

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of the
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION held
in the STATION HOTEL, PERTH at 2.00 p.m.
on THURSDAY, 5th MAY, 1983.

PRESENT: Messrs. J.H. Barr, J.E. Cook, R. Doig, J.G.H. Fenton, D.H. Lindsay,
P. Miller, J.R. McArthur, K.A. McKenzie and J.O. Robertson, with
R. David Hunter (Secretary) and D. Blackmore (Assistant) in
attendance.

The President, Mr. J.G.H. Fenton, took the Chair and welcomed those present to the Meeting.

APOLOGIES: The Secretary intimated apologies for absence on behalf of Messrs. A.J. Allan, J.P. Deuchar, B. Fulton, J. Henderson, D. Maxwell, J. Logan Milne, W.E. Muirhead, T. McClung and G. Smillie.

MINUTES: The Minute of Meeting of Council in Perth on 4th March, 1983 (a copy of which had been sent to each Member of Council) was taken as read. It was duly approved and signed to this effect by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING:

- (a) Conditions of Purchase - Mr. Hunter reported that in a written reply the N.F.U.S. had indicated resistance to the revised version of Condition 17 which was believed could lead to extension of the three-day and ten-day time limits for disease complaints. He felt this view might be due to misunderstanding of the need for this Condition and he sought Council's views as to whether he should seek a meeting with the N.F.U.S.' Legal Committee or arrange a further meeting of the Association's "Conditions" sub-Committee. During discussion it was agreed to adopt the former course as soon as possible with a view to reaching a decision within four weeks. It was further agreed that a similar Condition will require to be incorporated also into Conditions of Purchase for Export and Conditions of Sale for Export, in due course.
- (b) Product Liability Insurance - Mr. Hunter also reported the results of his enquiries. Only one local office had shown interest but only on the basis of a scheme which included cover for all other insurance needs of participating members as well. In Council's view this would not be acceptable to members and it was agreed the enquiries should be continued but on a "product liability only" basis.
- (c) Membership and Subscriptions - Mr. Blackmore reported that since Council's last meeting D. Mackie & Sons Ltd. had gone into Receivership (18/ 3/83); Messrs. Allan Redpath & Sons had notified (28/ 3/83) they had ceased trading; resignations from membership had been received from Hugh R. Munro (25/ 4/83) and Williamson (Perth) Ltd. (29/ 4/83) and Nickersons Seed Potatoes had been enjoined. The total Membership Roll was thus now 114.

With one exception (The Firm of T.B. Milne) payment of all annual Membership Subscriptions, totalling £8,990 (1981/82 was £9,252) had now been received, without change in the tonnage-bracket "breach" reported at Council's last meeting. Mr. Hunter explained he had telephoned the member concerned without success. He was instructed to notify the member that Council will welcome his continued membership in his correct tonnage bracket or, reluctantly, accept his resignation.

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It was pointed out that resignation from membership ended enjoyment of the Association's copyright Conditions of Sale. To maintain and protect this copyright the Secretary was instructed to inform all resigning members of this position.

Mr. Blackmore reported receipt of P.M.B. advices that applications for Ware Merchants Licences had been made by M.H.K. Fruit Sales Ltd., Galashiels and Messrs. Veg. Fruit (Glasgow). Council decided to consider inviting these applicants into membership when formally notified that their Licences have been granted.

Mr. Hunter reported having written to the P.M.B. regarding a complaint received from a member in respect of continuing trading by an unsuccessful applicant for a Merchants Licence. After brief discussion Council agreed to await a formal reply from the P.M.B. in due course.

- (d) True Potato Seed - No reply having been received, Mr. Blackmore undertook to press this matter further with the Department.
- (e) Average Prices "Blueprint" - Mr. Blackmore explained that despite many promises, over a long period of time, no progress had been made. Council instructed that pressure on the P.M.B. should be continued.
- (f) Council and Development Council Vacancies - After short discussion Council decided to defer the question of the two vacancies in its number to be resolved in the next annual postal ballot of members. In respect of Mr. R.G. Ramsay's resignation from the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council it was decided not to add to the Association's original nomination list. Council gave its unanimous support to a recommendation that Mr. R. Doig should be appointed to fill the vacancy that had arisen.
- (g) Scab Tolerance and Nomenclature - Mr. Hunter felt that the wording of the proposed change in Scab tolerance seemed slightly ambiguous. In a short discussion it was pointed out the industry had sought this change. Council confirmed its agreement to the proposed wording.

