

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of the
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION held in
the City Mills Hotel, PERTH at 10.30 a.m.
on Thursday, 17th APRIL, 1980.

PRESENT: Messrs. J.H. Barr, J.G.H. Fenton, J. George, D.H. Lindsay, D. Maxwell
J.R. McArthur and J.M. Waddell, with D. Blackmore (Assistant Secretary) in
attendance.

The President, Mr. D. Hendry Lindsay, occupied the Chair.

APOLOGIES: Mr. Blackmore intimated apologies for absence on behalf of Messrs.
A.J. Allan, G. Brass, J.E. Cook, JP Deuchar, R. Doig, J. Fordyce, B. Fulton,
W. Gordon, J. Henderson, T. McClung, K.A. McKenzie, J.O. Robertson, G. Smillie
and R. David Hunter (Secretary).

MINUTES: The Minute of Meeting of Council held in Perth on 11th March, 1980
(copies of which had been pre-circulated to each member of Council) was
taken as read. To-day's Meeting lacking a quorum, formal approval of the
Minute was deferred until Council's next Meeting.

MATTERS
ARISING:

(a) Membership and Subscriptions - Mr. Blackmore reported that all except
two Members had now paid Subscriptions totalling £6,182. Despite several
reminders, subscriptions due by R.E. Bailey & Sons (Perth) Ltd. and James
Mair, Esq., (Darvel) were now three months overdue. It was agreed to write
both these Members to intimate that their membership of the Association will
be suspended unless their subscriptions are paid within seven days.

He also reported receipt of advices that John Whiteford, Esq.,
(Kirkintilloch) and Grampian Growers Ltd., (Montrose) have applied to the
P.M.B. for Merchants Licences. After discussion it was agreed both applicants
be invited to join the Association.

In respect of earlier authorised invitations Mr. Blackmore reported
that Messrs. Peter Moffat (Potatoes) Jedburgh, had now formally applied for
Association Membership. Council accepted this application with effect from
to-day's date and also agreed that similar favourable replies to other
invitations be accepted and pro-rata Subscriptions be payable from the date
of their receipt.

(b) P.M.B. Registration of Packing Stations - In reply Mr. Blackmore ex-
plained this item had been deferred several times since it was first suggested
during discussion of repacking in the U.K. of ware potatoes imported in large
bags. That same discussion had also led to obtaining confirmation from the
P.M.B. that its Standards can only be imposed on potatoes grown in the U.K.
Council instructed that the matter be re-clarified with a view to writing the
P.M.B. before it can be discussed by the Joint Consultative Committee.

(c) 1980 Foreign Visit - Following a brief up-dating progress report Council
recommended that no increase in the prospective number of participants be
sought and that they should be circularised to urge each of them to insure
against loss from their possible last-minute inability to participate.

(d) Seed Trade Committee - The Chairman reminded Council that following
internal meetings of its constituent organisations by mid-May, the Seed Trade
Committee planned to meet to try to formulate a joint reply to DAFS' proposed
changes in disease etc. tolerances. He had hoped that Council would have
decided the Association's position today, on the proposals and counter-
proposals that had come out of discussions. He felt these fell into two
parts: (First) whether to alter the present disease tolerances; if so, to
what levels; other fundamental changes in the Crop Inspection Scheme and
(Second) improvement of tuber standards and to what levels.

During prolonged discussion of the first of these parts (which centred
on the counter-proposals paper by Mr. Lyall) it was agreed priority of
commercial considerations dictated that any changes must be most cautiously
considered and only implemented step by step. It was agreed there were long
term risks in making fundamental changes all together. There was support
for/

for retention of FS2 grade, agreement on the pressing need for a "down-labelling" capability and mixed views on a single AA grade excluded from the Scottish Scheme. It was suggested a resumé paper be prepared and circulated for Council's consideration before its next meeting. It was also agreed that changes for the 1981 Scheme should be resisted.

Careful discussion of the second part of the matter showed agreement that individual and group tolerances for tuber faults are too high and should be reduced and also that the Department's inspection efforts should concentrate on tuber standards rather than (as at present) so disproportionately heavily on growing crops.

(e) Scottish Seed Potato Association - After referring briefly to Council's meeting with SSPA representatives on 11th March, the Chairman reported a telephone call from Mr. Lyall following a meeting of SSPA Council on 14th April. He had learned that the SSPA is to press ahead full speed to secure statutory powers. Having now circulated its second News Letter (copies of which the Chairman tabled), the SSPA is to circularise a letter and notes to all registered producers, which DAFS is to enclose with its forms of application for crop inspections and other official documentation which, it is understood, will be posted within the next seven days.

Mr. Lindsay further explained that Mr. Lyall had sent him a copy of the draft of the letter and notes. Although "in confidence", Mr. Lindsay had made clear to Mr. Lyall that this development would have to be reported to Council today. The copy arrived this morning and (without time to read it fully through) Mr. Lindsay had been disturbed to note that it includes a "tear-off" slip to be completed and returned only by those registered producers who oppose the S.S.P.A.'s quest for statutory powers.

