

REPORT of a MEETING of the SEED
TRADE COMMITTEE held in the Station
Hotel, PERTH at 2.30 p.m. on Monday,
30th MARCH, 1981.

PRESENT: N.F.U.S. - Messrs. J.W. Hay and J.A. McLaren with P.J. Tait in attendance.
S.P.T.A. - Messrs. D.H. Lindsay, J.C.H. Fenton and J.R. McArthur with
D. Blackmore in attendance.
S.S.P.A. - Messrs. J.E. Cook and R.A. Smith.
V.T.S.C.G.A. - Messrs. J. Marshall, I. McKenzie and H.A.C. Davie.

Mr. D. Hendry Lindsay occupied the Chair.

APOLOGIES: Apologies were intimated on behalf of Messrs. A.A. Arbuckle (S.S.P.A.)
and R.D. Hunter (S.P.T.A.).

DISCUSSION: The Chairman welcomed those present and explained that formal
Minutes of Meetings not being prepared, discussion could proceed direct
to D.A.F.S. "February letter" to Growers and D.A.F.S. revised Consultative
Paper (now to hand) in readiness for a further meeting of the Seed Potato
Consultative Panel proposed for 27th April, 1981. It was agreed to deal
with these two items consecutively, paragraph by paragraph.

"FEBRUARY LETTER": 1(a) Inspection of AAL Crops - It was pointed out that no indication was
given as to what level of which disease(s) is to be permitted at first
inspections. It was believed to be D.A.F.S. intention to carry out
"blanket" inspections, subject to available resources and the number of
crops entered. The Meeting agreed to oppose "blanket" inspections of ALL
crops and/or ALL diseases and to press for a level of 0.5% for Blackleg
only at first inspection and for an undertaking that burning down before
second inspection will be uniformly permitted.

1(b) Eelworm - Inspectors' discretion has always been available - a witch
hunt of suspect fields should be avoided. The Meeting agreed to
ascertain D.A.F.S.' intentions in this respect at the next Panel meeting.

1(c) Blackleg -)
1(d) Virus Diseases -) The Meeting regarded these paragraphs as for
1(e) Inspection Fees -) information and advice. It was noted that the
latter were much higher than previously indicated.

1(f) Plant populations - Required no comment.

1(g) Separations - Noted to be the same as the previous year.

1(h) Burning Down - V.T.S.C.G.A. representatives were not opposed to
provisions for highest grades in 1981 provided that extra time will be
allowed for certain varieties, perhaps delaying second inspections and
possibly an extra "look-over" before an extension is granted. S.S.P.A.
pointed out that in these respects growers would be working with full-
time local inspectors, not part-time seed inspections staff. N.F.U.S.
expressed surprise at the proposed extension of these arrangements to
FS Crops in 1982, without further consultation after such strenuous
opposition by both producers and the trade at the last Consultative Panel
Meeting. Growers' concern took no account of "cosmetic" aspects
involved. S.P.T.A. saw the matter as an inevitable step that could not be
successfully resisted, in which light it was most important to agree the
practical mechanics and to determine rules for exceptions with D.A.F.S.

The Meeting agreed to make clear that re-consultation had been
expected before the proposal was circulated to all growers; to seek to
define "burning down" and "extension" criteria with D.A.F.S., in which
latter connection to raise the introduction of a tuber size criterion.

2(a) PCE Soil Sampling)
2(b) Categories) Agreed to be explanatory information only.

2(c) VTSC Class - V.T.S.C.G.A. representatives explained this paragraph acceded to their Association's requests - in particular, the proposed chemical treatment requirements for 1982 onwards allowed for suitably wide interpretation.

2(d) A.A. Grade -)
2(e) Famosa/Estima -) Agreed to be explanatory information only.

2(f) Inspection Applications - The Meeting confirmed the content of this paragraph had been agreed at the Consultative Panel meeting in December, 1980.

There followed a short discussion of the date of issue of planting statistics by D.A.F.S. Secretaries were instructed to note the Committee's strong pressure for D.A.F.S. to issue provisional figures during the first ten days of June, 1981.

2(g) Completion of Forms)
2(h) Further information) Noted.

CONSULTATIVE PAPER: Paragraphs 1 and 2 were noted as being introductory only. In reply to the Chair, the V.T.S.C.G.A. representatives commented on Para. 3 as follows:-

3(a) Multiplication - conforms to V.T.S.C.G.A.'s request.

(b) Entry for classification - no major problems expected.

(c) Burning off - Fully discussed during consideration of "February letter".

(d) Planting requirements - Intended to separate V.T. units from commercial operations. After a short discussion the Committee agreed the underlined phrase "produced on the farm" needs to be revised to read "produced by the Raiser".

(e) Chemical Treatment - Agreed at 2(c) above.

(f) Skin spot - Acceptable - should not be a problem.

