

REPORT of MEETING between REPRESENT-
ATIVES of JOINT LIAISON COMMITTEE and
the DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE and
FISHERIES for SCOTLAND at Chesser
House, Gorgie Road, Edinburgh, at
2.30 p.m. on THURSDAY, 14th SEPTEMBER,
1972.

PRESENT: N.A.S.P.M. Messrs. E.S. Sherriff, D.H. Smith, R.J. Beeson and
M. Strickland.

S.P.T.A. Messrs. J. Fordyce, G. Luke, T. McClung, and I. Barr
along with R.D. Hunter.

DEPARTMENT. Messrs. Brooke, Lyle, Frayne, Clark, MacKenzie and
Dr. Hardie.

Mr. Brooke was in the Chair.

D.A.F.S. VISIT. Mr. MacKenzie reported that the Department's Inspectors
were delighted with their visit to England in March, 1972 although they
were surprised and disappointed in some instances at the consignments which
they examined. In general, the English growers seemed to be satisfied
with the seed which they had received from Scotland. They had been invited
to see 66 lots of seed of which 9 lots were not satisfactory at the time
of their visit. Of these 6 were possibly not up to standard at the time
of despatch. 2 of the faulty consignments were found to have been passed
in Scotland by the Department's Inspectors at the time of despatch, 2 other
lots which had not been inspected were found to be derived from farms which
had produced other consignments which had been subject to stop notices.
Mr. Smith enquired if possibly the value of the Inspectors' visit had been
reduced by their being asked to cover too much ground in the time available.
Mr. MacKenzie stated that no complaints of this nature had been received
from the Inspectors concerned. It was agreed to repeat the visit in March,
1973 possibly to Yorkshire and the Midlands. It was agreed that the Department
would liaise with Mr. Trehair the N.A.S.P.M. Secretary.

POLYPROPYLENE CONTAINERS. The Department were informed that the Trade
generally was prepared to accept polypropylene containers for seed potatoes.
The opinion was, however, expressed that paper was likely to be used for
seed potatoes to a greater extent in the future. The only objection to
paper/

paper was that it was not suitable for storing. Dr. Hardie stated that he considered that seed potatoes should never be stored in bags of any material. Mr. Lyle stated that the Department's trials with polypropylene in the 1971/72 season had not produced any significant results for the reason that the consignments tested had unfortunately been given special "kid glove" treatment by the handlers. So far as the tests had gone, however, they indicated that for protection paper was best, hessian next and polypropylene was third. He added that the trials would continue during the forthcoming loading season. Mr. Sherriff enquired regarding the possible advantages of perforating the paper containers to allow ventilation. Mr. Lyle suggested that Fife Paper Mills would be willing to co-operate with any experiments with paper which the Trade wished to carry out.

E.E.C.

- (a) Conditions of Sale. Mr. Lyle stated that the next meeting of the Committee to consider the E.E.C. Conditions of Sale for potatoes was to be held in Geneva early in October. The Ministry of Agriculture and the National Federation of Fruit and Potato Trades would be representing the U.K. at that meeting. It was not the Department's intention to be present.
- (b) High Grade Seed Area. Mr. Lyle indicated (and requested that he should not be quoted) that Durham County may be omitted from the High Grade Seed Producing area to be introduced which would include Scotland and the Northern Counties of England. The original intention had been that outwith that area in England an F.S. Certificate would not be issued. The Ministry were, however, now considering carrying out a five year trial which would give existing S.S. growers the opportunity of growing F.S. to see if the standard could be maintained. Following the trials, the Ministry may decide to extend the area in England in which F.S. may be produced. Mr. Lyle stated that these areas would not exceed the existing S.S. area.
- (c) Post Crop Tests. Mr. Lyle stated (and requested that he should not be quoted) that the Ministry were considering whether it was necessary to carry out post crop tests. If these tests were to be introduced they/

they would add considerably to the cost of certification.

- (d) English Seed Potato Labelling Scheme. This would be introduced experimentally in 1973 with a view to formal introduction in 1974. It was the Ministry's intention to endeavour to supply all labels from Head Office.
- (e) Ban on Sale of Uncertified Seed. This would not bite until the 1975 crop.
- (f) Stitching of Labels. This was to be introduced in Scotland for the 1974/75 loading season. There would also be an alternative sealing scheme available for producers not having facilities for stitching.
- (g) Compulsory Eelworm Tests. The compulsory pre cropping soil tests for eelworm would be introduced for the 1974 planting season.
- (h) Tolerances. The tolerance for rots would be reduced from one pound to two pounds.

E.E.C. PLANT HEALTH DIRECTIVES. This was still in draft as it had been for some considerable time. Mr. Lyle added that the existing practice is for the importing country to accept the Health Certificate of the exporting country within the Community. This is possibly all right for the present Common Market Countries which are not separated from each other by a natural barrier of water as the U.K. is from the rest of Europe. It is the intention of the Ministry to resist the possibility of the United Kingdom having to accept as conclusive Health Certificates issued by other Common Market Countries. Mr. Lyle and Dr. Hardie stated that the Dutch potato trade was engaged on a propaganda campaign to encourage the use of Dutch seed in preference to the seed of other Common Market countries.

FUMIGATION TREATMENT. Mr. Brooke stated that the Department's fumigation treatment which was effective for Gangrene and Skin Spot was now being applied under licence in Scotland. The limitation of the treatment was that to be successful it must be applied within fourteen days of lifting. They stated however that tests showed that the fumigation treatment was worth while and that they were encouraging growers to use the treatment at least on the seed which they are retaining for their own planting. Dr. Hardie hoped that in this way the incidence of gangrene would gradually be reduced.

Mr. /

Mr. Lyle stated that the Department were not very impressed with the treatment developed by Dr. Hirst. Dr. Hardie stated that in his opinion the mercury treatment of potatoes would eventually be banned on the grounds of pollution.

MECHANICAL DAMAGE. Mr. Beeson, supported by Dr. Hardie, stated that the lower the soil temperature below 45^o F the greater the susceptibility of tubers to mechanical damage. Dr. Hardie stated that the Department encouraged growers to lift as early as possible to get the benefit of the higher soil temperatures. Mr. Smith expressed the opinion that statistics indicated that more care was being taken to avoid mechanical damage.

COMMON CATALOGUE. Dr. Hardie stated that the first draft of the E.E.C. Common Catalogue for the U.K. would be published in the Plant Breeders Gazette in the near future. If any varieties had been omitted from the list the Trade should bring these to the attention of the authorities immediately following the publication of the draft Catalogue.

INSPECTION CERTIFICATES. Mr. Frayne explained that as a result of faulty programming of the computer the issuing of Scottish Certification Certificates for 1972 had been delayed. They hoped that they would all be issued within one week. He added that the Department were willing to confirm certification by telephone. In reply to Mr. Barr, the Department stated that the delay in giving results of laboratory tests was being kept to the absolute minimum.

POTATO REGISTER. Mr. Frayne stated that it was hoped that the 1972 Register would be issued at the end of October or beginning of November.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman terminated the meeting.