

MINUTE of MEETING of the COMMITTEE  
of the WARE POTATO DIVISION of the  
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION  
held in the North British Hotel,  
GLASGOW, at 4 p.m., on THURSDAY,  
12th April, 1973.

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PRESENT: Messrs. James Robertson, A. T. Henderson, and A. D.

Williamson, along with R. David Hunter, the Secretary.

APOLOGIES. Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Messrs. D. Lawson, G. Dryden, T. McClung, J. Aitken, P. Macdougall and M. K. Mathie.

Before commencing the business of the Meeting it was observed that there was not a quorum present in terms of the constitution of the Association. It was agreed to continue with the business of the Meeting in the belief that the next Meeting of the Ware Committee would ratify any decisions made.

MINUTES. The Minute of Meeting of the Committee of the Ware Potato Division of 8th February, 1973 was taken as read, signed and approved.

(a) Weights and Measures. The Secretary reported that he had written to the Department of Trade and Industry requesting that steps be taken to control the sale of prepacks of potatoes by Hawkers. The Secretary confirmed that he had also requested that in the drafting of the new Weights and Measures Act a definition of a retail sale similar to that contained in the existing Food & Drugs Order be included. In his letter he had also requested information regarding the proposed units of weight to be prescribed for prepacks of potatoes in the new Weights and Measures Act.

(b) Curling. The Secretary reported that the South had been successful in their encounter with the North at Perth Ice Rink on 2nd March.

SCOTTISH ADVISORY COMMITTEE. Mr. A. D. Williamson reported on the Meeting /



Meeting of the Scottish Advisory Committee of the Potato Marketing Board held in Edinburgh on 15th March, 1973. At that Meeting the Advisory Committee had received Reports from the P.M.B. regarding the market supply position and the prospects for the 1973 crop. Mr. Williamson expressed his belief that more growers were going out of potatoes than the P.M.B. realised. At that Meeting the P.M.B. had expressed the opinion that the new compulsory identification regulations had been well received and adopted and that this had resulted in better standards of potatoes in the markets. They had also expressed some concern at the sub standard samples found in schools, canteens, hospitals, hotels, etcetera although even in this sector there was some improvement to be found.

J.C.C. The Secretary reported on the Meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee of the Potato Marketing Board held in London on 28th March, 1973. At that Meeting the Board had issued a Progress Report on the purchase and sale of outgrade potatoes from the 1972 crop. The principal variety was Majestic which represented 54% of the total tonnage offered to the Board. 92% of the offers received by the Board had been from registered producers. The Potato Marketing Board had also issued a Progress Report on inspections for standard of dressing and identification. The Board had stated that the percentage of sub standard loads varied from week to week but averaged about 5%. They had pointed out, however, that the inspections made are not on a cross section of the trade but rather at the points where their staff from experience expect to find sub standard loads. It is not, therefore, correct to assume that about 5% of the potatoes reaching consumers were below the ware standard. The Board had added that their recommendation that the variety should be shown on sacks had not met with any success as only 2% to 3% of consignments were /



were being so marked.

P.M.B. EXPORTS. The Secretary also reported on the Export Meeting convened by the Potato Marketing Board in London on 14th March, 1973. At that Meeting the Potato Marketing Board had announced that Mr. Sinclair of the Northern Ireland Board had been appointed to the post of Export Executive by the Potato Marketing Board. To facilitate housing Mr. Sinclair was to be based in Edinburgh. At the Meeting the P.M.B. had agreed that any export information received by Mr. Sinclair would be distributed to the Trade through the Trade Associations. Following the report there was discussion regarding the Government's recent introduction of a ban on export of potatoes. It was considered that merchants with existing contracts should be allowed to fulfil them.

