with sizeable agricultural and forestry resources.

On 3 December 1795, 20 *fanegas*, 10 *celemines* and 4 *estadales* of land belonging to the Duchess of Alba beside the Cantarranas stream, valued at 16,758 *reales* and 8 *maravedíes*, were purchased to be incorporated into La Moncloa.¹⁵

14 AGP, AG, caja 10404, exp. 16.

15 AGP, AG, caja 10404, exp. 28.

TABLE 9.3 List drawn up by José de Merlo in spring 1795 showing the cost of the land, buildings, waterwheels, pipes and reservoirs

Owners	Land and other assets (value in <i>reales</i> and <i>maravedies</i>)	Amount
Marquise of Castejón	Land	38,000 <i>reales</i>
	Factory and mines	180,135
	Pipes	68,004
	Trees and plants	24,976
Count of Noblejas	Land	11,000
	Waterwheel and pond	5,515
	Trees	225
Don Fernando Ruiz de Alarcón	Land	12,000
	Factory and mines	48,430
	Trees and plants	775
Don Juan Palas	Land	28,695 and 28
		Paid in <i>censos</i>
Don José Rivera	Land	4,200
		Paid in plots of the wood-pasture land of Amanié or uncultivated land in Parla
Community of San Martín	Land	5,850
		Land in Amanié
Don Juan Facundo Caballero	Land	4,900
		Payment with land in Amanié was proposed, but it was made in <i>censos</i>

TABLE 9.3 List drawn up by José de Merlo in spring 1795 showing the cost of the land, buildings, waterwheels, pipes and reservoirs (*cont.*)

Owners	Land and other assets (value in <i>reales</i> and <i>maravedies</i>)	Amount
Heirs of Bartolomé Valero	Land	4,200
Abbot of Vivanco	Land	2,000
Nuns of Santo Domingo	Land	2,916 and 22
Don Juan Albalá	Land	5,200
Don Pedro Bezinduaga	Land	2,750
Don Diego Ordóñez	Land	2,100
Don Francisco Benavides	Land	4,500
Pedro Alcalde	Land	2,500
Marqués de Corbera	Land	7,600
Don Cayetano de Urbaneja	Land	3,239 and 6

Fruit/vegetable farmer and lessors

Francisco Santos	Riverside produce and land	300	52,271 and 25
	Half of the Hieronymites' shed	650	Paid in money due to debts
	Produce and equipment of the Hieronymites' <i>huerta</i> (horticultural land)	48,766 and 25	
	Trees of the Hieronymites' <i>huerta</i>	595	
	Fruit and other produce of the Huerta de la Condessa	1,960	
Marcelo Laurel	Trees and plants of the Hieronymites' <i>huerta</i>	544	30,007 and 8
	Produce, livestock and equipment	27,513 and 8	Paid in money due to debts
	A shed, half of others, a pen and one part	1,950	

TABLE 9.3 List drawn up by José de Merlo in spring 1795, showing the cost of the land, buildings, waterwheels, pipes and reservoirs (*cont.*)

Owners	Land and other assets (value in <i>reales</i> and <i>maravedies</i>)	Amount
Santiago Olmedilla	Produce, livestock and equipment of the Huerta de Alarcón Trees 451	11,425 and 17 In land in Amaniel and part in money due to debts
Jacobo Rivas	Produce, livestock and equipment of the Huerta de Castejón	7,002 and 17 Paid in money to settle debts
María Teresa del Hoyo	Produce of the Huerta de Noblejas Trees 114 House and factory of the Huerta de Noblejas	26,629 and 17 Paid in money to settle debts the owner had
Manuel Losada	Produce of Pedro Alcalde Produce of Bezinduaga Produce of Juana Albalá	1,597 and 17 Paid in land in Amaniel
Mauro López	Produce of San Martín Produce of Pálas Produce of Don Diego Ordoñez	2,745 Paid in land in Amaniel

Fernando Sánchez	Produce of Bartolomé Valero	980	980	Paid in money
Don Francisco Garralda	Produce of Vivanco abbey	100	125	Paid in money
	Produce of the nuns of Santo Domingo	25		
Widow of Tomás Espinosa	Produce of Francisco Benavides	405	405	Paid in money
Discalced Carmelites	<i>Censo</i> taken out on the botanical garden by the Marquise of Castejón	20,000	20,000	Paid in censos
Payments for appraisers and deeds			20,000	
Total			622,901	All in censos except for 51,923 <i>reales</i> and 28 <i>maravedies</i> in plots of the king's land in Amaniel and 145,620 and 33 in cash

SOURCE: AGP, AG, CAJA 10404, EXP. 16

By the end of 1795, the Crown had thus spent more than 5,200,000 *reales* on buying land for the territorial configuration of the Royal Site of La Florida.¹⁶

The process of acquiring arable land continued in the following years. For example, in 1796, 6 *fanegas* of land appraised at 4,200 *reales* and belonging to José García de Rivera, a farmer resident in Parla in the area known as Las Cruces de San Bernardino, were incorporated. The following year saw the addition of some 10 *fanegas* of arable land belonging to the Seminary of Nobles beside the San Bernardino gate, acquired from the Marquis and Marquise of Carpio on 23 March 1730.¹⁷ A particularly notable incorporation was made on 23 July 1802: horticultural land (the Huerta de Alba) purchased from the Duchess of Alba's heirs, together with the Bordador plots, for 2,830,313 *reales* and 7 *maravedíes*, half in cash and the other in public debt securities (*vales reales*).¹⁸ Nine *fanegas* of farmland on the Pimiento hill (the site of what is now the Hospital Clínico) were acquired that December, and land stretching from the Huerta de Alba to the boundaries of El Pardo was purchased in 1803.¹⁹ A further 30 *fanegas* and 4 *celemines* of land that was part of the Dehesa de Amaniel were likewise incorporated shortly afterwards.²⁰

The new royal site accordingly took shape between 1787 and 1804. It was largely productive and, as shown in Table 9.3, predominantly agricultural, in accordance with the new rationale applied to the royal sites, in which economic criteria prevailed. When its configuration was complete, in January 1804 it was decided to fence this space at a cost of 1,749,546 *reales*, though the French occupation prevented it from being completed.²¹

la grandeza de espíritu y delicado gusto del Sor Rey Carlos Quarto en las obras q proyectaba, se manifiestan bien claramente en las Posesiones del RI Sitio de la Florida, pues a no haber ocurrido las novedades y vicisitudes de tiempos tan calamitosos que sobrevinieron, llevando aquellas a la debida perfección, hubiera perpetuado su memoria quedando un monumento hasta los siglos más remotos. Pero angustiado y poseído

16 AGP, AG, caja 10404, exp. 16.

17 AGP, AG, caja 10404, exp. 22. The process of incorporating this land triggered conflicts with the parish churches that were entitled to tithes on them, which were no longer paid when they became royal property. This was the case of the parish church of San Martín, in 1798. AGP, AG, caja 10404, exps. 17 and 24.

18 Fernández Talaya, *El Real Sitio*, 179. AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 20.

19 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 66, exp. 11.

20 Agustín Gómez Iglesias, "La Dehesa de Amaniel o de la Villa," *Anuario del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños* 2 (1967): 33–81.