Mr. Hunter reported a letter from N.A.S.P.M. agreeing to adoption of "Elite" and "Super Elite" classes. Mr. Fenton also reported that Northern Ireland had also agreed. Council felt that D.A.F.S. should now be urged to finalise revision of the Regulations.
- (h) National Federation Annual Conference - Mr. Hunter explained a request received for this Association's participatory support for this event at Gleneagles Hotel on 20th/23rd October, 1983. Council decided the Public Relations Committee be authorised to allocate about £200 of its funds to this end. On behalf of his own Company, Mr. McArthur offered to provide sprays of white heather for each of the ladies attending the final banquet.
- (i) Scottish Seed Potato Development Council - Council considered a letter outlining the Development Council's actions in fostering the formation of an exporting group. Following discussion Council noted the present position and agreed to await further developments in due course. It was further agreed to ask the Development Council to arrange for Mr. Hunter to receive a copy of the Minutes of each meeting of the Development Council.
- (j) Entertainments Committee - Mr. Hunter reported briefly on (1) progress in arrangements for the Association's annual Golf Outing at Rosemount on 17th May, 1983; (2) provisional bookings made for the North v. South Curling Match to take place at Murrayfield Ice Rink on 13th December, 1983 and Perth Ice Rink on 9th March, 1984; (3) plans for the Committee's next meeting to initiate arrangements for the proposed 1984 Foreign Study Tour to North Portugal.

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- (k) P.M.B. Scheme for Processors - Mr. Hunter reported receipt of a letter from Mr. J. Low, General Manager of the P.M.B. in reply to the Association's complaint in respect of interference with trade. While Council felt the position remained very unsatisfactory, it was agreed that further correspondence at this stage would prove unproductive.
- (l) Disease Warnings - Council noted from a letter from E.S.C.A. (pre-copied to all members of Council) that future disease warnings will continue to be posted direct to all Growers.

SCOTTISH ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Council took note of a (pre-copied) P.M.B. Report on a meeting of the Scottish Advisory Committee held in Edinburgh on 24th March, 1983. As Mr. McKenzie (who had accompanied Mr. Fenton at the meeting) explained, the meeting had been mostly concerned with historical matters which did not require further comment.

SEED POTATO ADVISORY COMMITTEE: It was reported that no Association representative had attended a meeting of the Seed Potato Advisory Committee held in London on 29th March, 1983 and a Report on the proceedings had yet to be received from the P.M.B. In brief discussion it was reported that Notices of and Papers for the meeting had not been received from the Board. The Secretariat was instructed to write to the Board apologising for the Association's non-attendance at the meeting.

EXPORT DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: Council took note of a (pre-copied) P.M.B. Report on a meeting of the Export Development Committee in London on 11th April, 1983. Once again, no representative from the Association had been present and the Secretariat was instructed to write a letter of apology to the Board. In respect that Mr. Ramsay's resignation from Council had created a vacancy for the Association's alternative representative on this Committee, Mr. Doig accepted nomination to fill the vacancy. The Secretariat undertook to arrange with the Board accordingly.

WARE IMPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Council also took note of a pre-copied P.M.B. Report on a meeting of the Ware Imports Advisory Committee held in London on 13th April, 1983. Mr. Fulton, who had attended the meeting vice Mr. Lindsay, added further brief explanatory comment.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS:

- (a) European Union Congress - The Chairman enquired whether any Association member intended to be present at the annual Congress being held at Killarney, in Ireland, from 19th to 21st May, 1983. Mr. Blackmore explained that leaflets and booking forms had not been circulated to members because they had not come to hand until after the closing date for return of the package-booking forms.
- (b) James E. Rennie Awards - Council was pleased to note that the P.M.B. had made an Award under its James E. Rennie Scheme to Mr. Stuart V. McKenzie, a member of the staff at the Crieff office of Glendale Potato Co. Ltd. (an Association member), to enable him to visit the U.S.A. to study production and distribution of potatoes for specific markets there. Council agreed to extend congratulations and best wishes to Mr. McKenzie.
- (c) Report on a visit to Morocco - The Chairman drew attention to a Report by Mr. T.W. Mabbott, a nematologist in D.A.F.S.' Scientific Services. In brief discussion the Report was felt to be both objective and helpful.
- (d) Press Release - Mr. McKenzie enquired whether Council felt the Association should respond to criticism that it had not made any public statements on the P.M.B.'s handling of the 1982 Ware Crop. In full discussion, including a brief report on a recent "protest" meeting in Forfar, several factors were cited as having possibly contributed to inaccuracy in P.M.B. statistics. It was the majority view of Council that it would be unwise to issue a Press Release on this subject at this time.

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- (e) Casual Wages and Deductions - Mr. Miller reported having met with difficulties regarding non-deduction of Income Tax P.A.Y.E. and National Health Insurance contributions from wages paid to casual potato-harvesting workers. Following discussion (which disclosed similar experience by other members) it was decided the Secretariat should ascertain the up-to-date official position, for circularisation advice to all Association members. Mr. Hunter confirmed the Association would still assist any member in particular difficulties.
- (f) Date of next Meeting - It was agreed to hold the next meeting of Council in the Station Hotel, Perth on Thursday, 30th June, 1983 and the Secretariat was instructed to make the usual arrangements.

The meeting then concluded with a Vote of Thanks to the Chair.

O. Hunter