

MINUTE of MEETING between the Representatives of S.P.T.A. and N.A.S.P.M. with Representatives of the Department of Agriculture held in Chesser House, Gorgie Road, Edinburgh, at 2.30 p.m., on Wednesday, 10th October, 1973.

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PRESENT:

Department of Agriculture. Messrs. Lyall, McKenzie, Archibald and Frayne.

N.A.S.P.M. Messrs. Beeson, Fell, Sherriff and Strickland.

S.P.T.A. Messrs. Fordyce, Barr, Powrie, T. McClung and Hunter.

Mr. G. Lyall was in the Chair.

DEPARTMENT ANNUAL VISIT TO ENGLAND. Mr. Sherriff stated that the English Trade had been again delighted to welcome the Department officials in England in 1973. He hoped that there would be a similar visit in 1974. The Department confirmed that they will be happy to visit England in 1974 and would welcome from the N.A.S.P.M. their suggestions with regard to the timing and location of the trip. They expressed the opinion, however, that the visit should cover a relatively small area to avoid too much loss of time in travelling. It was arranged that the N.A.S.P.M. Secretary would contact the Department of Agriculture to discuss the arrangements.

SUB STANDARD SEED SAMPLES. Mr. Lyall expressed the opinion that for the reason that label specifications were shortly to be strictly controlled under E.E.C. Regulations there may be difficulty in a different coloured label being introduced for Sub Standard (Scab) Samples of Seed Potatoes. He added that it may be necessary owing to these regulations for the concession permitting the sale of Scab affected samples to be discontinued. He agreed, however, that for 1974 the letter "X" would be added to the Certificate Number printed on the Department label in respect of such sub standard samples. Such labels would only be issued on the seller producing a letter from the purchaser confirming his willingness to accept the /



the seed notwithstanding the presence of Scab in excess of the permitted tolerance. The Department would have a meeting with the Scottish trade to discuss the method of issue of sub standard seed labels.

SPROUT DEPRESSANT CHEMICAL. Mr. Lyall indicated in confidence that he believed that Fusarex was again being considered by the Pesticide Safety Precaution Authorities. Accordingly the future of the chemical was in doubt. He added, however, that the Department of Agriculture accepted the opinion that Fusarex was not a Sprout Depressant but was rather a chemical treatment to improve keeping quality. He added that at the present time no trials were being conducted by the Department or the Ministry to ascertain the effect of Fusarex on germination.

Mr. Lyall undertook that in the event of Fusarex being given a clean bill of health the Department would carry out advisory work to ensure its proper use. This advisory work would not, however, be conducted during the current loading season.

VEINAL NECROSIS. The Department stated that they were unwilling to announce any tolerance for Veinal Necrosis at least until the Spring of 1974. They considered that such an announcement at the present time would prejudice current negotiations in Brussels. On being pressed, however, the Department confirmed that it was their intention to include Veinal Necrosis in the tolerance for severe Mosaic for the 1974 crop. As the result of E.E.C. Regulations the tolerance for severe Mosaic was to be reduced from 0.5% to 0.25%. The reduction in the tolerance would be introduced with the new Plant Health Regulations which were scheduled (but unlikely) to be introduced for the 1974 crop.

The Trade representatives urged the Department as a Public Relations Exercise to "play down" Veinal Necrosis as was the practice in other European /



European Countries. The Department confirmed that Veinal Necrosis was Aphid transmitted. They added that the Department were shortly to investigate the need for the introduction of compulsory spraying in Scotland to control the spread of Aphid.

NON IMMUNE VARIETIES. The Department of Agriculture expressed the opinion that the new E.E.C. Regulations banning the planting of non immune varieties in gardens or allotments was more of a problem for England than Scotland. Mr. Lyall suggested that the N.A.S.P.M. should take the matter up with the Ministry of Agriculture.

INSPECTION STANDARDS. Mr. Lyall for the Department stated that the inspections in the English Counties included in the High Grade Seed Producing Area would be administered from the Ministry in London and not by the Department of Agriculture in Scotland. The English Inspectors concerned, however, were in continuous close touch with Scotland and were all "good potato people".

POTATO CONTAINERS. In reply to Mr. Sherriff the Department stated that under the E.E.C. Regulations the Department had no control over the quality of Seed Potato Containers other than requiring that they must be new and do not constitute a plant health hazard. Mr. Lyall confirmed that the stitching of a label will be accepted as sealing under the E.E.C. Regulations. Hand sewing will also be accepted provided there is also a finger seal which would be supplied by the Department of Agriculture.

FUMIGATION TREATMENT. Mr. Lyall stated that as the treatment was being carried out on licence by two commercial firms the Department of Agriculture did not presently have much information with regard to the success or otherwise of the treatments patented by the Department of Agriculture. He added that they hoped to have full information by mid November. He stated that he believed that other fumigation treatments on the market had proved not to be successful.

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In reply to Mr. Beeson, Mr. Lyall stated that to obtain clearance of the treatment for application to Ware potatoes would be a difficult and expensive operation. Limited tests already carried out had shown that even after crisping the treatment "tasted" the potatoes.

POTATO REGISTER. The Department announced that the "dead line" date for the issue of the 1973 Register was 24th October, 1973.

CERTIFICATES OF INSPECTION. The Department confirmed that if the Certificate of Inspection was not available information regarding the Certificate could be quickly obtained by telephone from the Area Office of the Department.

EEL WORM. In reply to Mr. Beeson the Department confirmed that for Export Certificates in Scotland the normal pre crop Eel Worm Soil Test carried out under the Certification Scheme would be accepted without the necessity of a post cropping soil test.

SEED POTATO - FUTURE PROSPECTS. It was the general opinion of the Meeting that 1974 would see a further reduction in the acreage of potatoes planted in both Scotland and England. The extreme shortage of labour is the prime factor in the continued decline in acreages. It was also the general opinion of the Meeting that good Ware prices in the Spring of 1974 could have the effect of minimising the extent to which acreages may be reduced.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman terminated the Meeting.