21 AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 31.

de los más tiernos sentimientos, considerando a la Nación en un estado deplorable, no solo mando la suspensión del trabajo, sino que dispuso al mismo tiempo se aprovecharan muchos de los materiales que había prevenidos, sirviesen para las obras más precisas y cerrar la posesión, que no se acabó de ejecutar.²²

The greatness of spirit and exquisite taste of His Lordship King Charles the Fourth in the works he planned are clearly visible in the Properties of the Royal Site of La Florida. For had it not been for the changes and vicissitudes of the calamitous times that befell him, bringing them to completion would have perpetuated his memory in a monument that would have remained for centuries to come. But in his anguish, and possessed of the most tender feelings, considering the Nation to be in a deplorable state, he not only ordered the work to be suspended but also arranged for many of the available materials to be used for the most necessary tasks and to enclose the property, which was not completed.

The process of fencing royal spaces became common practice from the time of Ferdinand VI. Stemming from reasons of security and control, it was also a money-saving measure as it prevented animals from straying beyond the confines of the royal estate and causing damage – for which the Crown was liable – to the surrounding land. Furthermore, fencing created an enclosed and private royal space over which the Crown exercised full rights.

2 The Productive Value of the Royal Site (1807–1814)

2.1 *The Situation of the Royal Site in 1808*

The economic significance of this new royal space was perfectly clear from the beginning of the 1800s, when unirrigated land, plots of vineyards and vegetable gardens/orchards began to be put into production. This was made possible by the proximity of the Manzanares river and hydraulic structures already in place such as pipes and waterwheels (see Table 9.3), to whose maintenance various items of expenditure were allocated, as shown in Table 9.5 under the heading ‘plumbing expenses’ (*gastos de cañería*). For instance, in 1808, according to a report by Nicolás Thelis and Florencio Martín dated 6 August 1814, La Florida had an income of 693,877 *reales* and 14 *maravedíes* (see Table 9.4) from

22 AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 31.

TABLE 9.4 Income of La Florida in 1808 (in *reales* and *maravedies*)^a

<i>Farm products</i>	<i>Revenue</i>	<i>Total</i>
Harvest (8,815 <i>fanegas</i> of all kinds of grain; unspecified but probably mainly wheat, barley and oats)	330,843	
Straw (31,212 <i>arrobos</i>)	46,818	405,711
Land leased for broad beans and peas	10,300	
Sale of unusable mules and donkeys	9,850	
Produce from the Bordador vineyard	4,000	
Products of the henhouse and dovecote	3,900	
<i>Livestock products</i>		
Cattle	12,609	
Sheep	45,429	62,505
Pigs	4,467	
<i>Garden produce</i>		
From La Florida or Montaña	30,415 and 16	
From La Moncloa and Huertezuelos	64,332 and 16	224,439 and
From El Paso and Belén	66,136 and 20	44
From Alba	63,554 and 30	
Product of the beehive	1,222	1,222
Total		693,877 <i>reales</i> and 14 <i>mrs</i>

a Another list included a few changes: for instance, the amount of straw obtained from La Florida increased by 5,000 *arrobos*, boosting income by 6,000 *reales*, and that of the Huerta de La Moncloa by 1,222 *reales*. This brought the total income up to 701,099 *reales* and 31 *maravedies*

SOURCE: AGP, AG, CAJA 10405, EXP. 32

agricultural and garden produce and livestock commodities (major irrigation systems were installed during those years: pipes, waterwheels, etc., to ensure a sufficient water supply); this is not counting the amounts already earmarked and ordinary expenses of 551,724 *reales* and 11 *maravedies*, plus 141,265 for wages, leaving a profit of 888 *reales* and 3 *maravedies*.²³

23 AGP, AG, caja 10404, exp. 4.

TABLE 9.5 Expenses of La Florida in 1808 (in *reales* and *maravedies*)

<i>Expenses of the royal farmhouse</i>	
Salaries	50,005
Extraordinary days' wages	134,604
Fodder for 83 mules and 11 donkeys	41,219
<i>Livestock expenses</i>	
Salaries, fodder, equipment and expenses for the cows	13,837
Salaries, shearing, equipment and maintenance of dogs for the sheep	35,450
Salaries, bran and maintenance of a dog for the pigs	14,946
<i>Expenses of the vegetable gardens/orchards</i>	
Salaries, days' wages, piecework and equipment for La Florida	59,180 and 16
Salaries, days' wages, piecework and equipment for La Moncloa and Huertezuelas	56,131 and 17
Salaries, days' wages, piecework and equipment for El Paso and Belén	55,347 and 30
Salaries, days' wages, piecework and equipment for Alba	69,788 and 16
<i>Plumbing expenses</i>	
Days' wages and materials	21,215
Total	551,724 and 11
Salaries related to auditing, revenues, guards, widows, orphans and retired employees, and works	141,265
Total	692,989 and 11

SOURCE: AGP, AG, CAJA 10405, EXP. 32

The economic and productive significance of the Royal Site of La Florida grew when riparian woodlands (the *sotos* of Aldovea, Daralcalde and Viveros) and other land acquired by Charles IV in the area of the Henares and Jarama rivers were brought under the administration of La Florida. These royal spaces continued to be managed by the same administrator, Don José de Merlo, until the minister Azanza separated them in April 1808.²⁴

24 Nevertheless, in June 1809 Joseph I brought them together again under the direction of Don Ramón de Alvarado, who remained in the post until he was dismissed, at which point they were separated again. On 7 June 1813, following the departure of the French, the intendent was asked if he wished to again combine them under the same management. AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 22.

Even so, attempts were made to further reinforce the economic nature of the Royal Site of La Florida during those years through a plan submitted by Don Juan Blesa.²⁵ It envisaged planting 200,000 fruit trees given the characteristics of the land and the abundance of channelled water resources (running water or *agua de pie*). This would require little spending and would make 'this property delightful, joyful and pleasant and a stimulus for HM's enjoyment and full relaxation'.²⁶ Accordingly,

en el plano del Camino Nuevo y falda de la Montaña, tomando por la derecha del Tejar hasta la gruta del palacio que fue de Pío, otras 4 carreras de arbolado y lo mismo en el declive que forma el terreno hasta que descansa en la huerta. Igual operación podrá practicarse en toda la extensión que se advierte desde el Tejar y Huerta de las Minas, formando con el tiempo las parras caminos cubiertos, procurando que los sarmientos sean de buenas calidades. Estos tres plantíos tienen agua de pie para su riego hasta que prendan.²⁷

On the level ground of the New Road and the side of the Hill, to the right of El Tejar as far as the grotto of the palace that belonged to Pío, another 4 rows of trees [can be planted] and likewise on the slope formed by the land running down to the vegetable garden. A similar operation can be carried out throughout the entire expanse of land visible from El Tejar and Huerta de las Minas, with the vines forming covered paths over time, endeavouring that the vine shoots are of good quality. These three plantations have running water to irrigate them until they take root.

To boost the site's income, the plan stated that the San Gil brick factory, which had 4 kilns, should supply to the royal site and the proceeds from the sale of between 50,000 and 60,000 tiles produced there annually be incorporated into its revenues.²⁸ It also recommended stepping up milk production by giving the cows fodder of salted broad beans and oat, barley and carob straw at night. This milk could be sold at the San Vicente gate and at the fusiliers' barracks. It is important to note that while the production of this dairy cattle was upped, that of Aranjuez was then having problems.

25 AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 31.

26 'risueña, alegre y placentera esta posesión y estímulo para la diversión y puro desahogo de S.M.'