In discussion Council agreed that the arrival of the letter among urgent official documents at a time of intense farming activity will much increase the risk that it will be put aside for later attention. It was noted that no "return-by" date for the slip was given. It was the unanimous view that, by assuming slips not returned indicated support for the quest for statutory powers, the degree of support would be mis-leadingly boosted.

It was agreed to obtain the Secretary's professional view of the legality of such an "inertial" polling system in terms of the Industrial Organisation and Development Act 1947 and the legality of inclusion of non-official enclosures in D.A.F.S' official mail. Thereafter the Secretary was instructed, as a matter of first urgency, to telephone Mr. Todd (DAFS) to acquaint him of the anticipated potential repercussions.

SEED
POTATO
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE:

Council took note of Mr. Fenton's pre-circulated Report on the Meeting of the Seed Potato Advisory Committee which he had attended in London on 25th March, 1980. It was agreed the Report was fully comprehensive and in response to Mr. Fenton's invitation Council felt that questions or discussion were not necessary.

SCOTTISH
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE:

Mr. McArthur explained that the Meeting of the Scottish Advisory Committee which he had attended in Edinburgh on 27th March, 1980 had been virtually a repetition of Mr. Fenton's Report above. Once again there were no questions or discussion by Council.

N.S.D.O.
CONSULT
COMMITTEE

Mr. Barr reported on the meeting of the N.S.D.O. Consultative Committee which he had attended in London on 14th April, 1980. As he explained (during the Seed Trade Committee discussions recorded above) the Plant Royalty Bureau's Export Licensing Scheme prohibits the export of certified seed of protected varieties, except by Licensed Exporters with the consent of the owners of the Rights. In respect that "certified" seed cannot be planted for seed reproduction in Europe it is held that Royalties on "certified" seed are exhausted. Current efforts to frame an E.E.C. Competition Directive (applicable to all trades and goods) is believed to include provision under which "certified" seed will be excluded from export prohibition. Such a provision would appear to be acceptable to N.S.D.O. In this event/

event, producing only "basic" seed will place Scotland at a disadvantage unless a remedy (e.g. "down-labelling") can be devised. Following Council's discussion of this point it was agreed to apply further thought to instructing the Secretariat to write the Ministry for clarification.

Mr. Barr reported that NSDO's proposed Index-linking of Royalty Rates will be adopted (in his view the Index itself now seemed to have been very fairly constructed) and, while yet to be formally ratified, it seemed certain that N.S.D.O. Rates will be increased by £5.75 per hectare for the 1981 crop. It was not known what increase will be applied by the private breeders (who had declined the invitation to be represented on the N.S.D.O. Consultative Committee.)

The Committee had also learned that a limited monopoly, to export "Hawk Ivory" and "Squire" to certain North African countries during the next five years, has been granted to a single U.K. company which had made a maximum effort instrumental in securing official listing of those varieties in those countries. It has also been disclosed that during the first year of operation of the Export Licensing Scheme only seven or eight licenses had been issued and only about 200 tonnes of NSDO varieties of seed had been exported. Council agreed this result hardly inspired confidence in N.S.D.O.'s overseas potential.

"CONDITIONS"

SUB-
COMMITTEE:

On a call from the Chair and in the absence of Mr. Hunter, Mr. George reported on the meeting of the "Conditions" sub-Committee which he had attended in Perth on 11th April, 1980. (A copy of a Minute of that meeting, with a copy of the resulting Conditions of Sale now recommended for approval, had been pre-circulated to each Member of Council). Referring to the differences incorporated into the Scottish version of the Conditions formulated earlier jointly with NASPM, he explained the wider definition of "destination" now recommended (sub clause 6 on page 3) and definition of the rate of interest payable on overdue accounts (Condition 15 on page 5).

In Council's discussions both points were acceptable but it was agreed it should be pointed out when issuing the Conditions to Members that for the purposes of Condition 15 their individual Sales Notes and/or Invoices must define the date on which payment is due and the date on which payment becomes overdue.

Council also discussed the possibility that in the event that strike action prevented delivery at the due time, Condition 16 appears to provide for unilateral cancellation of the Contract. It was agreed Mr. Hunter be asked to consider this point and whether it might be overcome, either by omission of the words "and the buyer" in the first line or inclusion of the phrase "subject to their mutual agreement", as in the Association's Conditions of Sale currently in use.

The Chairman regretted that both a lack of a quorum and Mr. Hunter's absence had prevented adoption of the recommended Conditions of Sale for introduction on 1st June, 1980 but he hoped it would still prove possible for them to be introduced on 1st August, 1980 in time for use for the 1980 Crop.

CONSORTIUM

M.A.F.F.

Mr. Blackmore explained he had received a report by telephone from Mr. Rackley on a meeting which took place in London on 14th April, 1980 to consider draft Community Standards for new and for maincrop potatoes. Typewritten notes on this Report had been provided to Messrs. Lindsay and Fenton (the Association's representatives in the Consortium) for information.

ANY
OTHER
COMPETENT
BUSINESS:

Under pressure of time no other business was discussed, except to arrange that the next Meeting of Council will take place in the Station Hotel, Perth at 12.30 p.m. for 1 p.m. on Thursday, 29th May, 1980.

The Meeting then concluded with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

J. Lindsay