

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of the  
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION  
in the City Mills Hotel, Perth at 2 p.m.  
on Friday, 10th MAY, 1985.

PRESENT: Messrs. G.S. Brass, J.E. Cook, J.P. Deuchar, J.G.H. Fenton, D. Maxwell, P. Miller, J.R. McArthur, K.A. McKenzie, J.O. Robertson and J.M. Swinton, with R. David Hunter (Secretary) and D. Blackmore (Assistant) in attendance.

The President, Mr. J.E. Cook, took the Chair and welcomed those present.

APOLOGIES: The Secretary intimated apologies for absence on behalf of Messrs. A.J. Allan, J.H. Barr, R. Doig, B. Fulton, J. Henderson, D.H. Lindsay, I. Melrose, J. Logan Milne, P. Moffat, T. McClung and G. Smillie.

MINUTES: The Minute of Meeting of Council in Perth on 8th March, 1985 (previously copied to each Member of Council) was taken as read. It was formally approved and signed to this effect by the Chairman.

MATTERS  
ARISING:

(a) Subscriptions and Membership - Mr. Blackmore reported only two annual Membership Subscriptions, due by Messrs. John Craig (Hamilton) and Messrs. W. & G. Meikle (Bathgate) remained unpaid, 15 weeks since first due and 6½ months through the Association's financial year. It was agreed Council Members would apply pressure and report back.

Mr. Blackmore also reported that Balhearty Potatoes Ltd. had resigned from the Association (reducing the total Membership Roll to 113 Members) and two formal proposals for Membership had been received on behalf of Fresh Farm Produce (Tealing) Ltd. (per Wm. S. Strachan, Esq., Inveraldie Farm, Tealing). After brief discussion Council accepted these proposals, this restoring the total Roll to 114 Members.

In respect of an application for a Ware Merchant's Licence by Greenock Fruit Co. (Proprietors A. & J.M. Aikman) notified by the P.M.B., Council agreed to defer consideration until this Licence is granted.

(b) Revision of Notes for Arbiters - Mr. Hunter explained the finalised revisions already sent to each Member of Council carried the sub-Committee's recommendation for formal adoption by the Association. After brief discussion, Council accepted this recommendation but agreed copies be sent for comment by the Association's Insurance Brokers and Insurers before copies are sent to each Member of the Association.

(c) PAYE/NHIC - Mr. Hunter read out a letter of 29th April received from Mr. Alex. McDougall, of Arthur Young McLelland Moores, stating he was awaiting replies from the Revenue and DHSS regarding an apparent discrepancy between instructions to Revenue Audit Review teams and an Agreement between the NFU and the Revenue/DHSS.

During its discussion Council agreed unless Audits were carried out on all merchants an unfair selectivity would result. It was proposed a constituency approach be made to Nicholas Fairbairn, Q.C., M.P., in two weeks time, to press Mr. McDougall for his further information in readiness, bearing in mind the agreed responsibility to NFUS. In these circumstances it was noted that Notes for circularisation to all Members should await these further developments.

(d) British Potato Trades Consortium - Mr. Hunter reported payment of this Association's share of the Consortium's 1984 costs and the authorised sponsorship Contribution had been made. Discussion revealed difficulty arranging Association representation at the European Union Congress and the Secretariat was instructed to try to resolve this.

(e) Annual Golf Outing/

(e) Annual Golf Outing - Mr. Miller reported that arrangements for the annual Golf Outing at Rosemount on 14th May had been completed. Bookings were less than last year, but a later date was being sought for next year to restore the position.

(f) Higher Voluntary Standards/N.S.D.O. Liaison representation - Noting that these two matters should be discussed by the Seed Trade Committee, the Secretariat was instructed to arrange the necessary meeting. It was agreed SPTA representation with N.S.D.O. should not be given up.

S.S.P.D.C.

The Chairman explained that SSPDC sent copies of a précis of each Minute of each full Development Council meeting to each appointed Member. These had not been passed on to the Secretariat for circularisation to all Association Council Members. It was agreed Mr. Bethel be asked to add the SPTA Secretary to this list for this purpose.

