

REPORT on a MEETING between the JOINT  
(NASPM/SPTA) LIAISON COMMITTEE and the  
DEPARTMENT of AGRICULTURE and FISHERIES  
for SCOTLAND held at Chesser House,  
EDINBURGH at 2.15 p.m. on Wednesday, 14th  
OCTOBER, 1981.

- PRESENT: N.A.S.P.M. - Messrs. H.N. Aves, C.J. Baker, G. Burdhouse and  
R.G. Ramsay (vice G. Costa);
- S.P.T.A. - Messrs. J.H. Barr, J.G.H. Fenton, D.H. Lindsay,  
J.R. McArthur and T. McClung, with R. David  
Hunter (Secretary) and D. Blackmore (Assistant)  
in attendance.
- D.A.F.S. - Messrs. D.C. Todd, A. Edwards, E. Barszek, Doctor  
Hall and Mrs. M. Gardiner.

Mr. D.C. Todd occupied the Chair.

APOLOGIES: Apologies were tendered on behalf of Messrs. R.J. Beeson  
and E.F. Sherriff (N.A.S.P.M.) and Messrs. A.J. Allan and  
J. Henderson (S.P.T.A.)

PROPOSED Opening discussions Mr. Todd first explained he had received  
AMEND- a note of the discussions between MAFF and NASPM in July, 1981  
MENT OF and in reply to Mr. Hunter he also stated that (1) EEC require-  
REGULA- ments place no limitation on the permitted number of generations  
TIONS. of seed potatoes and (2) AA grade was not to become a certified  
grade (such a decision being in the national, not the EEC  
province). DAFS had opposed a MAFF proposal that E ("Elite")  
grade become a certified grade. Mr. Baker stated that NASPM had  
not received a reply from MAFF since the July, 1981 discussion.  
Mr. Todd recounted the history of the problems of proposed  
nomenclature and agreed that no direct comparison of U.K. grades  
with Dutch, French and Danish grades is possible.

Mr. Barr declared that the Scottish industry wants to  
retain FS grades which Mr. Todd supported, especially since this  
is proposed to be reduced to 3 years. For NASPM Mr. Baker made  
clear that they do not seek U.K. alignment with Dutch grades and  
they had withdrawn the suggestion that AA become a certified  
grade. Mr. Aves explained that Northern Ireland wants two  
grades (FS and A) to offer to its customers, using FS1, 2 and  
3, and A+ and A internally in Northern Ireland only. Mr.  
Lindsay explained the SPTA difficulty of having agreed proposals  
with the Scottish organisations and DAFS in March, 1981 yet  
favouring VTSC1 and 2, FS1, 2 and 3 followed by Elite and AA  
during this morning's discussions with NASPM.

Mr. Ramsay enquired what provision would be made for  
exporters to identify stocks having a TVN content. Following  
discussion it was agreed DAFS would maintain an annotated Master  
Register at Chesser House. Mr. Baker asked what proportion of  
stocks classified AAL in the 1981 crop would have been classified  
Elite and AA if the new proposals had been operative. In reply it  
was explained that only 389 ha. (mainly King Edward and Desiree  
Varieties) had been classified AA and the area of AAL had con-  
tinued to decline from nine thousand odd hectares in 1980 to  
seven thousand odd hectares in 1981.

Mr. Barr enquired why DAFS would still not allow "down-  
labelling" when it was allowed in Northern Ireland. In the  
following discussion the problem of code number identification  
(Northern Ireland relies on the grower's number not the crop  
number), the English viewpoint, the effect in the export situation  
were all considered. Mr. Todd undertook to consider raising the  
matter/

matter with the Seed Potato Consultative Panel bearing NASPM's opposition in mind (Mr. Baker having also quoted the Regulations to indicate prevention of the proposal).

Turning to tolerances, while Northern Ireland had adopted a specified  $1\frac{1}{2}\%$  undersize and  $1\frac{1}{2}\%$  oversize, the Scottish view was that 3% for either with 3% overall would be acceptable. Mr. Todd stated DAFS wished to consider this, the relative Directive appearing to be ambiguous. It was not proposed to amend the tolerances in Group 1. It was proposed to remove the Frost tolerance from Group 5 into Group 2. For Group 3 the Scots wanted no change but NASPM wanted to amend to remove Common Scab as being non-infectious "odd man out".

In discussion of Powdery Scab, Mr. Edwards stated that of the 1980 crop there had been 31 complaints involving only 440 tonnes, out of a total of 210,000 tonnes transported South, indicating that the problem had been blown up out of all proportion and that it certainly did not warrant the undue publicity that had been accorded to it. Mr. Lindsay asked if DAFS is to take any action. Mr. Edwards stated a meeting would take place at East Craigs on 22nd October and enquired, in turn, whether the Trade would apply its own nil tolerance to satisfy its customers' demand for such. Mr. Barr stated the Trade needed to know much more about this disease. Dr. Hall commented on varietal susceptibility, new research, lack of any known chemical inhibitor, etc. Mr. Baker explained that MAFF does not fault cankerous powdery scab as such but instead fault it as mis-shapen tubers and he urged SPTA/DAFS to aim to provide customer satisfaction on appearance.

In Group 5 (after moving Frost to Group 2) NASPM wanted the 3% tolerance for damaged and mis-shapen tubers reduced to  $\frac{1}{2}\%$  but agreed after discussion to accept no change. Some Scottish opinion felt the reduction of the tolerance for soil in Group 6 from 2% to 1% was not enough but Mr. Edwards felt it was a very useful step in the right direction. Mr. Baker also pointed out that the Regulations forbid larger than 50 kg. sacks but NASPM want larger bags to be permitted.

INCREASED USE  
OF CHEMICALS:

Mr. Barr explained the Committee's morning discussions. DAFS undertook to do what it can to heighten awareness of the potential dangers and to bring the matter under control.

N.S.D.O. :

Further to the Committee's morning discussions, Mr. Todd was aware of a proposal to set up a joint BMB/NSDO company to co-ordinate trials and promotion of NSDO varieties overseas. Scottish and Northern Ireland participation was envisaged at a later date. He explained that following a DAFS meeting with the MAFF Marketing Branch it had to be made clear to the P.M.B. before tomorrow's meeting that the proposal applied to new NSDO varieties only and not to established varieties.

A.O.C.B. :

In reply to Mr. Baker, Mr. Todd doubted that a report on the meeting to be held at East Craigs on 22nd October to discuss powdery scab could be forwarded to NASPM in time for the meeting of its Council on 11th November. DAFS would be sending a Report on the Seed Potato Consultative Panel Meeting on 30th October to MAFF in due course but likewise doubted if a copy of this Report either could be forwarded in time for NASPM's Council Meeting. SPTA agreed to try to forward a copy of its own Report on this latter meeting to NASPM before 11th November.

In reply to SPTA, DAFS stated the 1981 Crop Register was already in the hands of the printer and it was hoped it would be published by end October/early November.