27 AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 31.

28 AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 31.

Money could also be made by bringing 600 goats to the pastures of Príncipe Pío hill, which would generate an additional 50,823 *reales* and 28 *maravedís* in income. Blesa stated that the breeding of black pigs from Extremadura could be started up with 20 sows and could lead to an income of 70,000 *reales*. The report gives an idea of how this area was viewed from a purely economic perspective. Revenues would be obtained not only by maximising the available agricultural, horticultural and livestock resources and improving crops and produce but also by introducing animal species. These modifications would result in the consolidation of a multifunctional space and a landscape that could bring aesthetic and leisure benefits for the royal family by making it 'delightful, joyful and pleasant and a stimulus for HM's enjoyment and full relaxation.'²⁹

Another means of increasing income was to lease the vegetable gardens/orchards and plots suitable for growing cereals (*tierra de pan llevar*) that were inside the fence, reserving the right of way and the buildings for the monarch. This meant that 60,000 *reales* could be obtained from leasing the horticultural and arable plots of La Florida stretching from the lower pond to the dividing wall of the Areneros road, including the Huerta del Platero and Pío gardens; 15,000 from the croplands inside the wall, from the Plazuela de San Antonio to the Huerta de Marcelo Laurel; another 60,000 from the Huerta de Marcelo Laurel and La Chispa; 60,000 from the botanical garden and Huerta de La Moncloa; 40,000 from the Huerta de Alba, excluding the Dehesa de la Villa; and another 34,000 from the hills below the Dehesa de la Villa. The arable lands of La Granjilla and the Huerta de Alba were not included in this project. It was reckoned that the total revenues would amount to 641,303 *reales* and 28 *mrs*.³⁰ The envisaged sums were high and somewhat unrealistic, as according to a report of 1814 income from leases of arable and horticultural plots on La Florida came to a total of 93,000 *reales* (Table 9.6).³¹

Charles IV's abdication in favour of his son Ferdinand VII early in 1808 did not lead to any changes in the economic value of the royal site. During the short time Ferdinand remained in power (3 months), an economic approach to the royal patrimony – the rationale behind the running of La Florida – was maintained. On 22 March 1808 the monarch announced a reduction in his hunting grounds and gave instructions for plots of land owned by him to be leased

29 '[siendo] risueña, alegre y placentera esta posesión y estímulo para la diversión y puro desahogo de S.M.', AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 31.

30 The project was never implemented on account of the French occupation. AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 31.

31 AGP, AG, caja 10404, exp. 4.

TABLE 9.6 Value of leased land^a

	Lots	Fanegas	Price per fanega	Value
Príncipe Pío hill		120		25,000
	1	196 ½	50	8,580
	2	60 ½	40	2,289
	3	83	38	2,905
	4	90 ½	50	7,000
	5	105 ½	36	4,820
	6	114	36	3,762
	7	103 ½	40	4,000
	8	87 ½	38	4,260
	9	98	38	
	10	86	38	6,936
	11	101	36	
Huerta de la Moncloa		18	800	7,000
Huerta del Paso		18	800	6,000
Huerta de Alba		18	800	7,000
Huerta del Botánico		3 ½	800	1,220
Huerta de Noblejas		3	800	770
Huerta de Belén		2	800	770
Los Huertezuelos and annexed plots		3 ½	600	600
Vineyard on La Moncloa hill with 100 olive trees and 1,000 vines				688
Total				93,600

a The differences with respect to the final value in some cases are due to the fact that not all *fanegas* of land produced the same and were worth the same.

SOURCE: AGP, AG, CAJA 10404, EXP. 4

out so that they would be put to cultivation.³² The Crown was still in need of money, given the debt incurred as a result of the alliance with Napoleonic France, which required it to pay the sum of 6 million livres a month from the signing of the Peace of Amiens in order to guarantee neutrality. Payments were maintained after Spain joined in the war in 1804.

Months later, on 14 November 1808, the secretary of state and finance in exile was entrusted on behalf of the supreme government committee with

32 AHN (Archivo Histórico Nacional), Consejos, lib. 1504, no. 28.

drawing up a set of regulations on the exploitation of game and meadows on the royal sites ‘to produce a proportionate benefit for the royal treasury’³³ after Ferdinand VII had lifted the ban on hunting in the royal preserves. The committee also agreed that this secretary’s office would be responsible for drawing up economic plans to curb expenditure and boost the income of the royal sites.³⁴ On 23 November the clerk of the counting-house (*veedor*) at Casa de Campo accordingly submitted a report to the committee on ‘improving the use of the lands hitherto devoted to hunting [...] By giving each piece of land of those hitherto devoted to the leisure activity of hunting a more profitable use’.³⁵ La Florida was to be an example of this economic management and of the use of land for agricultural and livestock purposes.

2.2 *The Value of the Royal Site under the French Government (1808–1813)*

The advent of the French merely increased the economic value of this royal property, as Title IV of the Statute of Bayonne (articles 21 to 24) considered the royal estates to be fundamental to the maintenance of the king and his royal household.³⁶ The royal patrimony would be used to obtain the resources required by the Crown Treasury to cover its needs. A distinction was thus drawn for the first time between state revenue and royal revenue.

The new administration needed to be apprised of the situation of the royal patrimony in order to implement measures to enable it to comply with the provisions of Bayonne. Accordingly, at the beginning of July 1808 the French administrators drafted a report on the situation of La Florida in which they also described the staff of officials and indicated that it provided the Crown with an annual profit of 36,000 to 37,000 *reales*.³⁷ This report sprang from the logic of gathering information in order to subsequently implement the measures that were deemed necessary. Shortly afterwards, a report was drawn up on the state of the 1808 harvest yielded by the unirrigated lands, which, as can be seen in Table 9.7, produced both cereals and grains for human food and straw for animal consumption. At the end of the month, on 25 July, Joseph I commissioned Stanislas Girardin d’Ermenonville and Jean-Baptiste Maximilien Villot

33 ‘produzca una utilidad proporcionada al real erario.’

34 AHN, Estado, leg. 22A, no. 10.

35 ‘el mejor aprovechamiento de los terrenos consagrados hasta aquí a la caza [...] Dando a cada terreno de los hasta aquí consagrados a la diversión de la caza un destino más provechoso’, AGP, AP, Casa de Campo, leg. 15.

36 Félix Labrador Arroyo, “Desamortización o reforma. Los Sitios Reales en un contexto de cambios (1790–1814),” *Memoria y Civilización* 25 (2022): 224.

37 It stated that there were 1,000 sheep and rams, 40 pigs, 21 cows, 14 calves, 72 mules, 2 horses and 6 asses. AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 66, exp. 11.

TABLE 9.7 List drawn up by Florencio Martín and José Miranda of crops harvested from unirrigated land in 1808

	<i>Fanegas of arable land</i>	<i>Fanegas of grain</i>	<i>Fanegas produced</i>	<i>Straw in arrobas</i>
Durum wheat	193 and 4	198 and 1	2,425 and 6	10,915
Beardless wheat	99 and 7	98 and 8	755	3,898
Barley	229 and 6	424 and 2	4,928	14,784
Rye	19 and 6	11	227	650
Oats	22 and 6	32 and 6	279 and 6	560
Chickpeas	34 and 6	24	170	255
Broad beans	4	8 and 6	38	50
Grass peas	9	10	75	80
Peas	3	2 and 6	17	20
Total	614 and 11	809 and 5	8,915	31,212

SOURCE: AGP, AG, CAJA 10405, EXP. 12

de Fréville, in whom the new monarch fully confided, to ascertain the value of the Crown's real estate and properties.³⁸

Joseph I's departure from Madrid on 31 July 1808 following his defeat at the battle of Bailén hindered any further progress in the enquiries about the situation of the royal site. The court did not return until the beginning of December 1808. During the days that ensued the Duke of Campo-Alange, as master of the horse, asked the officials in charge of the royal sites for detailed information about the products, revenues, liabilities and staff of each one.³⁹ The superintendent of the royal household and patrimony, the Count of Melito, also requested reports. On 22 January 1809 Florencio Martín, acting as administrator in lieu of José Merlo, who had gone to Bayonne with Charles IV, completed a detailed statement of the properties and annexed plots belonging to La Florida estate, as well as its products and annual expenses, credits, debts,

38 The seventh article of the decree they received requested them, after ascertaining the situation of the Crown patrimony, to state the value of its properties to determine whether this figure attained the annual amount of a million *pesos fuertes* stipulated by art. 21 of the Statute. AGP, Reinados, Fernando VII, caja 308, exp. 22.

