

MINUTE of MEETING of the COMMITTEE  
of the SEED POTATO DIVISION of the  
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION  
held in the STATION HOTEL, INVERNESS,  
at 2.15 p.m. on MONDAY, 27th NOVEMBER,  
1972.

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

Various Potato Merchants representing members of the Association in the  
Inverness area were also present at the invitation of the Committee.

APOLOGIES. Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Messrs.  
G. Luke, and A.K. Powrie.

Before commencing the business of the meeting, Mr. A.D. Williamson, the  
President of the Association, welcomed the guests who were attending the  
Committee meeting. He hoped that they would find that their attendance  
at the meeting of the Committee would be both interesting and useful.

MINUTES. The Secretary read to the meeting the Minute of meeting of the  
Committee of the Seed Potato Division of 6th October, 1972. The Minute  
was approved and signed.

MATTERS ARISING -

- (a) PRODUCE STUDIES. The Secretary read to the meeting a letter which  
he had received from Mr. Mundi of Produce Studies Ltd. intimating  
that although officially he would be unable to let the Association  
have a preview of the Report before it was published, he would be  
happy to attend an informal meeting with representatives of the Association  
with a view to discussing some of the issues that seemed to be important  
in the development of a viable Scottish potato industry.
- (b) VALUE ADDED TAX. The Secretary reported that 103 persons had attended  
the Association's Value Added Tax Conference held in Dunblane on 21st  
November. The Conference appeared to have been a great success.
- (c) SEED POTATO WORKING PARTY. The Committee were informed that there  
was to be a meeting of the Department of Agriculture's Seed Potato  
Working Party to be held in Edinburgh on 18th January, 1973.

(d)/

(d) SEED POTATO ADVISORY COMMITTEE. Mr. James Fordyce reported on the meeting of the Seed Potato Advisory Committee of the Potato Marketing Board which he had attended in Oxford on 23rd October, 1972 in the capacity of an observer. At that meeting the Advisory Committee considered proposals for export promotion. It had been felt that the opportunities in the export market, available to British exporters, in the current season should be followed up and exploited in future years using, if possible, the experience gained this year in the acceptability or otherwise of British varieties in foreign markets. The Advisory Committee were unanimous in their recommendation to the Board that the following proposals should be approved and adopted by the Board:-

"That a sum of around £25,000 a year be earmarked by the Board from its income to finance the following:-

- (a) The employment of a person of senior status with a sound knowledge of the Potato industry (or of approved promotional ability in a similar field) and with a working knowledge of at least one European language, to undertake the location of potential markets abroad for British potatoes, both ware and seed, to follow up the outcome of trials of British varieties in foreign countries and to promote export sales.
- (b) The setting up of a Board Advisory Service responsible for the issue of guidance on all matters connected with the export of potatoes.
- (c) The provision of publicity activities through the medium of the Board's Public Relations Division (backed by its Public Relations Consultant) with a view to projecting an accurate image of British potatoes both at home and abroad."

FUTURE ORGANISATION OF BRITISH SEED POTATO INDUSTRY. Mr. Williamson read to the meeting the draft of a letter reporting the series of meetings between the Potato Marketing Board and various organisations in Scotland concerned with the Potato Market which he suggested should be sent out to Association members. The Secretary was instructed to issue the letter to members of both Divisions of the Association.

Mr./

Mr. Williamson reported that there was to be a further meeting in the series to be held on 4th December, 1972 in London. The Seed Committee authorised the Association's representatives at these meetings to continue the discussions. It was agreed, however, that it was not for the Association itself to form a Trading Organisation. The formation of such an organisation would require to result from the initiative of individual Association members. It was agreed that arrangements should be made for a Division General Meeting to be held in the Station Hotel, Perth, at 7.30 p.m. on the evening of 18th January. It was agreed that the National Farmers' Union of Scotland and the Potato Marketing Board would be invited to send a representative of their respective Organisations to address the meeting to inform members with the views of their Organisations.

BRITISH POTATO TRADES CONSORTIUM. Mr. Fordyce reported on the meeting of the British Potato Trades Consortium held in London on 22nd November. He reported that Northern Ireland were now members of the Consortium. He added that arrangements had been made for a representative of the Consortium to attend fortnightly meetings with Ministry officials in London to discuss matters concerning the Potato Trade.

