

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 2.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 13th OCTOBER, 1982.

PRESENT: NASPM - Messrs. H.N. Aves, C.J. Baker, R.W. Beeson and E.F. Sherriff
SPTA - Messrs. J.H. Barr, J.E. Cook, D.H. Lindsay, J.R. McArthur and T. McClung, with R. David Hunter (Secretary) and D. Blackmore (Assistant) in attendance.
DAFS - Mr. C.K. McIntosh, Miss J. Gardiner and Miss A. Muir.
Mr. C.K. McIntosh took the Chair and welcomed those present.

SCOTTISH
SEED POTATO
DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL:

Opening discussion in reply, Mr. McIntosh envisaged the activities of the Council being directed towards improving the image of Scottish seed and developing both existing and new markets. With Mr. Barr's agreement, he felt these were of immediate shorter-term concern and, of course, the Council was still in its early days. In the longer term he foresaw the Council taking part in overseas missions (e.g. re health problems, etc.) and co-ordination with Solanex, Northern Ireland, etc. Mr. Barr added that it was important to contain escalation of costs to ensure a proper return on levied funds.

With regard to Solanex Ltd., Mr. Aves felt that a contribution of £55,000 (to secure a seat on the Solanex Board) was more than either the Scottish or the Northern Ireland seed industries could afford at the present time. At the same time (and supported by Mr. Sherriff) Mr. McIntosh felt that overlap, parallelism and duplication should be avoided.

Mr. Aves also felt that co-operation was urgently required for a dialogue to resolve problems arising from the plant health requirements of importing countries. Mr. McIntosh explained that despite persistent Embassy efforts no solution had been reached to the problem of a contract signed with an Algerian importer allowing a 0.25% tolerance for gangrene (which accords with current Algerian plant health requirements) while the Authorities there now intend early introduction of a Nil tolerance for gangrene. From Mr. Aves previous experience he felt the problem could have been reduced had there been better point-of-departure inspections by the importing country's plant health staff.

In reply in course of the subsequent discussion, Mr. McIntosh gave his views on the proposals for a ban on exports during severe frost which had been submitted by the Development Council. SPTA representatives strongly urged restriction of a ban to exports only and felt "guidelines" would be inadequate. Supported by Mr. Aves they stressed that only an official ban would be effective, the authority for which could, no doubt, be derived from within existing regulations.

NOMEN-
CLATURE:

Mr. Sherriff enquired whether a decision had yet been taken on whether the proposed improved A1 Class is to be named "Elite" or "Super A". In reply Mr. McIntosh stated the NFUS had still to reply but indications were that "Elite" will be adopted. Mr. Barr asked if this would be the only change, or whether Foundation Stock would be simultaneously renamed "Super Elite" and Mr. Cook asked when the final decision had to be made. Mr. McIntosh stated revision of the 1978 Regulations had met delay but were now with the Law Offices. At the same time the Statutory Instruments Committee had also found difficulty in the existing Regulations.

Mr. Cook explained the Trade would prefer to make its own decision and/

and proposed the matter be referred back to respective Councils for re-discussion in other forums. Mr. Sherriff undertook to reply within about six weeks. In reply to Mr. Baker, Mr. McIntosh thought that the ban on import of seed into the High Grade Seed Area would not be ended for a long time and he also undertook to write confirming one years notice will be given in respect of changes in the Seed Potato Regulations.

PROBLEMS
IN SCOTS
SEED:

Mr. Beeson explained in detail the Committee's very serious concern regarding the potential for problems to arise over chemical treatments. A joint Committee to investigate the matter had been suggested to secure guidelines and advice from DAFS and MAFF in the light of the declarations made on applications for labels. Mr. McIntosh noted the Committee's concern which he would take up with his Department's Scientific Services.

A.O.C.B:

(a) High Grade Seed Area - In reply to Mr. Baker, Mr. McIntosh felt that although perhaps not sacrosanct the HGSA was a very important factor indeed in the maintenance of very high standards of plant health and any changes would only be made with this criterior uppermost in mind.

(b) Burning down - In further reply Mr. McIntosh also stated that in this year's experience no real problems in the practical application of Scottish Burning down arrangements had emerged.

(c) 1982 Crop Inspections - In reply to Mr. Sherriff, Mr. McIntosh stated the statistical analysis of Inspections results were not yet available and he could give no indication of the incidence of Blackleg in the 1982 Scottish seed potato crop.

(d) 1982 Crop Register - In reply to SPTA Miss Gardiner explained the Register was already with the printer and she hoped it will be issued by the end of October.

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