39 AHN, Estado, leg. 3101.

liabilities and stocks.⁴⁰ Antonio de Mollinedo submitted information on El Pardo on 25 January 1809, and the steward of El Escorial, Francisco Carmona, did likewise on 30 January. For his part, the chief official (*alcalde*) of Aranjuez, Domingo Gaspar Pérez, stated on 5 February that the economic situation of that royal estate was disastrous, and José Manglano, the governor of San Ildefonso, reported on 21 February that the royal estate barely generated any income as the pinewoods were administered directly by the royal treasury.⁴¹

The situation described in the reports that continued to be sent from La Florida was not very encouraging. The events of 3 and 4 December, when the French again surrounded the capital following their victory at Guadarrama, had caused significant losses to the royal site. According to a list submitted on 18 March 1809, these amounted to 290,000 *reales*' worth of animals and 329,810 *reales* for the theft of produce from the farmhouses and granaries: 270 *fanegas* of wheat, 3,400 of barley, 150 of oats, 130 of rye, 38 of broad beans, 17 of peas, 60 of grass peas, 130 of chickpeas and 25,000 *arrobas* of straw, as well as horticultural produce (very substantial figures considering that year's harvest, as well as the income generated by the Royal Site of Florida, as can be seen in Table 9.4, as they almost equalled its annual income).⁴² It was also pointed out in this report that the royal estate's cultivated land comprised 1,100 *fanegas* under the responsibility of the head gardener, with the help of 5 foremen or overseers, 32 individuals on daily wages and various officials of the vegetable gardens/orchards and hands, as required.

Shortly afterwards, on 22 March 1809, a report was submitted on the state of the products and stocks of the royal site from 1 December 1808 to 18 March 1809. This report on the first three and a half months of French administration indicated that there was 66,356 *reales* and 8 *maravedíes*' worth of agricultural produce on the royal site and 33,912 *reales* and 16 *maravedíes* in garden produce, while the expenditure on daily wages during these months totalled 67,519 *reales* and 20 *maravedíes* for the arable land and 29,491 *reales* and 33

40 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 66, exp. 11.

41 Juan Mercader Riba, *José Bonaparte. Rey de España. 1808–1813. Estructura del estado español bonapartista* (Madrid, CSIC: 1983), 76–8.

42 The list does not mention the harm caused by the lack of two covered wagons, two carts, a great deal of equipment and farm implements or the damage to the buildings. Lettuces, curly endives, cabbages, celery, beans, aubergines, tomatoes, cucumbers, brussels sprouts, red cabbages and broccoli were grown in the vegetable gardens of La Florida. Summer and winter pears, apricots, peaches, cherries, morello cherries, strawberries and olives were also harvested. AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 65, exp. 7.

maravedies for the horticultural land. This report did not reflect the lost income resulting from the events of 3 and 4 December.⁴³

Slightly later, on 26 March 1809, the administrator Florencio Martín submitted a list of employees with their date of incorporation and their monthly and annual wages and the names of those who were on duty on 3 December 1808, when the French arrived.⁴⁴ The staff responsible for inspections at the royal property were the comptroller and 2 clerks, as well as 2 physicians and a surgeon. For gardening there were a senior gardener, 8 gardeners and 2 purveyors of fruit and flowers. Guard duties were performed by a deputy forester with the rank of captain, a corporal, 12 soldiers, a doorkeeper and 4 guards at the gates (18). The works branch comprised an architect, a works administrator, 3 clerks of works for masonry, stonework and carpentry, a plumber, an assistant, a hand, two senior overseers and two overseers (12). The royal chapel, which was in the parish church of San Antonio, had 2 deputies, a priest sacristan, an acolyte and a washerwoman and ironer. In total, 52 people were employed in the upkeep and improvement of the Royal Site of La Florida, in addition to those who were hired for specific tasks. This gives an idea of the importance of this space and the Crown's determination to improve it.

The steady flow of information from La Florida to the palace continued, always on economic matters. For example, on 6 April 1809 Florencio Martín completed a list of the horticultural and agricultural produce from April 1808 to the end of March 1809, pointing out the 329,810 *reales*' worth of produce that was lost in December, as well as the expenses incurred, which totalled 660,517 *reales* (Table 9.9).⁴⁵ Likewise, La Florida had a monthly allocation of 25,000 *reales* from the general treasury for the payment of wages, works, materials and repairs, but since April 1808 only 6,000 had been paid.

Also on 6 April Ramón Alvarado was appointed administrator of the royal site. The following day, together with Florencio Martín and the overseer Pedro Gumucio, he inspected the animals there. The visit revealed a significant reduction in their numbers. Of the just over 1,150 mentioned in the report of 1 July 1808, there were now 330: 80 mules, 11 donkeys, 215 sheep, 11 cows, 1 bull, 7 goats and 3 kids.⁴⁶ On the 9th Alvarado submitted a list of employees at La Florida whose posts could be done away with in order to streamline the administration.⁴⁷ Not long afterwards, however, following the abolition of the vegeta-

43 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 65, exp. 7.

44 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 66, exp. 11 and AG, caja 10405, exp. 21.

45 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 66, exp. 11.

46 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 66, exp. 11.

47 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 66, exp. 11.

TABLE 9.8 Income from the produce of La Florida (April 1808–March 1809, in *reales* and *maravedies*)^a

<i>Garden produce</i>		
From La Florida	21,531 and 16	
From La Moncloa	55,505 and 16	188,208
From El Paso and Belén	54,338 and 20	and 32
From Alba	56,834 and 14	
<i>Agricultural produce</i>		
2,111 <i>fanegas</i> of durum wheat at 44 <i>reales</i> per <i>fanega</i>	92,884	
485 <i>fanegas</i> of beardless wheat at 28 <i>reales</i> per <i>fanega</i>	13,580	
74 <i>fanegas</i> of rye at 18 <i>reales</i> per <i>fanega</i>	1,332	126,508
17 <i>fanegas</i> of chickpeas at 110 <i>reales</i> per <i>fanega</i>	1,870	
5,352 <i>arrobas</i> of straw	12,842	
<i>Produce of the vines</i>	4,000	
<i>Livestock produce</i>		
From the sheep	33,288	
From the pigs	4,467	52,608
From the cattle	10,953	
From the dovecote and henhouse	3,900	
<i>Losses, thefts, etc.</i>	329,870	
<i>Total</i>		697,134 and 32

a AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 66, exp. 11.

ble gardens and orchards of the Casa de Campo estate, orders were given on 17 April for the related officials to be incorporated into the staff of La Florida.⁴⁸

Nevertheless, Alvarado continued to call for a reduction in the workforce at La Florida. For instance, on 12 May 1809, when sending superintendent Melito a new set of regulations for Soto de Aldovea where he was interim administrator, he commented 'if only a similar economy were established at La Florida!'.⁴⁹ Alvarado's interest in improving the administration clashed with his manner of keeping the accounts. In September the counting-house warned Melito that those submitted for La Florida were not in order. As a result, he had to step

48 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 69, exp. 8.

