

Acres of farm land lie fallow

More than 1,000 people returned to farms in the New Territories during the past 12 months - but some 8,000 acres still remain derelict.

Yesterday, a spokesman for the Agriculture and Fisheries Department explained why so much land still remains untouched.

- The majority of these plots of land were originally under rice cultivation, which has not been profitable in recent years.

- Most of these plots are located in remote or inaccessible areas and many of the young people there have gone overseas or to urban areas.

- The plots have been lying fallow because of land speculation, especially those in the more easily accessible parts of the New Territories.

The spokesman was replying to comments by the Director of the Christian Industrial Committee, Mr Raymond Fung, who earlier in the week told the S.C.M. Post that young people should be encouraged to return to the land.

The spokesman pointed out that 1,000 acres of vegetable land had been added to the figure of 12 months ago.

"That is working on the basis of one person for every acre of land," he said.