

NATIONAL SEED DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION LTD

Meeting with N.S.D.O. for Adjustment of Potato Royalty Rates held at the Farmers Club, Whitehall Court, London SW1 on Wednesday 20th February 1985.

Present: NSDO D Forrest (chairman)  
D.J. Gardner (Chief Executive)  
K.W. Lynch  
NFUS J. Hay  
SPTA J.H. Barr  
NFU G.W. Gilson  
NASPN. H.GRIEFF  
UFU Mr Armstrong  
Consultant W.J. Richmond.

1. The minutes of the last meeting held on 15th February 1984 were approved. There were no matters arising.

Mr Lynch submitted back-ground papers (copy enclosed). It was noted that from 1982 to 1984 the NSDO variety's had dropped by about 1000 hectares where as other varieties carrying Royalties had increased by about 700 hectare. The increase in non NSDO varieties was mainly due to Estima, Wilja and Cara. The area under Maris Piper was static or slightly decreasing.

It was pointed out to the committee by the Trade Representative that this was largely caused by the lack of good new varieties coming out from the State Breeding Centres.

Mr Lynch and Mr Forrest agreed with this assessment but stated that they were confident that a number of useful varieties were in the immediate pipe-line and expressed the hope that this would shortly arrest the decline in the area under NSDO varieties. Prof. Richmond then produced his usual papers on Cost Index. These indicated that the appropriate Royalty Rates for the 1986 crop would be #64 per hectare certified seed and #74 per hectare for basic seed. This amounts to an increase from the 1985 rates of #4/ha. on both Certified and Basic crops. After discussion these figures were accepted by the committee. Your representative suggested that Maris Piper was continuing to cause problems since the demand for seed appeared to be over the peak and growers were dismayed at the continuation of increased Royalty rates in respect of this variety. It was suggested that the Royalty rate on Maris Piper should be held static or even decreased.

Mr Forrest made a plea to leave matters alone since Government were at present looking very carefully at the costs of plant breeding. The potato Royalties did not in any way cover these costs but Government were certainly looking for the recovery from Royalties to keep in step with increased costs. This was reluctantly accepted.

Given that Plant Royalties are inevitable unless major changes were made in legislation the index linking of NSDO varieties has I believe kept the increase in there Royalties in check. This is supported if one considers the Royalty payments demanded on many of the non NSDO varieties.

Given that the index linking agreement continues there is really very little scope for discussion or manipulation at this annual meeting in London. We must however remember that it was the Industry and the NFU who originally demanded that these consultations look place.

I do feel however that it is a waste of time and money to travel to London to attend one meeting lasting perhaps less than one hour. It could be that we might ask for Prof. Richmond's papers and the NSDO proposals to be sent to us for discussion and unless there are any proposed changed in the system there may be no need to have a meeting in London. Perhaps our representatives could sound out the Scottish NFU views on this proposal.

Signed

John H. Barr.