

MINUTE of MEETING of the COMMITTEE of
the SEED POTATO DIVISION of the SCOTTISH
POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION held in the
STATION HOTEL, PERTH, at 10.30 a.m. on
FRIDAY, 11th FEBRUARY, 1972.

PRESENT: Messrs. J. Fordyce, A. D. Williamson, T. McClung, W. Gordon, D. Maxwell, A. K. Powrie, P. Peebles and I. Barr, along with Mr. R. David Hunter, the Secretary.

APOLOGIES. Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Messrs. G. Gyle, D. H. Lindsay and G. Luke.

MINUTES. The Minute of Meeting of the Committee of the Seed Potato Division of 14th December, 1971 was taken as read, approved and signed.

MATTERS ARISING -

(a) ENTERTAINMENTS COMMITTEE. The Secretary read to the meeting a letter which he had received from Mr. Bruce McDiarmid in connection with his retiral from the Entertainments Committee. The Secretary was instructed to write to Mr. McDiarmid to express the Committee's appreciation of all the work which he had undertaken for the Association during his period on the Entertainments Committee.

(b) R.H.A.S. EXPORT GROUP. The Secretary reported that the Association had obtained membership of the Scottish Agricultural Export Group and that Messrs. G. Luke and G. Gyle had been appointed the Association's representatives on the Group.

(c) DRESSING STANDARDS. The Secretary referred to a further Paper received from the Potato Marketing Board regarding the proposed new Dressing Standards. It was resolved to leave this matter for the attention of the Committee of the Ware Potato Division.

(d) GENERAL MEETING. It was the general consensus of opinion that the previous evening's General Meeting of the Division at which Mr. Gordon Lyall of the Department of Agriculture had been a guest, had been most successful and well worth while.

(e) COMMITTEE. The Secretary explained that he had not compiled his suggested scheme for regional representation on the Committee for future years. It was agreed to defer this matter until the next meeting of the Committee.

POTATO TRADES CONSORTIUM. Mr. James Fordyce reported on the meeting of the Potato Trades Consortium held in London on 26th January, 1972. The principal matter/

matter which had been on the Agenda for that meeting had been to give consideration to a possible application for membership by the Potato Trades Consortium to the European Union du Commerce de Gros des Pomme de Terre. In the course of his report, Mr. Fordyce stated that it had been agreed that the Secretary of the Potato Trades Consortium would obtain further information regarding the European Union. That information had since been received and Mr. Fordyce gave the details to the meeting. The Committee considered, however, that further information would be required before they would be prepared to recommend that the Association should support the application for membership. It was suggested that the following information should be obtained:-

- (a) Details of the composition of the Managing Committee of the Union.
- (b) Details of the policy at present being pursued by the Union, and
- (c) A list of the Organisations representing the individual countries of the Common Market on the Union.

It was also suggested that the Potato Trades Consortium must have a meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture to obtain their views regarding membership of the European Union before the application for membership was submitted.

It was also agreed that the Secretary should write to the Department of Agriculture to obtain confirmation that the European Union was correct in its claim that it was the only Organisation representing the potato trade in the Common Market which was consulted officially by the legislature of the Common Market.

The Secretary informed the meeting that he had now received a copy of the European Conditions of Sale. It was agreed to delay, in the meantime, detailed consideration of these Conditions of Sale.

J.C.C. Mr. Fordyce reported on the meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee of the Potato Marketing Board held in London on 26th January, 1972. At that meeting the Potato Marketing Board had given details of the estimated potato stocks in the United Kingdom and of quantities of potatoes offered and contracted under their Buying Programme.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL. The Secretary reported regarding the meeting of the Administrative Council of the Association held in Stirling on 19th January, 1972. In the course of the Report the Secretary stated that it had been arranged/

arranged that Mr. Williamson, the President of the Association, would approach Mr. Lyall of the Department of Agriculture to ascertain if there was a possibility of obtaining a postponement in the proposed reduction in the level of Farm Capital Grants due to take effect from 17th March. He was also to ascertain if the time was appropriate for another attempt to be made to have the legislation altered whereby potato stores in the occupation of potato merchants would be eligible for the agricultural exemption from Rates. Mr. Williamson stated that he had arranged a meeting with Mr. Lyall to be held in Edinburgh on Wednesday, 23rd February, when these matters would be discussed. The first indications were, however, that there was little prospect of either a postponement in the reduction in the level of Farm Capital Grants or the exemption from Rates of potato stores being granted.