49 '¡ojalá que se estableciera en la Florida igual economía!', AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 65, exp. 11.

TABLE 9.9 Expenses of La Florida (1808–9, in *reales* and *maravedíes*)

Salaries paid until mid-November 1808	161,502 and 17
Bonuses and days' wages of labourers hired on a daily basis and extraordinary farm wages	51,883
Weeding, clearing of fallow land and purchased shrubs	9,487 and 17
Harvesting and fruit picking expenses	41,748
Stables and other expenses	6,230
70 <i>fanegas</i> of beardless wheat and 12 of carob purchased for sowing	3,608
Blacksmith's and cartwright's accounts paid up to December	19,714 and 11
Equipment purchased and tools	2,547
Livestock expenses	41,824 and 32
Bonuses, piecework and daily wages of officials and hands up to December in the vegetable gardens/orchards	124,669 and 17
Accounts paid to the cartwright and blacksmith for the vegetable gardens/orchards	20,812 and 33
Stables expenses for all the vegetable gardens/orchards	11,430 and 22
Total	495,458 and 32
4 months' expenses from December to March, and fodder for the livestock up to the end of July, and what was owed of it in March	165,059 and 14
Total	660,517 and 37

SOURCE: AGP, REINADOS, JOSÉ I, CAJA 66, EXP. 11

down from his post on 26 October 1809 and Messrs Ardena and Pardo were entrusted with inspecting La Florida.⁵⁰

Before resigning, Alvarado reported that stocks in the storehouses of the royal site amounted to 80 *arrobos* of chickpeas for sowing, 60 *fanegas* of grass peas for sowing and a month's worth of straw and barley for the working animals used in horticultural and agricultural production. On 19 July he wrote to the Count of Melito in response to the request for information about the harvest of the royal site of La Florida. He reported that he expected to gather 6,000 *fanegas* of barley and 3,000 of durum and beardless wheat,⁵¹ which

50 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 56, exp. 15. A summary of the file in exp. 12.

51 At the time the price of barley in Madrid was 13 and a half or 14 *reales* per *arroba*, so that the harvest was worth 81,000 *reales*, whereas durum wheat was worth 38 *reales* per *arroba*, amounting to 112,000 *reales* (there was no mention of the price of beardless wheat).

could fetch about 170,000 *reales*, leaving a portion to cover the needs of the royal site; double the amount could be obtained if they held on to it and sold it in winter. However, during these months consideration was being given to the possibility of selling La Florida and other royal sites to raise money for the royal coffers. Alvarado tried to demonstrate the site's economic capacity and the advisability of keeping it in the royal patrimony. He wrote to Melito: 'I repeat to Your Excellency my sadness at perhaps seeing the glory that would surround me disappear, yielding a net profit of 200,000 *reales* even in the first year of my administration, when it was necessary to buy everything'.⁵²

Over the course of 1809 an area of 296 *fanegas* of land, 1 *celemin* and 25 *estadales* was sown with 320 *fanegas* and 6 *celemines* of wheat at La Florida; a further 198 *fanegas*, 1 *celemin* and 26 *estadales* were sown with 332 *fanegas* of barley at La Florida; 25 *fanegas* were sown with 18 *fanegas* of carob; 8 *fanegas* with 4 *fanegas* and 6 *celemines* of rye; 28 *fanegas*, 1 *celemin* and 6 *estadales* with 20 *fanegas* of oats; and a further 15 *fanegas* were sown with grass peas, 2 *fanegas* and 6 *celemines* with peas, and 40 *fanegas* with chickpeas. These figures were provided by a report of 5 February 1810 drawn up by the new administrator, Don José Álvarez del Valle, who had been second in charge of the general counting house of the royal stables and interim overseer of the royal woodlands of the Casa de Campo estate.⁵³

Alvarado's efforts to curb expenditure and boost revenues do not appear to have achieved the desired effects. Income from the sales of the royal site's produce diminished, as a result of which it was not possible to pay the wages for November and December 1809. To increase revenues, on 24 December the Palace issued a general instruction stating that the auditors-administrators of the royal patrimony were to ensure the 'decency, decorum and subsistence' (*decencia, decoro y subsistencia*) of their administrations. It likewise gave orders that reforms carried out in any of them should be justified by the 'splendour befitting its magnificence in order that it is not only in good repair from now on but produces substantial revenues for the Crown allowance, as provided for in the Constitution'.⁵⁴

52 'repito a V.E. mi dolor de ver desaparecer tal vez la gloria, que me rodearía, dando un beneficio neto de 200,000 reales aun en el primer año de mi administración, en que ha sido menester comprar todo', AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 65, exp. 19.

53 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 66, exp. 6. The expense of harvesting these grains was 56,156 *reales* and 22 *mrs* (5,500 for weeding, 22,104 for sowing, 22,500 for threshing and other related expenses, and 6,052 and 22 for separating the grain from the chaff). AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 31, exp. 2.

54 'esplendor propio de su magnificencia, para no solo esté reparado en adelante, sino que produzca rentas quantiosas para la dotación de la Corona, según lo prevenido en la

This new instruction was to be implemented by the new administrator of the royal site, Don José Álvarez del Valle, who attempted to augment its income and reduce expenses. However, production decreased. This was clearly stated in the reports of 27 July and 3 August 1810, which indicated that the sale of agricultural produce, except for the *fanegas* kept for sowing, would fetch just over 243,000 *reales*, which could be increased to 300,000 if they waited until the market supply was lower to sell; the addition sum of nearly 300,000 *reales* could be earned from the sale of the produce of the vegetable gardens and orchards, livestock and the lease of 100 *fanegas* of land. In other words, it was hoped to obtain more than 544,000 *reales*,⁵⁵ a substantial sum but well below the nearly 700,000 earned in 1808, equivalent to a fall in income of 77.71% (reference year 1810) (Table 9.10). Nevertheless, the administrator was able to send 83,346 *reales* and 4 *maravedíes* to the general treasury for the Crown's maintenance (Table 9.11).

La Florida produced some 7,915 *fanegas* of wheat, barley, rye, oats, chickpeas, broad beans, grass peas and carob beans, as well as 25,000 *arrobos* of straw, which could fetch 239,820 *reales*, not including the produce of the vegetable gardens and orchards. These amounts, despite having decreased with respect to previous years, showed that the property was still one of the most productive Crown estates. Indeed, even compared to 1808, with the exception of the livestock, the increases were significant and demonstrated that the changes implemented were having the desired effect. Indeed, they were higher than the 6,000 *fanegas* of wheat and barley from the royal site of Gózquez, which fetched 198,000 *reales*, and the 157,500 *reales* earned from the 6,550 *arrobos* of wheat, barley, oats and broad beans from San Fernando-Aldovea.⁵⁶

In order to improve the administration of the royal site and boost its income, it was decided to appoint the administrator of El Pardo as its director. Accordingly, on 5 August 1811 a letter was written to Pedro Bouchard to inform him that 'the king having learned that it was advisable, under the current circumstances, for the royal properties of El Pardo and La Florida to be brought under the same administration',⁵⁷ he was to take charge of both, although he was instructed to keep separate accounts for each of the two sites. Bouchard was also entrusted with curbing the expenses of the officials, being asked to make staff cuts to keep expenditure down to no higher than 22,770 *reales* a

Constitución', ARAS (Archivo Real Alcázar de Sevilla), caja 405, exp. 6.

