

MINUTE of MEETING of the COMMITTEE
of the WARE POTATO DIVISION of the
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION
held at Dunblane Hydro, Dunblane,
at 12.30 p.m., on TUESDAY, 17th
JULY, 1973.

PRESENT: Messrs. James Robertson, A. D. Williamson, A. Henderson, T. McClung and I. P. Fulton, along with R. David Hunter, the Secretary (with D. I. Blackmore in attendance).

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Messrs. M. K. Mathie, G. Dryden, J. Aitken and P. McDougall.

Concern was expressed at the continued non-attendance at Ware Committee Meetings of Mr. D. A. Lawson. Following discussion the Secretary was instructed to prepare a letter for the Convenor (Mr. Robertson's) signature offering Mr. Lawson an opportunity to resign.

MINUTES. The Minute of Meeting of the Committee of the Ware Potato Division held on 12th April, 1973 had been previously circulated.

MATTERS ARISING.

- (a) Weights and Measures. The Secretary reported that, by letter dated 1st June, the Department of Trade and Industry had intimated that the six month relaxation of the regulations applicable to the marking of the country of origin on pre-packed potatoes has been extended for a further year (to 29th June, 1974) to permit discussion of a solution to the Industry's long term problems. The Association's application for exemption is thus under consideration. Mr. Williamson added that the National Joint Council had written the Department of Trade and Industry in support of the Association's application and that he intended to raise the matter during the next Consortium Meeting in London on 24th July.
- (b) P.M.B. Exports. The Secretary reported from the Minute of the Seed Division Committee Meeting held on 10th July that Mr. Barr had been nominated as the Association's official representative on the Export /

Export Committee of the Potato Marketing Board. The Ware Committee formally endorsed this nomination.

- (c) V.A.T. Registration. The Secretary reported that the formal procedure for voluntary registration of the Association for Value Added Tax purposes had been duly completed.

The Minute of the previous Meeting was formally approved and signed by the Chairman.

GUARANTEE AND MARKETING ARRANGEMENTS. The Consultative Paper jointly prepared by the Ministries of Agriculture previously circulated to the Committee Members was next considered. During a lengthy discussion which followed, Mr. Williamson summarised the views of the Meeting of the Seed Division Committee held on 10th July and the Secretary also read the views of Mr. W. O. Gordon of that Committee, which had been submitted in writing.

Mr. Williamson stated that although the Seed Committee did not clearly support either proposed course B or D he thought it tended to favour the latter. His own view was that a support price of £12 per ton (as course B) was out of the question and he therefore favoured course D. It was generally agreed that overall acreage control was essential with more freedom to transfer acreage quotas openly, in which latter respect Mr. Williamson's view was that provision would be necessary to prevent transfer of Scottish acreage quotas to England. Mr. McClung felt that course D should provide for specific transfers for stated quality varieties. This led to discussion of improvement of market quality, in which respect unanimous support was given to the suggestion that the P.M.B. should be "in the market" in every year (surplus or shortage) with a buying programme designed for quality (not quantity) control in order to prevent sub-standard potatoes from reaching the consumer. Mr. Robertson suggested that the support price in any of the proposed courses should not be pre-determined but should be reviewed annually on a "cost" basis.

The /

The Meeting resolved to support Course D, suitably amended as outlined if possible, which view Mr. Williamson will place before the Meetings with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Consortium to be held in London on 24th July.

BRITISH POTATO TRADES CONSORTIUM. Mr. Williamson reported on the Meeting held on 30th May, 1973 held basically to meet representatives of the Pre-Packers Marketing Association. Press reports indicated that PPMA is considerably short of having its house in order and it was too early to say if it should be given the opportunity of becoming a member of the Consortium.

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE. Mr. Williamson also reported on the Meetings held on 9th May (mostly concerned with history of 1972 crop, the then current supply position including imports, and the 1973 crop forecasts) and 14th June (which dealt mainly with the then current growing position). During a discussion of the new Ware Inspection Certificate at the latter Meeting, successful representation was made to delete reference to produce that "may have become sub-standard since the time of dressing" and to modify the wording from "breaches of the conditions of the issue of the licence will be reported" to "may be reported".

In this respect Mr. Fulton reported an instance similar to that reported by Mr. Barr to the Seed Committee Meeting on 10th July. Mr. Williamson undertook to raise this incident also at the next Meeting of the J.C.C. on receipt of full details.

Mr. Williamson also reported that "leaning over backwards to gain the favour of the trade", the P.M.B. had agreed that future Meetings of the J.C.C. will be held one week before Board Meetings thus removing the previous "ineffective, rubber stamp" aspect of J.C.C. Meetings.

SCOTTISH ADVISORY COMMITTEE. In reporting on the Meeting held on 25th June, Mr. Williamson explained this had largely duplicated the Meeting of the J.C.C. held on 25th June. In discussion Mr. McClung questioned the /

the gross inaccuracy of delivery tonnages from Ayrshire shown in recent P.M.B. Weekly Reports. Mr. Williamson undertook to raise this point at the next S.A.C. Meeting.

It was noted that the total acreage of potatoes planted in 1973 was 492,000 acres which is 18,000 less than the target (510,000 acres) and 33,000 less than last year. With indications of a less than average yield a substantial shortage appeared to be a possibility.

BRITISH RAIL. The Secretary reviewed the Report of the Meeting held on 30th May, details of which had been included in the Association's most recent News Letter. In discussions of the use of polypropylene sacks it was agreed these were unsatisfactory in handling respects. Mr. McClung reported that his English customers found them unacceptable and were quite ready to pay the higher cost of jute bags. He also pointed out the increased inroads in the trade with England achieved by the Freightliner Service.

The Secretary reported that the annual Scottish Meeting with British Rail was to be held in Perth on 8th August and in the event that no Member of the Ware Committee would be present, Mr. McClung's suggestion to leave it to the Seed Committee representative to report back was adopted.

GRADING STANDARDS. The Secretary reported the content of the P.M.B. News Release of 16th July regarding Ware grading standards for the 1973 crop and the introduction of the now permitted grading of "Bakers" for sale quite separate from all other grades. The Standard for Premium Grade remains unchanged. He reported that a copy of the News Release was being posted to all members today.

PROPOSED DUTCH TOUR. The Secretary read a letter received from the National Farmers Union of Scotland inviting two Association Members to join a party (as paying guests) to visit Holland early in November and reported that Mr. Williamson had agreed to participate on behalf of the Seed Committee. It was agreed that either Mr. Robertson or Mr. McClung would participate on behalf of the Ware Committee subject to formal acceptance by the Administrative Council.

1973 SUBSCRIPTIONS AND RESIGNATIONS. Following the issue of subscription renewal notices the Secretary reported that, to date, payments (including V.A.T.) of £1,450 (out of a total of £3,490) had been received from 59 of the 141 members of the Association. He further reported receipt of Resignation from three Full and one Associate Members of the Seed Division (John W. McKenzie, Inverness: Robbie & Nicoll, Forfar: Jas. Grant, Esq., Munloch and A. & J. Shedden Ltd. Thornton) and two Full and one Associate Members of the Ware Division (Wm. I. Wyllie Jnr. Ayr; A. & J. Shedden, Thornton; and John W. Mackenzie, Inverness). The Meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

James O. P. [Signature]