Also arising out of the Report on the meeting of the Administrative Council Mr. Fordyce stated that he had discussed with the President of the Aberdeen Association the possibility of their members being transferred to S.P.T.A. The President of the Aberdeen Association was hopeful that something could be arranged but would get back in touch with Mr. Fordyce after a meeting of his own Association.

BRITISH RAIL. Mr. Fordyce stated that he had been approached by the British Railways requesting his suggestions for means whereby they could recover the considerable decrease in the percentage of potatoes carried by rail during the current season. The Committee resolved that the following suggestions should be put to British Railways:-

- (a) That they should quote a "farm to destination" rate.
- (b) That they should raise the minimum tonnage carried at "Board's risk" during the winter period from 8 to 10 tons.
- (c) That they should reduce the instances of excessive delay in transit and in the event of such delays occurring they should accept responsibility for frost damage notwithstanding that the potatoes are being transported at "Owner's risk" in respect of frost damage.
- (d) That they should curtail their policy of station closures in England, at least so far as regards main potato stations.

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The Secretary informed the meeting that he had written to British Railways to ascertain if a change in policy on their part was resulting in their declining to accept their own postcard as evidence of the quantity of potatoes loaded on rail. At the time of the meeting no reply had been received.

The Secretary gave to the meeting the most recent statistics issued by the Potato Marketing Board of seed potatoes transported from Scotland to England and Wales.

SCAB. The Secretary informed the meeting that it appeared that the Department had found it necessary to reverse their decision to allow potatoes containing more than the permitted tolerance of Scab to be sold as seed on production of a letter from the seller confirming that the purchaser was willing to accept the potatoes notwithstanding the presence of Scab. In future the Department will require production of a letter signed by the first purchaser confirming his willingness to accept the potatoes.

POTATO BOXES. It was suggested that legislation may be under consideration which would prohibit the stacking of potato boxes in excess of four boxes in height. The Secretary was instructed to make discreet enquiries regarding any such possible legislation with Mr. Gordon Lyall of the Department of Agriculture.

SEED DIVISION ANNUAL DANCE. Mr. Fordyce informed the meeting that possible dates for the Seed Division Annual Dinner, Dance and Whist Drive to be held in the Station Hotel, Perth, on a Friday evening had been obtained for November and January. No suitable Friday evening was, however, available in December. It was agreed to leave the arranging of the date to the discretion of the Entertainments Committee.

SEED DIVISION ANNUAL GOLF OUTING. The Secretary reported that the Annual Golf Outing arranged by the Seed Potato Division was provisionally booked for Thursday, 25th May, 1972. The Entertainments Committee were authorised to make the necessary arrangements.

V.T. RAISERS MEETING. Mr. A. K. Powrie reported on the meeting of the V.T. Raisers held at Aviemore on Friday, 17th December, 1971. Arising out of Mr. Powrie's Report, the Secretary was instructed to draw to the attention of Association/

Association members of the need to specify in a Contract of a Sale of V.T.S.C. that the sale is subject to the stock being passed on the final Department tuber inspection.

VITAMIN C. Mr. Williamson informed the meeting that the Secretary had copies of a Paper prepared by the Potato Marketing Board regarding the Vitamin C content of potatoes. He advised any member who was interested in obtaining a copy of the Paper to contact the Secretary.

GRAMPIAN TELEVISION. Mr. Fordyce informed the meeting that Mr. A. D. Williamson was shortly to appear in a discussion regarding the Common Market to appear on Grampian Television. If possible the Secretary was to advise members of the date and time when the programme would be broadcast.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING. The Secretary was instructed to make arrangements for the next meeting of the Seed Division Committee to be held in the Station Hotel, Perth, at 12 noon on Thursday, 6th April, 1972.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman terminated the meeting.

James Fordyce