

MINUTE of MEETING of the COMMITTEE  
of the SEED POTATO DIVISION of THE  
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION  
held in the STATION HOTEL, PERTH, at  
12 noon on THURSDAY, 13th MAY, 1971.

PRESENT: Messrs. J. Fordyce, G. Luke, W. Gray, G. Gyle, T. McClung,  
R. McLeish, D.H. Lindsay, P. Peebles, and I. Barr, along  
with R. David Hunter, the Secretary.

APOLOGIES. An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Mr. Ian  
P. Fulton.

MINUTES. The Minute of Meeting of the Committee of the Seed Potato  
Division of 25th March, 1971 was taken as read, approved and signed.  
Arising out of the previous Minute the Chairman informed the meeting  
that he and George Luke, the Vice-Convenor, were proposing to visit  
Inverness-shire, Morayshire and Ross-shire on 24th and 25th May for  
the purpose of recruiting new Association Members.

Also arising out of the previous Minute the Secretary reported that  
he had still not received the draft of the revised Licensing Conditions  
from the Plant Royalty Bureau.

Also arising out of the previous Minute the Secretary read to the meeting  
the draft of a letter concerning the P.M.B.'s proposed new Grading  
Standards which was to be sent to the Potato Marketing Board on the  
instructions of the Ware Potato Division Committee. After discussing the  
draft letter the Committee expressed the opinion that if the compensation  
price paid for early ware were raised this would be a means of removing  
the inferior quality tops from the Ware market.

LABELLING SCHEME. The Secretary informed the meeting that there was to be  
a meeting of the Seed Potato Working Party in Edinburgh on 14th May, the  
primary purpose of which was to discuss the first year's operation of the  
Department's compulsory Labelling Scheme for Seed Potato containers.

The Secretary added that he understood that the matter which was  
concerning the Department most with the Labelling Scheme was the  
considerable/

considerable quantity of unused labels which had been returned. After a full discussion it was the opinion of the Committee that the Department of Agriculture should be strongly urged to discontinue the dating of the labels. To ensure that the Department knew where dressing was to be taking place the Growers could be taken under strict obligation to advise the Department before commencing to dress each stock of potatoes. If there was no possibility of persuading the Department to abolish the dating of labels as a secondary objective it was resolved that a system of code dating should be introduced in preference to the existing practice of openly stating a date. The Secretary gave to the meeting statistics which indicated that 4% of consignments had been stopped either compulsorily or on a voluntary basis by the Department under the Labelling Scheme. The representatives of the Committee on the Seed Potato Working Party were requested to obtain details of the percentage of consignments found in the hands of Grower/Dealers to be outwith the tolerances specified in the Examination Order. The Chairman referred to the new quality labels which were being tested by the Department of Agriculture. The tests seems to indicate that the new quality labels would be preferable to the original labels.

SEED POTATO CONTAINERS. The Secretary referred to the minimum standards recently announced by the Department of Agriculture for seed potato containers. The meeting agreed that at the Seed Potato Working Party an effort should be made to prohibit the use of "double marked meal bags" as containers for seed potatoes.

CONDITIONS OF SALE. The Secretary read to the meeting a letter which had been received from a Member of the Association in which it was stated that there should be a "nil" tolerance for frost and gangrene. After a full discussion it was suggested that the Examination Order should be altered to permit a maximum of 1% of potatoes suffering from/

from frost damage. The representatives on the Seed Potato Working Party were asked to raise this matter with the Department of Agriculture.

POTATO TRADES CONSORTIUM. The Secretary gave a brief report on some of the matters which had been discussed by the Potato Trades Consortium at their meeting in London on 11th May. One of the matters which had been discussed was the proposal that the Potato Marketing Board should make provision for an end of season reserve of potatoes which would only be brought on to the market in a year of shortage. In a normal year the end of season reserve would not be available for human consumption. The Committee were of the opinion that the proposal was worthy of further consideration.

J.C.C. The Secretary reported that at the meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee of the Potato Marketing Board held in London on 31st March, 1971 the forecast of early potatoes available for import into the United Kingdom was given by the Potato Marketing Board. At the Committee Meeting some concern was expressed regarding the effect of these imports on the home early grown crop. This matter was, however, remitted to the Ware Division Committee for further consideration.

SCOTTISH ADVISORY COMMITTEE. There was no Report available on the meeting of the Scottish Advisory Committee held in Edinburgh on 8th April, 1971.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL. The Secretary reported on the meeting of the Administrative Council of the Association held in Stirling on 8th April, 1971. Arising out of the Report Mr. Gordon Gyle was appointed the Seed Division Committee's representative on Industrial Training. Also arising out of the Report on the meeting of the Administrative Council it was suggested that in connection with the proposed trip to Europe it may prove useful to make contact with the Dutch equivalent of our own Association.

EXPORT. The Secretary informed the meeting that there was to be a meeting in Edinburgh of the British Agricultural Export Council on Friday, 21st May. It was resolved that the Association should be/

be represented at that meeting by George Luke and William Gray.

P.M.B. BUYING PROGRAMME. It was noted that the last date for Merchants removing "Tops" from stocks sold to the Potato Marketing Board had this year been brought forward by approximately 10 days. In view of the favourable weather conditions this year no particular problems had resulted. It was considered by certain Members of the Committee that in a normal year there could have been considerable difficulty to Merchants. The Secretary was instructed to write to the Potato Marketing Board to request that they consult the Trade each year before announcing the last date on which they will allow "Tops" to be removed.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING. It was resolved to hold the next meeting of the Committee in the King's Arms, Girvan, at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, 29th June, 1971.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman terminated the meeting.

*James Lodge*