The Committee diverged into a short discussion of powdery scab. It was pointed out that A.D.A.S. advice did not accord with the permitted tolerance (which the Committee felt was too high anyway), almost as if a Certificate meant freedom from powdery scab. S.S.P.A. felt this should be discussed with D.A.F.S. (perhaps with a view to settling up a Scottish equivalent of A.D.A.S). N.F.U.S. stated they are to press the Scottish Agricultural Colleges to find out more about powdery scab.

4(a) F.S. Classification - It was agreed this sub-paragraph represented adoption of the Committee's own proposals.

4(b) S.S. Class - Noted, but not applicable in Scotland.

4(c) Burning Off - Already previously discussed (as above).

4(d) "Super Elite" (S.E.) Class - After consideration of comparison of tolerances with Dutch S.E. Class, the Committee accepted this proposed nomenclature. Although the tolerances proposed for Leaf Roll and Mild Mosaic were lower than the Committee's own proposals they were felt to be reasonable. S.P.T.A. also felt this nomenclature would make quite clear to the English market that F.S. Class is superior to Dutch S.E. Class and that "Super Elite" would also be a good class for export markets.

N.F.U.S. pointed out that the proposals did not strictly provide for/

for reproduction "without limit of time" for this grade. The Committee agreed to maintain its pressure for incorporation of this provision into the proposals.

4(e) "Elite"(E) Class - The Committee agreed this paragraph gave effect to its own "catch grade" proposals and, with the proposed disease tolerances being acceptable, this sub-paragraph was approved.

It was further agreed that (to avoid the need to declare at crop inspection that the crop was intended for export) unless Tobacco Veinal Necrosis was actually identified at crop inspection, ALL Elite (E) Class certificates will declare that the stock was free from Tobacco Veinal Necrosis Virus at the time of official growing crop inspection.

It was also felt that the wording of this sub-paragraph should be amended to make it quite clear that, provided crops for classification as seed are not being grown on the same farm at the same time, "Elite" Class seed may be planted to produce a crop for ware purposes only.

5. Tolerance Groupings - The proposals in this paragraph were approved and accepted. It was noted that the overall revised Group II tolerance would remain at 1%. With the seven individual tolerances within the revised Group II set at 1% each, the Committee's own proposed overall (revised) Group tolerance of 0.5% was accepted to be impractical.

6. Potato Cyst Eelworm Tests:-

(a) Area Sampled - The Committee agreed to ask D.A.F.S. for clarification of the need for and its proposed intention to double the requisite lower limit of the area to be sampled. It was subsequently proposed that the Committee should strive to retain the present minimum of 2 hectares for a "permanently fenced" area. It was also subsequently pointed out that such an area constitutes "a field" in its own right.

6(b) Fenced exlusions - After discussion, and accepting that adoption of this proposal would reduce the number of "two-years-in-advance" (banked) tests, the Committee agreed its adoption was inevitable and decided not to resist it.

N.F.U.S. representatives pointed out that implementation of such (6(a) and 6(b)) proposals would seriously hamper normal farming practices. They felt this re-inforced the available evidence of the continuously apparent non-awareness by D.A.F.S. of the commercial implications of its proposals and its decisions.

The Committee therefore agreed to press D.A.F.S. for clarification of its "permanently fenced" proposals (and their implications) and to seek to devise more practical solutions for the commercial producers.

6(c) Resistant Varieties - It was agreed to ask for Scientific Branch advice on this proposal and (if necessary) to press for the inspectorate to be discouraged from pulling plants of such resistant varieties during inspections in such situations.

6(d) "Non-scheduling" finds - The Committee's consideration of adoption of this proposal defined its first immediate effect as the end of the (present) "automatic re-testing" arrangements. It was also agreed to be clear that discovery of one live cyst would debar the planting of a seed crop and would also debar a re-test, but would not lead to "scheduling" of the tested area nor debar the planting of a resistant variety for the production of a "ware only" crop. N.F.U.S. proposed that D.A.F.S. be asked to state the incidence of such "one live cyst" finds.

The Committee also agreed that in the event that non-viable cysts were found a re-test at the applicant's option should be permitted and it was agreed to press these understandings on D.A.F.S. In conclusion it was felt that D.A.F.S.' proposals were headed in the right direction but that they needed to be defined to ensure their practical "workability".

6(e)/

6(e) Root examinations - The Committee confirmed its opposition to any form of "witch-hunt" in this respect (see foregoing "February Letter" 1(b)) and confirmed the need for a degree of restraint of the inspectorate's discretion (see foregoing "Consultative Paper" 6(c))

Finally, S.S.P.A. pointed out that the Consultative Paper omitted any reference to the Committee's proposals regarding licensing of V.T.S.C. Raisers and a prohibition on the planting of unclassified seed potatoes. N.F.U.S. reminded the meeting that both these items will require new legislation but felt the Committee should discuss these omissions with D.A.F.S.

Thereupon the meeting concluded with a Vote of Thanks to the Chair.