

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of the
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION
held in the Station Hotel, PERTH at
2 p.m. on Thursday, 1st JULY, 1982

PRESENT:

Messrs. J.H. Barr, J.E. Cook, J.G.H. Fenton, D.H. Lindsay, D. Maxwell, K.A. McKenzie and R.G. Ramsay with R. David Hunter (Secretary) and D. Blackmore (Assistant) in attendance.

The President, Mr. J.G.H. Fenton, took the Chair.

APOLOGIES:

The Secretary intimated apologies for absence on behalf of Messrs. A.J. Allan, J.P. Deuchar, R. Doig, J. Fordyce, B. Fulton, W. Gordon, J. Henderson, J. Logan Milne, W.E. Muirhead, J.R. McArthur, T. McClung, J.O. Robertson and G. Smillie.

MINUTES:

The Minute of Meeting of Council in Perth on 6th May, 1982 (copies of which had been sent to each Member of Council) was taken as read. Pending ratification by a quorum the Minute was approved and duly signed to this effect by the Chairman.

MATTERS
ARISING:

(a) Conditions of Purchase - The Secretary reported that due to a mis-understanding (for which Mr. Blackmore accepted responsibility and offered his apology) the revised Conditions of Purchase had only recently now been submitted to N.F.U.S. for approval. In reply Mr. Hunter explained N.F.U.S. had been asked to indicate its approval by end-September.

(b) N.A.S.P.M. Arbitration Rules - The Secretary reported that a copy of the revised Rules, which the London meeting of the Joint Liaison Committee in December last had stated would be forwarded in due course, was still awaited. Council agreed a reminder enquiry be sent to N.A.S.P.M.

(c) D.A.F.S. February letter to Growers - Mr. Blackmore referred to D.A.F.S. follow-up reminder letter detailing changes in PCN-testing arrangements for 1982/83 to report receipt of D.A.F.S.' confirmation that applications for whole-field tests do not, in fact, require sketch plans. Council instructed insertion of a suitable item, to include a reminder of the new closing date for applications, into the next News Letter to all members. Council's discussion revealed deep anxiety regarding the effect of these changes on next year's crop.

(d) 1983 Ware Standard - Discussion of this matter was deferred until later in the Meeting.

(e) Membership - Mr. Blackmore reported receipt of P.M.B. notification of cancellation of their Merchant's licence in name of Messrs. Thos. Anderson & Sons and granting of licences to G.S. Brass (Perth) Ltd. and to a Dunfermline Branch of Wood Ormerod & Co. Ltd. He explained that in respect of the first of these a reply to an enquiry was still awaited from James Anderson, Esq. and to invitations sent to the second named as well as Gowanbank (Potatoes) Ltd. and MacLennans Potatoes.

In addition, the P.M.B. had intimated receipt of applications for ware merchant licences from Messrs. John Craig & Co., Hamilton and Gilden Ltd., Weydale (Caithness). Council agreed both these Companies be invited to apply for Association Membership.

(f) Ring Rot - Mr. Blackmore reported the reply to his telephoned enquiry regarding the outcome of tests for suspected Ring Rot and he pointed out the same information had been published in an article in the Farmers Weekly recently. Council agreed a copy of the article should be sent to each Member of Council.

DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL:

Mr. Barr reported that the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council had now appointed a Chief Executive and a public announcement was imminent. There was some concern over widening of outside activities, rather than the combining and centralisation of effort as supported by the Joint Consultative Committee. He also referred to the relationship with Solanex Ltd. and during Council's wide-ranging discussion it was agreed the President and the Secretary should try to arrange an informal meeting with Mr. John Fotheringham as a fore-runner to inviting Development Council representation in the Seed Trade Committee.

In respect of the P.M.B.'s recently announced formation of its Commercial Group it was felt that in the absence of prior consultation with the Trade this initiative had been high-handed. On Mr. Barr's suggestion it was agreed to write to the P.M.B. to ascertain the intended function and activities of the Group and further, in view of the precedent established on the formation of the Board's Seed Potato Advisory Committee, to seek a right for the Association to nominate one representative for the purpose of reporting back to Council.

EUROPEAN
UNION:

Mr. Blackmore reported receipt, courtesy of Mr. Harold Aves, of a copy of his full Report on the 1982 Congress of the European Union held in Belgium from 24th - 26th May, 1982. The Secretariat was instructed to offer copies, on application, in the next News Letter.

"CONDITIONS"
sub-
COMMITTEE:

Mr. Hunter reported on the meetings of the "Conditions" sub-Committee held in Perth on 25th May and 28th June, 1982. In supporting the direction of discussions and draft proposals for a "frost ban", Council anticipated D.A.F.S.' resistance to ^{its application} specific ^{ally to} export movements. It was felt that D.A.F.S.' probable preference for a ban on all seed movement (including internal U.K. trade) during severe frost might not be a bad thing. Council also approved an approach to the Seed Trade Committee for support from N.F.U.S. and V.T.S.C.G.A. and from the Development Council and P.M.B.

In respect of Conditions of Sale for Export, Mr. Hunter reported a third draft is being prepared. Once this had been re-considered it will be copied to all Council Members prior to its next meeting. On Mr. Ramsay's suggestion it was agreed that whenever approved by Council a copy of the Export Conditions will be submitted to N.A.S.P.M.