55 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 31, exp. 2.

56 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 31, exp. 1.

57 'haviendo conocido el rey que conviene en las circunstancias del día que estén bajo una misma administración los reales dominios del Pardo y de la Florida'.

TABLE 9.10 Calculation of the income of La Florida (1810, in *reales*)

Produce	<i>Fanegas</i>	Value at normal prices	Value at high prices
Wheat	2,960 <i>fanegas</i> at 40 <i>reales</i>	118,400	148,000
Barley	4,200 <i>fanegas</i> at 15 <i>reales</i>	63,000	84,000
Rye	40 <i>fanegas</i> at 18 <i>reales</i>	720	960
Oats	230 <i>fanegas</i> at 10 <i>reales</i>	2,300	2,760
Chickpeas	25 <i>fanegas</i> at 200 <i>reales</i>	5,000	6,000
Peas	50 <i>fanegas</i> at 60 <i>reales</i>	3,000	3,000
Grass peas	130 <i>fanegas</i> at 46 <i>reales</i>	5,980	7,800
Carob beans	280 <i>fanegas</i> at 14 <i>reales</i>	3,920	4,480
Straw	25,000 <i>arrobas</i> at 1½ <i>reales</i>	37,500	37,500
Vineyards		4,000	4,000
Total		243,820 <i>reales</i>	298,500
Vegetables from the Alba garden		54,735	
Vegetables from the Moncloa and Huertezuelos gardens		53,800	
Vegetables from the El Paso and Belén gardens		43,402	
Vegetables from the La Florida garden		38,572	
Fruit and grapes		10,000	
Milk and lard		15,000	
Goats' milk, sale of lambs, wool		15,000	
Pigs sold and for breeding		7,000	
Lease of 100 <i>fanegas</i> of arable land		12,000	
Total		544,009	

SOURCE: AGP, REINADOS, JOSÉ I, CAJA 31, EXP. 2

TABLE 9.11 Income and expenses of La Florida in 1810 (in *reales* and *maravedís*)

Month	Income	Expenses	Balance
January	25,353	13,524 and 26	11,828 and 8
February	18,542	14,625 and 17	3,916 and 17
March	18,440 and 20	19,551 and 31	-1,111 and 11
April	19,509 and 13	13,866 and 19	5,642 and 28
May	26,951 and 20	23,218 and 32	3,732 and 22
June	40,917	24,524 and 8	16,392 and 26
July	21,945 and 12	21,843 and 23	101 and 23
August	47,589 and 18	52,390 and 20	-4,801 and 2
September	67,498 and 4	30,766 and 17	36,731 and 21
October	37,895 and 1	29,355 and 28	8,539 and 7
November	17,629 and 4	29,282 and 23	-11,653 and 19
December	32,628 and 18	17,948 and 4	14,680 and 14
Total	374,948 and 6	290,899 and 10	84,048 and 30

SOURCE: AGP, REINADOS, JOSÉ I, CAJA 56, EXP. 29

year. This involved a fairly significant reduction in the number of employees whose wages were paid out of the property's income.⁵⁸

Throughout his term in office, although 'savings' were attempted, it was not possible to reduce staff expenditure by much. Personnel expenses went from just over 5,100 *reales* per month to slightly more than 4,900 *reales* per month.⁵⁹ Efforts were also made to boost income, for which leases were promoted as a management model. For example, the 120 *fanegas* of arable and horticultural land on the Principe Pio hill were leased to Don Manuel Tejera for 5 years for 18,400 *reales* annually. Another 196 *fanegas* and 6 *celemines* – the first of the lots into which the hill was divided – were leased to Don Francisco García for 8,580 *reales* per year; 60 and a half *fanegas* (the second lot), to Don Francisco Oliva for 2,289 *reales*; 83 *fanegas* (the third lot) to Jerónimo Arjona for 2,905 *reales*; 90 *fanegas* and 7 *celemines* (the fourth lot) to Tiburcio López for 4,348 *reales*; 105 *fanegas* and 4 *celemines* (the fifth lot) to Blas Montero for 3,476

58 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 56, exp. 29.

59 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 54.

reales; and 114 *fanegas* (the sixth lot) to Raimundo Montero for 3,762 *reales*. A total of 769 *fanegas* and 11 *celemines* were thus leased for 43,760 *reales*.⁶⁰

A major dispute arose that year, 1811, over the payment of tithes. The royal estates had been exempt from payment but the Napoleonic administration revoked this right by means of a decree of 24 July 1811.⁶¹ As the administrator pointed out, the payment of tithes was detrimental to the royal patrimony: 'we all know that the funding from the royal patrimony is very far from being complete. And it would be much more so if the incorporated estates were subjected to all general or municipal exemptions.'⁶² The administrator's views were backed by the advisor to the royal household, Don Domingo Agüero y Neira, who justified why tithes should not be paid in his report of 27 August 1811 to the Count of Melito:

No puede, porque el estado no ha organizado aún su sistema de contribuciones reales, y cuantas medidas toma en el día son más bien un resultado de la exigencia de las circunstancias que de un sistema adoptado, las reclamaciones para el reintegro del real patrimonio serían muy difíciles por no decir imposibles de liquidar ... No se debe porque la dotación de la corona aún no está cubierta, ni se ve el momento en que podrá ser cumplido este deber y no será justo que sobre no haberse completado se disminuya aún con exenciones en lo poco que actualmente la constituye, cuyo reintegro no puede ser efectivo en la actualidad, pues que ni siquiera lo es la consignación mensual sobre el tesoro público.

It cannot, because the state has not yet organized its system of royal contributions, and whatever measures it takes at present are more the result of circumstantial requirements than of an established system, and demands for payment of royal patrimony would be very difficult if not impossible to meet ... It should not because the funding of the Crown has yet to be covered, nor is it possible to envisage when this task will be fulfilled, and it is not fair that when it is not yet complete the little there is currently should be further diminished, even with exemptions, as

60 As the area of land was too large for a single lessee, it was decided to divide it up into smaller lots (*suertes*) to ensure higher revenues and be able to lease them more easily. AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 22.

61 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 66, exp. 28.

62 'todos sabemos que la dotación del real patrimonio se halla muy lejos de estar completa. Y lo estaría mucho más si las fincas agregadas se sujetan a toda exención general o municipal', AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 66, exp. 28.

payment cannot be effectively made at present, for not even the monthly allocation to the public treasury is.