The Chairman further explained that the matter of Mr. Bethel's recent unfortunate Press Release had now been closed; that financial supports had been discussed (Council's views were divided on promotional payments, but agreed its views should be channelled through its appointed representatives); a proposal to allocate annually a fixed sum to a sub-Committee had also been considered.

WARE POTATO  
IMPORTS  
ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE:

Council noted the pre-circularised (PMB) Report on the meeting of the Ware Potato Imports Advisory Committee in London on 12th March, 1985. While accepting the information was mostly historical the Chairman, supported by Mr. McKenzie, again stressed the importance of all Association representatives at all external meetings submitting their Reports to the Secretariat for pre-circulation to all other Council Members. This would provide for speedier dissemination of information, better reflect Merchant (rather than PMB) interests and save time in Council meetings.

SCOTTISH  
ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE:

Council considered the pre-circularised (PMB) Report on the meeting of the Scottish Advisory Committee in Edinburgh on the morning of 14th March, 1985. Subsequent discussion disclosed that seed exports overseas now exceeded 83,500 tonnes but movements by the Board were still not known, although Scotland was believed now cleared. For the incoming Season the Board intends to issue contracts for 420,000 tonnes with a further 80,000 tonnes "up its sleeve" for the Direct Intervention Scheme. In reply to the Chair it was stated a bulk sale by the Board to Dornay was not yet finalised. It was also stated that with a governmental pistol at the Board's head, unless the minimum riddle had been increased to 45mm., there would have been no Direct Intervention Scheme.

SEED POTATO  
ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE:

Mr. McKenzie reported that the meeting of the Seed Potato Advisory Committee in Edinburgh in the afternoon of 14th March, 1985 (concerned principally with the increase of the minimum ware riddle to 45mm) had been virtually a carbon copy of the above morning meeting and required no further comment.

JOINT  
CONSULTATIVE  
COMMITTEE:

Council noted the pre-circularised (PMB) Report (and Mr. McKenzie apologised for not having circularised his own Report) on the meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee in London on 20th March, 1985. He explained that although SPTA and two Board Members had been the only voices raised against a 45mm. minimum riddle and he thought their arguments had "won the day", it was not so. It had been stated that in the event of a shortage the riddle could be reduced to 40mm. quickly by Prescriptive Resolution.

The Chairman drew attention to the seed prices per hectare quoted in the "model farm" computation (£495 in 1983 and £290 in 1984). It was agreed to raise this point, and the matter of English CIPC treatment, at the next meeting of this Committee.

EXPORT  
DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE/

EXPORT  
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COMMITTEE:

Mr. Deuchar apologised for having been unable to attend the meeting of the Export Development Committee in London on 9th April, 1985 and Council duly noted a very recently pre-circularised (PMB) Report on this meeting. In particular, while Maris Piper had not been accepted for addition to the French National List after trials, that list included Record, Pentland Dell, Maris Peer and Pentland Squire. During brief discussion of the SSPDC display at the Paris Show, the Chairman stated that the SSPDC had decided its display at future Smithfield Shows would (after prior consultation) be better balanced. In respect of initiatives to try to co-ordinate U.K. export promotional activities it was reported that a certain personalities clash had now become much aggravated.

A.O.C.B.

(1) Dates of "Maincrop Year" - Mr. Fenton pointed out that the maincrop year was now 1st July to 30th June, instead of 1st August to 31st July, and he felt this would affect the Board's average price calculations. During discussion it was felt this change had been made for Direct Intervention Scheme purposes. It was agreed this should assist early growers but it was also reported that those in Ayrshire were unhappy.

(2) 1985 Plantings Figures - In reply, it was stated these figures were not yet available, although one Member stated the Board had said plantings in Southern England exceeded those of last year.

(3) Date of next meeting - Council decided to meet again in the City Mills Hotel, Perth at 12.30 p.m. on Friday, 28th June, 1985 and the Secretariat was instructed to make the necessary arrangements.

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

