

MINUTE OF MEETING of the COMMITTEE
of the SEED POTATO DIVISION of THE
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION
held in the STATION HOTEL, PERTH, at
2.30 p.m. on THURSDAY, 25th FEBRUARY,
1971.

PRESENT: Messrs. J. Fordyce, G. Luke, G. Gyle, A.J. Allan, G. McClung,
D.H. Lindsay and I. Barr, along with Mr. R. David Hunter, the
Secretary.

APOLOGIES. Apologies were intimated on behalf of Messrs. I.P. Fulton,
W. Gray and R. McLeish.

MINUTES. The Minute of Meeting of the Committee of the Seed Potato
Division of 30th December, 1970 was taken as read, approved and
signed.

Arising out of the previous Minute there was a brief discussion regarding
the operation of the Department's Labelling Scheme. It was the general
feeling of the meeting that despite the difficulties arising from the
Post Office Workers' Strike the Labelling Scheme was not causing any
particular problems so far as the Trade was concerned. It was noted,
however, that weather conditions during the loading season had been
particularly favourable with the result that the Scheme had not really
been put to a proper test. Mr. Ian Barr suggested that the Department
should be asked to discontinue the practice of dating the labels. It
was agreed to raise this matter with the Department of Agriculture at
the meeting of the Seed Potato Working Party which, it was anticipated,
would be convened shortly after the end of the loading season. Mr. G.
Gyle informed the meeting that in December he had been unable to obtain
labels from the Department of Agriculture to attach to the outside of
containers of potatoes being exported to the Canary Isles. It was
agreed that this matter would be raised with the Department of Agricul-
ture at the meeting of the Seed Potato Working Party.

Also arising out of the previous Minute the Secretary reported that he
had now received a telephone call from Mr. Wheeler of the Plant Royalty
Bureau/

Bureau confirming that the Bureau were revising their Conditions of Licence and that a copy of the proposed revised Conditions would be sent to the Association as soon as it was available. It was agreed to defer further consideration of this matter until the next meeting of the Committee.

Also arising out of the previous Minute the Secretary reported that he had written to the Potato Marketing Board regarding the acreage of potatoes in 1970 planted in excess of quota. Owing to the Postal Strike a reply had not been received from the Potato Marketing Board.

Also arising out of the previous Minute the Secretary reported that he had written to the Ministry of Transport requesting confirmation regarding the relaxation in the Regulations governing drivers' hours at planting time. Owing to the Postal Strike no reply had been received.

Also arising out of the previous Minute the Secretary informed the meeting that he had written to the Potato Marketing Board regarding the complaint concerning the Potato Marketing Board's Inspector's Report on a consignment of seed potatoes. Owing to the Postal Strike no reply had been received.

Also arising out of the previous Minute it was acknowledged by the Committee that the General Meeting held in Perth on 14th January at which Mr. Gordon Lyall of the Department of Agriculture had been the guest speaker had proved a great success. It was resolved to defer the arrangements for the next General Meeting until the Autumn.

Also arising out of the previous Minute the Secretary read to the meeting a letter which he had received from Mr. McDonald of the Department of Agriculture with his views concerning the export of seed potatoes from Scotland.

Also arising out of the previous Minute the Secretary read to the meeting correspondence which he had received from Mr. Ian MacArthur, M.P. regarding the closing down of Potato Processing Plants in the East of Scotland.

Also arising out of the previous Minute the Secretary reported that he had/

had had a further meeting with Mr. Butler of British Railways regarding the Trade's responsibility for the loading of potatoes on rail. The Secretary reported that Mr. Butler had taken the matter back for further consideration and would be getting back in touch with the Secretary in due course.

J.C.C. Mr. James Fordyce reported on the meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee of the Potato Marketing Board held in London on 20th January, 1971. In the course of his report Mr. Fordyce informed the meeting that the Potato Marketing Board had been perturbed regarding the quantity of potatoes which, although offered to the Board under its Buying Programme, had not been contracted owing to an improvement in the Ware Price early in the New Year.