In the end La Florida did not have to pay these tithes. Despite all odds, La Florida continued to be a significant agricultural estate, as demonstrated, for one thing, by the fact that its related revenues increased following the arrival of the French (see Tables 9.4, 9.8 and 9.10). On 21 July 1812 Joseph I decided that the harvests of El Pardo and La Florida should be sold in Madrid and used to supply the city (poor harvests had undoubtedly been conducive to such a measure).⁶³

However, this measure was not implemented to a great degree as the French abandoned the capital only weeks later. As occurred at the rest of the royal sites, the vicissitudes of the military conflict affected La Florida with respect both to the normal course of the production processes and to military needs. The arrival of English troops in Madrid in August 1812 spurred the departure of the Madrid government. The interim finance council (*Junta Interina de Hacienda*) requested information about the state of La Florida as it did for the other royal sites in Madrid.⁶⁴

The task of drawing up the reports was entrusted to the administrator José Álvarez del Valle, who held the post from 12 August to 24 October 1812,⁶⁵ and the comptroller Don Florencio Martín, both of whom had been dismissed from their government duties by the French. The first of the reports listing the staff employed there was submitted to the Junta on 26 August. Another, describing the condition of the buildings, was sent shortly afterwards on 30 August 1812.⁶⁶ They stated that the palaces of Alba and La Moncloa were 'well cared for and decorated' (*bien tratados y adornados*), though the farmhouses were 'in middling condition' (*un estado medio*) and included an inventory of the objects in them: at La Moncloa, 5 pine tables, 8 walnut tables, 2 walnut cabinets, 4 gilt tables, 36 chairs from Vitoria, 4 fireguards, 1 screen with no cover, with bronze mounts, 10 blue taffeta curtains, 10 green taffeta curtains, 2 white marble busts,

63 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 67, exp. 6.

64 Gloria Martínez Leiva, "La destrucción del patrimonio arquitectónico durante la Guerra de Independencia: El Buen Retiro y el Edificio Villanueva," in *La Guerra de la Independencia, Jornadas de Arte e Iconografía*, dir. José Manuel Pita Andrade (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 2009), 255–57. This interim council worked in collaboration with the Regency Council to guarantee Ferdinand VII's rights.

65 AGP, AG, caja 10386, n.d.

66 AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 14.

87 paintings of different sizes, 103 miniature paintings, 3 pictures without frames and 6 'cane-coloured' taffeta curtains.⁶⁷

The report likewise mentioned the situation of the few animals that remained, as the French had taken much of the livestock with them: 366 sheep, 39 mules, 4 oxen and 5 donkeys – barely one-third of the more than a thousand animals there were before the outbreak of the Peninsular War.⁶⁸ Such a decrease not only led to a substantial reduction in the revenues from livestock but also made farm work and transportation more difficult. La Florida was reported as having little more than 1,200 *fanegas* of land, of which 1,100 were unirrigated, for growing cereals, 83 of vegetable gardens and orchards, and 72 *aranzadas* of vines and olive trees. Five or 6 pairs of mules needed to be brought: otherwise the produce of the vegetable gardens and orchards would go to waste and the land could not be worked. The contents of the storehouses were also listed (Table 9.12).⁶⁹ The authors reported that 600 *fanegas* of grain worth 17,000 ducats had been taken from the estate's granaries and supplied to the joint Anglo-Spanish army. The report also included a list and inventory of the farming equipment (among other items, irons for branding livestock, tools for pitching, cauldrons, tinplate pots, churns, copper creaming vessels, tubs, pitchers, hoes and wrenches).

TABLE 9.12 Livestock and produce remaining in the storehouses at La Florida

Sheep	366	Existing grain in La Granjilla	<i>Fanegas</i>
All kinds of cattle	22	Chickpeas	27
Oxen	2	Grass peas	32
Horses	2	Lentils	1 $\frac{3}{4}$
Colts	2	Carob beans	68
Donkey foals	2	Peas	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
Pigs	13	Barley	1,100
Beehives	12	Ears of wheat	200
Carts	12	Wheat and barley straw	5,500 <i>arrobos</i>
4-wheel wagon	1	Oil	20 <i>arrobos</i>

SOURCE: AGP, AG, CAJA 10405, EXP. 14

67 AGP, AG, caja 10405, exps. 12 and 18.

68 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 66, exp. 11.

69 AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 14.

TABLE 9.13 Situation of the 83 *fanegas* of vegetable gardens/orchards

Garden	Expenses	Days' wages	Produce	Total expenses	Total produce	Profit
La Florida	21,663	26,645	50,000	192,558	218,500	25,952
El Paso	22,211	17,155	40,500	<i>reales</i>		
La Moncloa	31,737	20,805	64,000			
Alba	31,537	20,805	64,000			

SOURCE: AGP, AG, CAJA 10405, EXP. 16

Soon afterwards, on 6 October 1812, Francisco Antonio Álvarez and José Álvarez del Valle submitted a plan for making the site more economically viable and restoring it to its former splendour.⁷⁰ The proposal involved leasing 400 of the 1,100 *fanegas* of arable land, from which 37,400 *reales* would be obtained at no expense to the Crown; the 83 *fanegas* of vegetable gardens/orchards, for 8,000; and the meadows and pasturelands, for 3,000 *reales* annually. An additional 8,000 *reales* could be earned from the yields from the 72 *aranzadas* of vines and olive trees (Table 9.13). Furthermore, the farmhouse of La Granjilla would be leased for a small sum, but the tenant would be obliged to repair it, as well as the 7 small buildings used to keep the livestock. This would provide a further 56,400 *reales*.

The authors of the plan advised against exploiting the livestock: although a considerable profit could be obtained – more than 9,000 *reales* – the expenses involved would be substantial (Table 9.14). Despite the profit earned, revenues fell significantly from 62,505 *reales* in 1808 (Table 9.14) to 34,134 *reales* – in other words, by 54.6% with respect to the income recorded in 1808.

As the assets would be leased, a staff of only 10 officials would be required. This would amount to a saving of 130,508 *reales* in expenses: on payments of daily wages, the salaries of the permanent staff, manual workers, harvesting, etc. (Table 9.15). The heftiest farming expenses at La Florida were fodder for the livestock, whose price had shot up during the war, followed by sowing arable land and harvesting, and the days' wages paid for these tasks.

The estate's income could be augmented by leasing a further 700 *fanegas* of lower-quality land for 14,000 *reales* and by selling the grain and livestock

70 AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 16.

TABLE 9.14 State of the livestock

	Days' wages	Expenses	Products	Total expenditure	Total products	Profit
Sheep	12,957	2,450	20,134			
Cattle	8,030	1,200	14,000	24,637	34,134	9,497

SOURCE: AGP, AG, CAJA 10405, EXP. 16

TABLE 9.15 Farming expenses at La Florida

Daily wages	Extraordinary wages	Manual labourers	Fodder for livestock	Harvesting expenses	Expenses of weeding vineyards and olive groves	Amount of <i>fanegas</i> sown	Total
16,790	11,400	7,284	38,820	23,344	6,000	26,870	130,508

SOURCE: AGP, AG, CAJA 10405, EXP. 16

on the royal site. It would be possible to obtain 42,224 *reales* (from 130 *fanegas* of wheat, 57 of carob beans, 16 of chickpeas, 19 of grass peas and $1\frac{3}{4}$ of lentils, as well as 13 pigs, 9 rams, 4 goats, 2 blind horses and 1 mad colt) plus a further 107,330 *reales* and 14 *maravedies* for the wheat, barley and hay supplied to the allied armies and the city of Madrid (739 *fanegas* of wheat, 355 *arrobas* of straw and 283 *fanegas* and 9 *celemines* of wheat for Madrid).⁷¹

These proposals for improvements and reducing expenses were not put into practice, as the French re-entered Madrid early in December 1812. On returning to the previous situation, they appointed Juan Vidal as administrator of El Pardo and La Florida by means of a letter of 11 December 1812.⁷² Vidal attempted to keep up the agricultural production, endeavouring to achieve the highest possible revenues. Given the economic straits and the situation caused by the vicissitudes of the war, he opted for reinforcing the model of leasing the

71 AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 16.

72 AGP, Reinados, José I, caja 67, exp. 6.

property. The 18 January 1813 edition of the *Diario de Madrid* thus announced a 5-year lease on the Príncipe Pío hill for an annual sum of 14,000 *reales* and a 6-year lease on the Fuente de la Reina vegetable garden/orchard beside the road to El Pardo for 2,200 *reales* per year. During that period the pasturelands were leased for 750 *reales* to Juan Herreros, Basilio Herreros, Juan Altares, José Basala and Jerónimo Arjona,⁷³ and the first lot of land of the Príncipe Pío hill was leased to Don Francisco García and Don Casimiro Sanz, residents of Madrid, on 6 February 1813.⁷⁴

However, few further measures were adopted during those months as the French withdrew from Madrid permanently on 17 March 1813. After the senior officials of the Regency Council that had remained in Spain to safeguard Ferdinand VII's interests arrived at this royal site, a plethora of reports was produced on the situation not only of the buildings but also of the economic resources.

