

MINUTE of MEETING of the COMMITTEE
of the SEED POTATO DIVISION of THE
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION
held in the Station Hotel, PERTH, at
12 noon on MONDAY, 17th JUNE, 1974.

PRESENT: Messrs. I. Barr, J. Fordyce, D.H. Lindsay, D. Maxwell, P. Peebles and J. George, along with Mr. R. David Hunter, the Secretary with Mr. D.I. Blackmore in attendance.

APOLOGIES. An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Mr. G. Gyle.

MINUTES. The Minute of Meeting of the Committee of the Seed Potato Division held on 21st March, 1974, copies of which had been previously circulated to Committee members, was taken as read and formally approved and was signed by Mr. Ian Barr as Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING -

- (a) Veinal Necrosis. The Secretary read to the meeting a letter which had been received from the Department of Agriculture regarding the introduction of a tolerance for Veinal Necrosis for the 1975 crop. The Committee expressed disappointment that the tolerance was not to be introduced for the 1974 crop. The Committee resolved that the tolerance to be introduced for V.N. should be in addition to the existing tolerance for severe diseases. It was agreed to take this matter up with the Department of Agriculture after prior consultation with the National Farmers' Union of Scotland.
- (b) State Pension Scheme. The Secretary informed the meeting that as the new Government had intimated its intention to repeal the provisions of the Social Securities Act, 1973, the arrangements for an Association Seminar on the subject of pensions for employees had not been proceeded with. Arrangements for the seminar would be considered when the present Government's proposals for a State Pension Scheme had been made known.

P.M.B. EXPORT DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE. Mr. Ian Barr reported on the meeting of/

of the Potato Marketing Board Export Development Committee held in London on 9th April, 1974.

SEED POTATO ADVISORY COMMITTEE. Mr. Ian Barr reported on meetings of the Potato Marketing Board Seed Potato Advisory Committee held in London on 26th March, 1973 and in Tenby, Pembrokeshire, on 11th June, 1974. At the latter meeting reference had been made to one or two instances of the complete failure of crops planted with Scottish Seed potatoes. It was alleged that the seed had failed to germinate as a result of chemical treatment which had been applied to it in Scotland. It had been suggested that Fusarex type treatment was responsible. It, however, appeared virtually certain that the chemical which had caused the failure of the seed to germinate was CIPC. It also seemed likely that all of the seed involved was derived from the same single source. Mr. Barr added that the Department of Agriculture were preparing a report on the matter. The Committee were perturbed at the likely detrimental effect which this unfortunate occurrence might have on Scottish seed potatoes. It was further considered that these cases of crop failure may result in an even greater prejudice against acceptance in England of Scottish seed potatoes which had been treated with Fusarex. It was agreed to arrange, if possible, an early meeting of the Joint Liaison Committee in order that the matter may be discussed with the N.A.S.P.M. It was further resolved that the Association should bring to the attention of Association members:-

- (a) The provisions of the Seed Potato Regulations which require a seller to intimate to a purchaser, within a prescribed period of time, details of any chemical treatment which had been applied to seed potatoes, and
- (b) The dangers of careless or improper chemical treatment of potatoes.

It was agreed to discuss this matter further at the next meeting of the Seed Committee when more information would be available.

J.C.C. Mr. Fordyce reported on the meeting of the Joint Consultative Council/

Council of the Potato Marketing Board held in London on 13th May, 1974. At that meeting the Potato Marketing Board had given statistics regarding (a) stocks of ware potatoes in the U.K.; (b) the P.M.B. 1974 Buying Programme; (c) 1975 crop prospects, and (d) imports of potatoes during the 1973/74 loading season. At that meeting the Potato Marketing Board had also issued for discussion a Paper on the subject of the re-allocation of basic acreage for 1975.

BRITISH POTATO TRADES CONSORTIUM. Mr. Fordyce reported on the meeting of the British Potato Trades Consortium held in London on 16th May, 1974. At that meeting a proposal to invite the Potato Processors and Canning Sub-Committee of the Food Manufacturers Association to membership of the Association had been rejected. It had been agreed to recommend a standard size of pallet of 48" x 42". There had been discussion with regard to metrication but no final decisions had been concluded.

P.M.B. RETURNS - BAGS ALLOWANCE. The Secretary read to the meeting a letter from the Potato Marketing Board announcing the increase in the sum to be deducted in merchants' Returns for paper bags to £1.75p per ton. The Committee considered that £1.75p per ton was not sufficient and that the allowance should be increased to at least £2.00 per ton. The Secretary was instructed to take this matter up with the Potato Marketing Board.

CONDITIONS OF SALE - WARE POTATOES. Mr. Fordyce informed the meeting that at the Consortium meeting of 16th May there had again been discussion regarding pressure exerted from the English Farmers' Union for the introduction of Conditions of Sale for ware potatoes. In particular, the English Union were seeking a time limit of four days for intimation of rejection. It was agreed to remit the matter to the Committee of the Ware Potato Division for their consideration with the recommendation that the introduction of such a time limit should be resisted.

RAIL TRANSPORT. Mr. D.H. Lindsay reported on the meetings with British Rail/

Rail and Freight Liners Limited which he had attended in London on 29th May, 1974. At the meeting with British Rail they had agreed to consider limiting the increase in freight rates of potatoes for the 1974 crop to 15%. Mr. Lindsay added that it now appeared that the increase would, in fact, be limited to 15%. At that meeting the embargo dates for Christmas and New Year had been announced. British Rail had stated that unlike previous years, the embargo would also be applied in 1974/75 to ware potatoes. It was resolved to urge British Railways at the Annual Scottish Meeting not to extend the embargo to ware potatoes.

The Secretary was instructed to draw to the attention of members of the Association that the special freight rates offered by British Rail to potato merchants may in many cases not be available to members' customers in the event of the customer paying the freight charges.

The Secretary read to the meeting the most recent statistics issued by the Potato Marketing Board of seed potatoes despatched from Scotland to England and Wales.

WART DISEASE. It was agreed to urge the Department of Agriculture at the next meeting of the Seed Potato Working Party to expedite the re-scheduling of wart disease affected land.

DAVID MACKIE & SONS LTD. The Secretary read to the meeting a letter which had been received from David Mackie & Sons Ltd., Potato Merchants, Forfar, who are members of the Association, complaining regarding the alleged ineffective negotiating ability of the Association. The Secretary was instructed to write to David Mackie & Sons Ltd. in reply refuting their allegation and inviting the Company to send a representative to attend the next meeting of the Seed Division Committee in order that they may have the opportunity of personally stating to the Committee their objections.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman terminated the meeting.