POTATO TRADES CONSORTIUM. Mr. Fordyce also reported on meetings of the Potato Trades Consortium with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and the National Farmers' Union of England Wales in London on 21st January, 1971. Mr. Fordyce stated that the meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture had been a most useful meeting. It had afforded the Trade an opportunity of discussing directly with representatives of the Ministry the various problems affecting the Potato Industry. One of the matters which the Trade had suggested to the Ministry for consideration was that the potato acreage target should aim for supplying the requirements of the home market for eleven months in the year only and that, if necessary, the twelfth month could be supplied by imports. The Ministry had also been urged to look for quality rather than quantity. Mr. Fordyce was hopeful that some benefits might be obtained from the direct contact with the Ministry of Agriculture afforded by the creation of the Potato Trades Consortium.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL. The Secretary reported on the meeting of the Administrative Council of the Association held in Stirling on 28th January, 1971. In the course of discussion on the report on the Administrative Council meeting Mr. Fordyce stated that he and the Vice-Convenor, Mr. George Luke, were proposing to visit Morayshire and the/

the Black Isle in the near future with a view to recruiting further members of the Seed Potato Division. Also in the course of consideration of the Council Meeting it was agreed that it appeared that there was no need for the Association to take out Associate Membership of the Freight Transport Association. It was considered that it would be sufficient if a member of the Association who is also a member of F.T.A. would contact the Secretary regarding any transport matters which he considered should be brought to the attention of Association Members. Mr. Ian Barr stated that he was prepared to inform the Secretary of any such matters. Also in the course of discussion of the Council Meeting it was agreed that the Association trip to Europe should be arranged for early in September, 1971 provided there was sufficient support from Members. Also arising out of the Council Meeting the Entertainments Committee of the Division were authorised to make arrangements for the Annual Golf Outing to be held over Gleneagles Golf Courses on Thursday, 27th May, 1971.

PLANT HEALTH REGULATIONS - IMPORTS. The Secretary read to the meeting a letter which had been received from the Department of Agriculture concerning proposals with regard to changes in the Plant Health Regulations governing the importation of plant produce and potatoes. The Secretary was instructed to obtain further information regarding the existing Regulations to ensure that the full effect of the proposed alterations could be assessed. It was also suggested that the proposed alterations should be discussed at a meeting of the Seed Potato Working Party as soon as possible.

RATING OF POTATO STORES. The Secretary referred to the new Rating Bill which was at present being debated by the Parliamentary United Kingdom Standing Committee. He added that he was endeavouring to contact Mr. Ian MacArthur, Member of Parliament, who was a Member of the Standing Committee, in the hope that the new legislation may allow for the exemption from rates of potato stores occupied by Potato Merchants.

SEED POTATO COMPLAINT. /

SEED POTATO COMPLAINT. The Secretary read to the meeting a letter which he had received from a member of the Association concerning a complaint regarding a consignment of seed potatoes sent to England. The Committee noted the facts of the case but did not consider that there was any action which they could take as a committee to assist the member concerned.

UNFAIR ADVERTISING. The Secretary informed the meeting that a member of the Association had brought to his attention an advertisement inserted by Thinet in the Farming Publications which seemed to constitute unfair advertising. The Committee agreed that the advertisement appeared to have been of an undesirable nature but decided to take no action.

POTATO PRICES. The Secretary read to the meeting a letter which he had received from a member of the Association drawing attention to the fact that although the cost of potato production had increased considerably potato prices had not shown a corresponding increase.

CONDITIONS OF SALE. Mr. D.H. Lindsay drew to the attention of the meeting the clause in the Conditions of Sale recommended by the Scottish Potato Trade Executive, which provided for interest at the rate of 2d per £ per month in respect of overdue accounts. He enquired if this clause should not be altered in view of decimalisation. It was resolved to remit this matter for consideration at the next meeting of the Administrative Council.

POSTAL STRIKE. On the suggestion of Mr. Ian Barr it was arranged that the Secretary would contact the Potato Marketing Board to ascertain if they would be willing in the event of a prolonged continuation of the Post Office Workers' Strike, to co-operate in the distribution of mail for Potato Merchants throughout the United Kingdom.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING. The Secretary was instructed to arrange for the next meeting of the Committee of the Seed Potato Division to be held in the Station Hotel, Perth, at 12 noon on Thursday, 25th March, 1971. The Secretary was instructed to enquire if a salad lunch could be provided/

provided for members during the meeting.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman terminated the meeting.

James Fordyce