The revenues of La Florida, like those of other royal sites such as the Casa de Campo, Valladolid, the Buen Retiro and El Escorial, were diminished by the military occupation and looting, despite the French-implemented plans to streamline it and improve its management.⁷⁵ This was pointed out in the report that the temporary lord steward, the Marquis of Sales, and Don José González Manrique, the king's attorney, submitted to the finance committee (Comisión de Hacienda) at the Cortes of Cádiz early in 1813⁷⁶ and in various reports sent from La Florida, such as the one drawn up on 7 June by the intendent general Don Francisco Antonio de Góngora.⁷⁷

The years of war and the changes in the administration of these places had plunged them into a difficult situation. This was stated, with regard to La Florida, in a report sent to the intendent general. The document acknowledged that this royal property had been the best farming estate during Charles IV's reign but had now almost gone to waste, as was reflected in the detailed inventory of all the buildings and outbuildings on the estate, as well as the farm equipment, crops and livestock.⁷⁸ Its income had dwindled to a mere 43,760 *reales* from leases of land.⁷⁹

73 AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 22.

74 AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 36.

75 On the looting of assets during the Peninsular War, see, among others, María Dolores Antigüedad del Castillo-Olivares, *El patrimonio artístico de Madrid durante el Gobierno Intruso (1808-1813)* (Madrid: UNED, 1999). Some reports are held in AGP, AG, leg. 403.

76 AHN, Consejos, leg. 13564, exp. 1, no. 18.

77 It reported on the condition of the buildings and stated that no livestock and little equipment remained. AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 22.

78 AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 12.

79 AGP, AG, caja 10405, exp. 22.

Before Ferdinand VII's arrival work was undertaken to put the royal site in order and boost its income. One of the first measures adopted, after dismissing all those that were approved under the French government, was a plan to lease unirrigated land for 4 years. Submitted on 20 July 1813,⁸⁰ the scheme was approved by the intendent of Madrid, Don Francisco Antonio de Góngora, on the 29th of the month.⁸¹

The plan achieved the expected effects. In August 1813 Don Isidro Luengas and Don José Ardison took out 5-year leases on the Huerta de Alba and Casa de la Granjilla for 7,000 *reales* annually; on 9 September the eighth lot of Príncipe Pío hill (87 *fanegas* and 9 *celemines*) was leased by Benito González for 4,260 *reales*. The following day the lease of the seventh lot of Príncipe Pío hill, suitable for cereal crops (103 *fanegas* and 3 *celemines*), was granted to Isidro Luengas and José Ardison for 4,000 *reales*; and a 4-year lease of the ninth, tenth and eleventh lots (285 *fanegas*) was awarded to Don Isidro Luengas for 6,936 *reales*. The Huerta de Belén (2 *fanegas*) was leased for 770 *reales* per year for 5 years and the first lot (196 *fanegas* and 6 *celemines*) to Don Francisco García for 8,580 *reales* annually for 4 years; and the second lot (60 *fanegas* and 6 *celemines*), to Don Francisco Javier Oliva for 2,298 *reales* annually for a 4-year period. Also on 10 September the third lot (83 *fanegas*) was leased to Jerónimo Arjona at 2,905 *reales* annually for 4 years; the fourth lot (90 *fanegas* and 7 *celemines*) to Don Sebastián Cuesta for 7,000 *reales* annually for the same period; the sixth lot (114 *fanegas*) to Raimundo Montero for 3,762 *reales* annually; the Huerta de Noblejas (3 *fanegas*) to Don Francisco Oliva for 770 *reales* yearly; and the produce of all the vines and olive trees to Don Bernardo Tomé for 1,920 *reales*.

On 20 September, the 120 *fanegas* of Príncipe Pío hill were leased for 5 years to Don Sebastián Cuesta for 25,000 *reales*, and the fifth lot (105 *fanegas* and 4 *celemines*) to Don Marcos Cubillo for 4 years for 4,820 *reales*. At the beginning of December a 5-year lease of the Huerta de la Moncloa (18 *fanegas*) was awarded to Pedro Cuesta and on 10 December the pastureland was leased to Don Francisco García for 4 years for 3,700 *reales* annually and the Huerta del Botánico (3 ½ *fanegas*) to Jerónimo Arjona for 1,220 *reales* per year, for 5 years. The following year, on 4 February 1814, the vineyard located in the upper part of the Moncla hills was leased to Don Francisco García for 5 years for 688 *reales* annually, and the Huerta del Paso to Pedro Cuesta for 5 years for 6,000 *reales* a year.⁸²

80 AGP, AG, caja 10386.

81 AGP, AG, caja 10404, exp. 1.

82 Report by Manuel de Retes, 16 April 1814. AGP, AG, caja 10403, exp. 3.

3 Conclusions

In the late 1700s and early 1800s the royal sites of the Spanish Crown underwent major changes with respect to how they were considered and the economic approach from which they were run. These changes stemmed from the financial situation caused by wars and the need to find new economic resources, as well as from the influence of the ideals of the Enlightenment, a period in which the Crown needed to take the initiative to promote the country's development. Hunting and representation of the power of the sovereign and his family had no place in the shaping of the new royal sites.

The Royal Site of La Florida, established when the Crown was in the grip of economic crisis, can be explained by its value as a source of both agricultural and livestock production. Ninety percent of its area, 526 hectares, consisted of agricultural spaces, chiefly unirrigated crops: wheat, rye, barley, chickpeas, broad beans, etc., as well as vines, olives and fruit and vegetables, in the part located closest to the river Manzanares. Its plentiful harvests met the palace's own needs and provided enough for sowing and feeding the livestock – sheep, cattle and pigs – that was kept there and generated sizeable profits, and, of course, was sold in Madrid. The resulting income made it possible to maintain the site as it covered the payment of salaries, daily wages and other expenses and provided revenues for the royal treasury.

After it took shape as a royal site, plans to boost the production and reduce expenditure by adapting the staff of officials to its running were carried out during the reigns of both Charles IV and Joseph I. Leases were a prominent part of the management systems as they made it possible to curb expenditure and obtain cash quickly. That is why Charles IV regarded La Florida as the best estate for crop cultivation.⁸³ Joseph I wished to continue in this direction and implement programmes for augmenting income and reducing expenditure as at other royal sites; however, the vicissitudes of the war and the political instability it brought made it impossible to put into practice a policy of continuation, even though La Florida remained at the apex of the income-producing royal possessions during the French rule.

Abbreviations

AGP: Archivo General de Palacio

AG: Administración General

83 AGP, AG, caja 10,405, exp. 12.

AHN: Archivo Histórico Nacional

ARAS: Archivo Real Alcázar de Sevilla

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