BRITISH POTATO TRADES CONSORTIUM. Mr. A.D. Williamson reported on a meeting between representatives of the British Potato Trades Consortium and the Ministry of Agriculture in London on 19th February, 1973. At that meeting there had been considerable discussion regarding the supply position of the 1972 crop and possible measures which the Government may wish to introduce to ensure that there was an adequate supply of ware potatoes for the home market. The general consensus of opinion of the Consortium representatives was that an export restriction should be the first step to be taken but only if the U.K. market conditions justified it. Their second preference was the removal of the upper riddle. The Consortium representatives were entirely against a relaxation of the import ban and were strongly opposed to reducing the lower riddle which they had fought for so long to increase. At that meeting there was further discussion regarding the special arrangements for granule processors. At the meeting the Ministry had also stated that the Report of the Working Party on Guarantee and Marketing arrangements for potatoes had been with Ministers /



Ministers since October but preoccupation on other pressing problems such as the Prices and Incomes Policy and entry into E.E.C. had prevented early progress. A consultative document is to be issued soon so that decisions can be taken by early autumn. There had also been discussion regarding producer groups in E.E.C.

Mr. Williamson also reported on the meeting of the British Potato Trades Consortium held in London on 19th February. The Consortium meeting had received a report from Mr. D. Smith regarding an E.E.C. meeting of experts held on 5th to 10th February. The meeting had considered amendments proposed for General Conditions of International Dealings in Potatoes. The U.K. delegation had agreed to all the amendments dealt with so far with the exception of Article 36 which states:- "A Certificate of quality of produce (details of and compliance with standards) drawn up by an official control authority shall constitute prima facie evidence of the quality at the despatching stage, which shall be valid until such time as evidence is furnished to the contrary".

At the Consortium meeting it had been agreed that it had now become necessary to have a certain amount of money available to cover translation and travelling expenses, etc. and it had been decided that members should contribute as soon as possible, £200 to a General Fund on the following ratio:-

National Federation	35%
National Joint Council	20%
National Seed Association	15%
Scottish Potato Trade Association	15%
Northern Ireland Association	15%

Mr. Williamson also reported on a meeting of the British Potato Trades Consortium held in London on 28th March, 1973. In the course of his Report Mr. Williamson read to the meeting an extract from a Dutch Journal reporting a discussion on E.E.C. Potato Trade. In the extract it was stated that it is likely to take several years before /



before a common policy for potatoes in the enlarged community would become effective. It added that it is not desirable for Holland or for the whole community to adopt an arrangement for potatoes which included Market intervention. It proceeded to list the regulations which should be included in the E.E.C. potato policy. Mr. Williamson also read to the meeting a report on the meeting of the European Union of Wholesale Potato Merchants held in Brussels on 2nd March at which the British Potato Trades Consortium had been represented by Messrs. D.H. Smith and H.N. Aves. From that report it was clear that the Dutch Potato Trade were entirely in favour of "free trade". It was equally clear, however, that many of the other member countries had considerable reservation regarding "free trade". The meeting of the Ware Division Committee expressed the wish that their representatives through the British Potato Trades Consortium should continue to oppose the introduction of a policy of "free trade".

At the meeting of the British Potato Trades Consortium on 28th March, the application for membership of the Consortium by the Produce Packers Association had been considered. The Packers Association had exerted pressure on the National Joint Council who were now supporting their application for membership. The Ware Division Committee resolved to leave the decision regarding the granting of membership to Produce Packers to the Association's representatives on the Consortium.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL. The Secretary reported on the meeting of the Administrative Council of the Association held on 8th February, 1973. Following that Report Mr. Robertson informed the meeting that consideration was again being given to a possible wind-up of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Potato Trade Benevolent Society. Consideration was being given to the amendment to the Constitution of the Society which would facilitate the winding up of the Society. He added that in the /



the meantime new members would not be accepted of the Society.

CONDITIONS OF SALE. It was agreed not to proceed further with the possible introduction of Conditions of Sale for ware potatoes.

VALUE ADDED TAX. The Secretary expressed the opinion that it would be to the Association's financial advantage to be registered for Value Added Tax. The Ware Division Committee authorised the Secretary, so far as it was competent for it to do so, to register the Association for Value Added Tax.

P.M.B. WARE PRICES. The Secretary read to the meeting a letter which he had received from a member of the Association complaining that the Cupar market prices quoted in the Glasgow Herald were not a true reflection of the prevailing trade. After discussing this matter fully, the Secretary was instructed to inform the member concerned that it considered that for an average price the Cupar price quoted by the P.M.B. was generally accurate.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman terminated the meeting.

*James O. Rhine*