

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 2 p.m. on THURSDAY, 25th
APRIL, 1974.

PRESENT: Messrs. J. Robertson, M.K. Mathie, A.T. Henderson and I.P. Fulton, along with Mr. R. David Hunter, the Secretary.

APOLOGIES. Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Messrs. G. Dryden, T. McClung, P. McDougall and J. Aitken.

MINUTES. The Minute of Meeting of the Committee of the Ware Potato Division held on 7th February, 1974, copies of which had been previously circulated to the Committee members, was taken as read and formally approved and was signed by Mr. James Robertson, the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING -

- (a) Weights and Measures - The Secretary informed the meeting that no further word had been obtained from the Department of Trade and Industry regarding the Association's application for exemption from the Regulation requiring the marking of pre-packs of potatoes with the country of origin. In view of the lack of word from the Department, it was assumed that the proposed date of introduction of the Regulation would be further deferred.
- (b) Ware Standards - The Secretary confirmed that he had written to the Potato Marketing Board with the Committee's observations regarding the Board's proposals for the amendment to the Ware Standard. Mr. Robertson confirmed that at the recent meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee of the Potato Marketing Board, it had been agreed that the Board would prepare for consideration by that Committee the draft of the proposed Prescription introducing the new Standards.

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(c) State Pension Scheme. The Secretary informed the meeting that to date he had received replies from 33 Association members in response to the circular seeking from members an indication of interest in the proposed seminar possibly to be held in Dunblane to explain the provisions of the Social Securities Act, 1973. Of the replies received, only 10 members indicated their intention of attending such a seminar.

(d) P.M.B. Contributions. The Secretary confirmed that he had written to the P.M.B. complaining that the Board had failed to consult the J.C.C. before announcing the reduction in the Excess Acreage Contributions for 1974. A letter had been received from the Board's General Manager expressing the opinion that in terms of the Scheme prior consultation with the J.C.C. was not necessary. It was agreed to take no further action.

BRITISH POTATO TRADES CONSORTIUM. Mr. Robertson reported on the meeting of the British Potato Trades Consortium held in London on 19th February, 1974. At that meeting the effects upon the potato trade of the introduction of metrication had been discussed. Produce Packers Association had suggested that the weight for pre-packs of potatoes should be standardised at 2 kilos, 5 kilos and 7 kilos. Although the official Minute of the Consortium Meeting indicated approval of this suggestion, Mr. Robertson stated that the Consortium had not, in fact, granted its approval. It had, however, agreed that the top weight for pre-packs should be 10 kilos. The Secretary was instructed to write to the Secretary of the Consortium to point out this apparent error in the Minute of the Consortium Meeting.

At the Consortium meeting it had been agreed that each member Association of the Consortium would present to the Consortium for consideration, draft proposals for the introduction of a Regulation for ware potatoes to be adopted by the European Community. Mr. Hunter stated that the
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Seed Division had suggested that the Association should arrange to meet the National Farmers' Union of Scotland to seek their views regarding such a Regulation before presenting their proposals to the Consortium. The Ware Committee agreed to participate in such a meeting and nominated Messrs. J. Robertson, T. McClung and M.K. Mathie to attend the meeting to represent the Ware Committee.

Also at the Consortium meeting it had been agreed to recommend to the P.M.B. that the allowance for bags in merchants returns should be increased to £2 per ton.

Also at the Consortium meeting the representatives of the Produce Packers Association had suggested that the Food Manufacturers Federation be invited to become members of the Consortium. It was the opinion of the Ware Committee that the Food Manufacturers Federation should not be invited to receive membership of the Consortium.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. Mr. Robertson also reported on the meeting between representatives of the British Potato Trades Consortium and the Ministry of Agriculture held in London on 19th February, 1974. At that meeting the Ministry had made it clear that they were not prepared to consider granting any concessions to permit any ware potatoes to be exported during the remainder of the 1973/74 season. Mr. Robertson also reported on a further meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture held in London on 7th March, 1974. At that meeting the Trade had requested that a concession be granted to allow Ulster Banner potatoes to be exported from Northern Ireland and Record potatoes to be exported from Scotland. Mr. Robertson was not certain as to whether the concession was granted with regard to the export of Ulster Banner potatoes from Northern Ireland. No concession, however, was granted in respect of the export of Record potatoes from Scotland.

J.C.C. Mr. Robertson reported on the meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee of the Potato Marketing Board held in London on 11th March, 1974. /

1974. The Board had estimated that the supply position was in the balance. The statistics indicated that consumption of potatoes had increased.

At that meeting the Board had announced that planting intentions indicated that in 1974, 505,000 acres appeared likely to be planted which was in line with target.

SCOTTISH ADVISORY COMMITTEE. Mr. Robertson also reported on the meeting of the Scottish Advisory Committee of the Potato Marketing Board held on 14th March, 1974. At that meeting details of exports of potatoes had been given by the Potato Marketing Board. At that meeting the Potato Marketing Board had suggested that a Scheme should be introduced for the Licensing of Export Contracts whereby in the event of the introduction of a ban on the export of ware potatoes being introduced in future years, Contracts so licensed could be excluded from the prohibition.

At the Advisory Committee Meeting the Potato Marketing Board had announced the following riddle sizes for new potatoes in 1974:-

9th to 29th June	1¼" for all varieties
30th June onwards	1½" for all varieties

MARKET REPORT CIRCULAR. It was considered that owing to the considerable fluctuations experienced in prices of imported potatoes it would not be feasible for the Association to quote prices for imported potatoes in their weekly market bulletin. The Committee members, however, expressed doubt regarding the value of the weekly bulletins presently being issued by the Association. The Committee members discussed the possibility of the Association providing a telephone answering service of potato prices. It was agreed to consider the matter further at the next meeting of the Ware Committee. In the meantime, the Secretary was instructed to obtain information regarding costs of providing such a service.

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The Secretary was also instructed to include in the next weekly bulletin a statement that Cyprus potatoes would be in Glasgow market as from the week commencing 29th April.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman terminated the meeting.