J.C.C. Mr. Fordyce reported on the meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee of the Potato Marketing Board held in London on 22nd November, 1972. At that meeting the P.M.B. had announced the result of their census of Farm Stocks in Great Britain taken at the end of October. The P.M.B. estimated a surplus of 350,000 tons after allowing for the removal of approximately 125,000 tons as a result of the new riddle sizes. The meeting considered that the latter figure may be excessive owing to the Board's inability to enforce their Grading Standards. The P.M.B. had indicated that there was no Buying Programme in prospect. The P.M.B. had agreed, at the request of the Association's representatives, to quote a "Bags included" price in future Press Reports. The Potato Marketing Board were also considering amending their prescribed deduction of £1 per ton for bags. At the meeting the P.M.B. had agreed to extend the entitlement to be registered as Central Grading Stations under their Ware Potato Labelling Scheme/

Scheme to potato merchants with Central Grading Stations.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL. The Secretary reported on the meeting of the Administrative Council of the Association held in Dunblane on 16th November, 1972. At that meeting the Administrative Council had agreed to accept the Seed Committee's recommendation with regard to increased Subscriptions for the Seed Division from 1st December, 1972.

JOINT LIAISON COMMITTEE. The Secretary informed the Committee that there was to be a meeting of the Joint Liaison Committee in London on Monday, 4th December, 1972. He informed the Committee of the Agenda for that meeting. One of the matters on the Agenda was discussion regarding an embargo on British potatoes entering Northern Ireland. In this connection the Secretary read to the meeting a letter from the Department of Agriculture explaining the position. The Seed Committee instructed that this matter should be raised further at the forthcoming meeting of the Seed Potato Working Party.

REGISTER OF POTATO CROPS CERTIFIED. The Secretary read to the meeting a letter from the Department of Agriculture apologising for the delay in publication of the Register. The Secretary was instructed to write to the Department of Agriculture requesting a guarantee that in 1973 the Register will be published not later than the end of October.

SEED TRANSPORT FIGURES. The Secretary read to the meeting the most recent statistics issued by the Department of Agriculture of Seed Potatoes transported from Scotland to England and Wales. Mr. Barr observed that the figures disclosed an increase as compared with the previous year of 47.7%. He doubted if, in fact, the quantity of potatoes despatched was as high as indicated in the statistics. He believed that the Board's figures were inaccurate. It was possible that the tonnage carried by Freightliners may include ware as well as seed. The Secretary was instructed to take this matter up with the Potato Marketing Board.

SCAB. Mr. Peter Peebles stated that the present regulations precluded the sale of a badly scab infested crop as either ware or seed. It was confirmed that provided the written consent of the ultimate purchaser of the seed was/

was obtained, the Department would waive the Seed Regulations with regard to scab and permit the seed to be sold.

ASSOCIATION CIRCULARS. Mr. W. Gill expressed his disapproval of the enquiry for seed potatoes recently circulated to Association members by the Secretary. In his opinion the issuing of such a circular in respect of an enquiry from the Home Market could only have the effect of encouraging merchants to undercut each other. It was, accordingly, not in the best interests of Association members for such a circular to be issued. The meeting endorsed Mr. Gill's views. The Secretary was instructed in future, in similar circumstances, to point out to the enquirer that the Association is not a trading body and to supply the enquirer with a list of the members of the Seed Division. The Secretary was instructed, however, to continue to issue circulars to members on the Export Mailing List giving details of export enquiries received by the Association.

Mr. Gill also expressed the opinion that information circulated was being duplicated by the N.A.S.P.M. He suggested that consideration should be given to an amalgamation of the Potato Trade Associations with a view to minimising duplication of information. The Committee pointed out that in recent years the degree of co-operation between our own Association and the N.A.S.P.M. and the National Joint Council had greatly increased. It was the opinion of the Committee, however, that there was a need for the Scottish Merchants to retain their own Association.

SEED DIVISION COMMITTEE ELECTIONS. The Secretary advised the Committee to assume that Mr. George Luke the Vice Convener wished to resign from the Committee as at 30th November, 1972 and did not wish to be considered for re-election. It was accordingly resolved that at 30th November, 1972 Messrs. G. Luke, I. Barr and W. Gordon would retire. Messrs. I. Barr and W. Gordon intimated their willingness to be considered for re-election. The Secretary was instructed to write to members of the Association requesting nominations for members to be considered for election to the Committee. The Secretary was instructed to point out to members that they should ensure/

ensure that their nominee was willing to stand for the Committee. The Secretary reminded the Committee that it had been resolved on 27th June, 1972 that at least one Committee member must be from the Inverness-shire, Ross and Cromarty area. Mr. W. Gordon was retiring and accordingly one of the new Committee members must be appointed from that area. A vote of thanks to the Chairman terminated the meeting.

*James Fordyce*