

REPORT OF MEETING WITH N.S.D.O., FARMERS CLUB, LONDON,

15TH FEBRUARY 1984

Due to the indisposition of Mr Barclay Forrest, the Chair was taken by Mr David Owen of N.S.D.O. Professor Ridgman presented his analysis of costs which showed an inflation increase in the year of 6.3%, over the final figures of 1982. These figures were as usual presented in a very fair manner and were generally accepted.

Following from this came the usual discussion on the Plant Royalty rate to be agreed for the 1985 crop year. It was pointed out by N.S.D.O. that they had conceded a reduction from and variation from the index at the 1983 meeting due to the very low prices pertaining in the trade at that time. They however made it clear that they wished to bring the rates back into line with the index in the current year. After a good deal of discussion, your representative and the representatives of the Scottish, English and Northern Ireland N.F.U. somewhat reluctantly agreed to accept this principle. It was therefore reluctantly agreed to an increase of £6.00 per hectare on the Royalty rates for the 1985 crop, bringing the Royalty for Basic Seed to £70.00 per hectare. The Royalty rate for C.C. Seed in England and Wales is £60.00 per hectare.

There is general agreement with the National Farmers Union representatives that they index-linking of these Royalty rates does provide a reasonable basis for settlement, and we are of course always under very strong pressure from N.S.D.O. who see the industry prepared to pay much higher rates of Royalty in respect of non N.S.D.O. varieties.

The English N.F.U. representative raised the subject of paying Plant Royalties on a, per tonne basis. N.S.D.O. are prepared to take a further look at the possibility of this. I am, however, strongly of the opinion that the present system is reasonably fair, easily and cheaply collected and that it is more to the advantage of the trade than paying rates on a per tonne basis. It seems likely that if this were to come about, the rate would be in order of £10.00 per tonne. It would be very difficult in my opinion to police this method and might lead to "under the counter" illegal trading to the detriment of the legitimate trade.

The next meeting of the committee was fixed for 20th February 1985.