Council agreed more time would be required to consider the proposed Conditions of Sale for Ware recently submitted to all its Members. In brief comment, Mr. Hunter highlighted the salient points and Mr. Ramsay added that whereas RUCIP Rules could be applied to both Ware and Seed in the U.K. home trade, they were not as convenient for use for seed exported aboard vessels. The Ware Conditions were then deferred until Council's next meeting.

SCOTTISH
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE:

Council noted that a special meeting of the Scottish Advisory Committee (to which all Scottish Board Members of the P.M.B. had been invited), held in Edinburgh on 27th May was devoted exclusively to the Board's "GREAT BRITS" ware scheme. P.M.B. staff had also held a special, very well attended meeting with Association members in Dunblane on 9th June, 1982 to explain and discuss the Scheme.

CONSORTIUM:

Mr. Fenton reported on the meeting of the British Potato Trades Consortium which he had attended in London on 7th July, 1982. In respect of proposed changes to the Ware Grading Standards for 1983 it had been stated elsewhere that there had been unanimous support, with S.P.T.A. exception, for adoption of a 45mm. minimum riddle. Mr. Fenton insisted that even with only the one (S.P.T.A.) exception, the reported unanimity was impossible. In fact, as Mr. McKenzie briefly explained, the P.M.B. reported to the meeting of its Scottish Advisory Committee in Peebles on 30th June, 1982 (see below), that despite pressure for a 45mm. minimum riddle in 1983 the Board had respected the Scottish view and the present 40mm. minimum/80mm. maximum riddle sizes/

sizes would not be changed for 1983. However, provided it is clearly marked on the bags, a 45mm/85mm. grade will be permitted in 1983. It would also become necessary to implement an E.E.C. Directive to mark on the bags whether they contained new potatoes or ware potatoes.

JOINT
CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE:

Mr. Fenton also reported on the meeting of the P.M.B.'s Joint Consultative Committee which he had attended in London on 7th June, 1982 the major part of which had been taken up with prolonged discussion of various proposed changes in the Ware Grading Standards for 1983. It had also been reported that 1982 crop plantings were estimated to be on a par with last year. Mr. Grieff (NASPM) had reported that Scottish seed is far outyielding Dutch seed this year. Full 1981 statistics had been tabled, copies of which he would provide on request.

BRITISH
RAIL AND
FREIGHT-
LINERS:

Mr. Blackmore explained that partly due to late notification the Association's representatives had not attended the meetings with British Rail and with Freightliners in London on 9th June, 1982. He had accordingly arranged to receive a copy of N.A.S.P.M.'s Report on these meetings but this had still not come to hand. A copy will be forwarded to each member of Council in due course.

SCOTTISH
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE:

In addition to his remarks recorded above, Mr. McKenzie continued his Report on the Scottish Advisory Committee meeting which he had attended in Peebles on 30th June, 1982. The meeting had received reports on current prices and supplies of new crops in England, from Brittany and in Scotland, including Ayrshire/Wigton yields stated to be 19 tonnes per hectare. Heavy top-growth was reported in English maincrops and blight had been recorded in Suffolk and Essex on 30th June. Final 1981/82 seed despatch statistics had been considered, as had export markets (in which respect a successful P.M.B. presence at the Santarem Fair was recorded). It was also stated that by the close of the Board's Early Payment Scheme on 22nd June, 1982 no payment had been made.

In this latter respect Mr. Cook believed Pembrokeshire early growers are seeking Scottish support to extend the Scheme to 1st July next year. He also reported that in respect of defaulted contracts for "Record" for crisping, the P.M.B. is not to step in but will give sympathetic consideration to requests to waive the £1 per tonne cancellation fee arrangements. He agreed that in his own view the Scheme "is only half way there".

A.O.C.B.:

(a) Revision of nomenclature - In respect of a further letter from N.A.S.P.M. (copied to all members of Council) the Chairman reminded Council that the respective views now held represented a complete reversal from a year ago. In his own view, with plantings increasingly becoming predominantly FS class, AAL will disappear and all the argument will have been in vain. Others present did not all share this view but, following full discussion, the weight of opinion favoured adoption of FS, Elite and AA Classes.

(b) Royalties - Mr. Blackmore reported receipt of a letter from a member complaining of the heavy burden of plant Royalty payments. He had replied to the letter and had passed a copy of each to Mr. Barr for his information. Mr. Barr confirmed that a further letter to the member was not necessary and following a brief discussion of tonnage based royalties, it was confirmed that Mr. Barr will continue to proceed on Council's instructions in discussions with N.S.D.O.

(c) "Below-grader" PCN Tests - Mr. Hunter reported receipt of a request from a member for a note of the results of the experimental soil tests in which some Association Members voluntarily co-operated at the instance of D.A.F.S. in 1980 and 1981. Mr. Blackmore added that broad summarised totals sufficient for the Member's purposes could be easily compiled (e.g. total number of samples tested and total number of clear tests) if Council approved. After a short discussion, centred on the confidentiality guaranteed both by D.A.F.S. and the Association to those who participated, the Secretariat was instructed not/

not to provide the requested information.

(d) Date of next Meeting - Council agreed to hold its next meeting in the Station Hotel, Perth at 2 p.m. on Thursday, 26th August, 1982 and the Secretariat was instructed to make the usual necessary arrangements.

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

A. Penton