

MINUTE of MEETING of the PRESS sub-COMMITTEE
of the SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION
held at 8, Kinnoull Street, PERTH at 2.30p.m.
on Thursday, 21st DECEMBER, 1978

PRESENT:

Messrs. J. H. Barr, J.G.H. Fenton, B. Fulton and D. H. Lindsay with D. Balckmore in attendance

Mr. D. H. Lindsay, (Convenor) occupied the Chair.

APOLOGIES:

Mr. Blackmore intimated apologies on behalf of Messrs. J. R. McArthur, J. Waddell and R. D. Hunter (Secretary)

DISCUSSIONS:

Recalling Council's meeting on 30th November and the decision to seek a one-month extension of the contract with Agripres in respect of non-activity due to Mr. Watson's indisposition, Mr. Barr also reported his meeting with Messrs. Reader and Grater on Thursday afternoon of the Smithfield Show. He felt an extension, although not discussed, could receive consideration since Agripres were aware that we were disappointed following the October Press visit. Mr. Blackmore tabled a series of Press Cuttings now to hand and explained that the extension request would be included in his acknowledgement.

Mr. Barr next reported a subsequent telephone call from Agripres proposing they will prepare a feature article for distribution to the press for "on file" use if we will supply item headings and photographs.

Mr. Lindsay explained today's meeting was arranged to review the situation and to consider the possible headings. Following discussion, the members present shared ^{the} view that, despite the effort and expense to date, feed-back from Agripres had been minimal and disappointing. In particular, it was felt that the press visit to the Perth area had been largely non-productive although this could have been due to Mr. Watson's indisposition immediately after that event. It was also agreed that loss of impetus would lead to loss of confidence which, in turn, would affect future activity.

In further discussion the following items were agreed should be submitted to Agripres for incorporation into their feature article (though not necessarily in this order):-

- (a) Amount of Capital Investment in recent years
- (b) excess publicity for high prices of seed and ware, absolute silence when prices below cost of production
- (c) high degree of Scottish professionalism
- (d) Improvements in health standards over the years
- (e) Statistical evidence indicates leaf roll difficulties of past two years have been overcome
- (f) Extreme concern that mid-February rush will be compounded by transportation difficulties

Mr. Blackmore was also instructed to obtain ^{Agripres'} views on the success or otherwise of our campaign to date and their suggestions to amend or improve methods employed in order to increase the impact of our continuing campaign.

Citing an earlier non-Association experience, Mr. Lindsay warned of the dangers of stored comment being quoted disadvantageously at an unknown future date. He also felt thought should be given to obtaining professional journalistic assistance locally. It was agreed Mr. Lindsay should contact Mr. Kemp to enquire if he would be prepared to act as Press Officer for the Association and the likely cost involved.

Considering its future activities the sub-Committee agreed to await Agripres reply and draft feature article before reaching its own decision whether to renew the contract with Agripres. Since that decision depended principally on membership support, Mr. Blackmore was instructed to circularise copies of press cuttings to all Press Fund members and to invite them to renew their subscriptions for a further six months as soon as possible

The meeting then closed at 10.15 p.m.