

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of the  
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION in the  
Wheel Inn Motel, SCONE at 12.30 p.m. on  
Thursday, 15th MAY, 1986

PRESENT:

Messrs. W.T. Aitken, J.H. Barr, J.P. Deuchar, D.H. Lindsay, D. Maxwell, P. Moffat, J.R. McArthur, K.A. McKenzie, J.O. Robertson, J.M. Swinton and A.S. Whitehead with R. David Hunter (Secretary) and D. Blackmore (Assistant) in attendance.

The President, Mr. K.A. McKenzie, took the Chair and welcomed those present to the meeting.

APOLOGIES:

The Secretary intimated apologies for absence on behalf of Messrs. A.J. Allan, G.S. Brass, J.E. Cook, R. Doig, J.G.H. Fenton, J. Henderson, P. Miller, J. Logan Milne and T. McClung.

MINUTES:

The Minute of Meeting of Council in Perth on 7th March, 1986 (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) Quota Sales - Council agreed that the correspondence to date (previously copied to each Member of Council) indicated that the P.M.B. is avoiding the basic premise put forward by the Association. Following full discussion it was agreed a further letter be composed in liaison with Mr. Robertson to pursue acceptance of the principle involved.

(b) P.A.Y.E./N.I.C. - Mr. Blackmore reported learning by telephone to Mr. McDougall (Messrs. Arthur Young) that D.H.S.S. is holding an internal review of its policy on casual harvest workers' N.I.C. and it was hoped a meeting with D.H.S.S. could be arranged before the end of June. Council confirmed its anxiety to expedite this matter.

(c) Amendment of Regulations - This item was deferred until later in today's meeting.

(d) Association Accounts - Mr. Hunter reported that after correction of a typographical error without alteration of totals, the audited Accounts for the year to 31st October, 1985 had now been received duly signed by Mr. Greig. Council instructed a copy of the Account be sent to each Association Member.

(e) RUCIP - Arbitrators - Mr. Blackmore reported receipt of a letter from the British Potato Trades Consortium seeking an up-to-date list of Association Members willing to act as Valuers or Arbitrators for inclusion in a fresh printing of the (now revised) RUCIP Rules. Council agreed the Association's Panel of Arbiters (all current Members of Council, plus Mr. J. George) be submitted.

(f) Entertainments Committee - Mr. Hunter reported a reduced response in bookings to date for the Association's annual Golf Outing. Several factors were agreed to be involved. Mr. Blackmore also reported that Mr. McClung had arranged for the first leg of the Annual Curling Match to be held in the Murrayfield Ice Rink on Tuesday, 16th December, 1986 enabling an application to hold the second leg in Perth Ice Rink on Friday, 6th March, 1987 to be submitted shortly.

(g) Membership and Subscriptions - Mr. Blackmore reported that despite having resigned (on 31.1.86 as reported to Council's last meeting) Clarence Murray Ltd. had now paid their Annual Subscription. Also since that meeting, resignations have been received from Anderson-McKay (Produce) Ltd. (30.4.86) McCallum & Munro Ltd. (9.5.86) and Brahan Farms Ltd. (15.5.86), reducing the total Membership Roll to 106 Members. Following discussion Mr. Maxwell undertook to contact the first of these Companies and Mr. McKenzie to contact the other two.



Subscriptions received from 96 Members (including 10 downward and 4 upward tonnage-bracket changes - a net decrease of £155) totalled £8,770, an increase of 14.3% over those same Members' Subscriptions in the preceding year. Ten Subscriptions (potentially totalling £830) were still outstanding. In reply these were listed as follows:- (1) John Bryden (Potatoes) Ltd., (2) Buchan Potato Growers Ltd., (3) Messrs. D. & J. Eadie, (4) Ian Glen (Montrose) Ltd., (5) Gordon & Innes Ltd., (6) Messrs. David A. Lawson (Thrums), (7) Messrs. MacLennans Potatoes, (8) Duncan McCallum, Esq., (9) J.A. Scott (Moray Potatoes) Ltd. and (10) S. Thompson & Sons Ltd. It was arranged these Members would be contacted individually by (1) Mr. Lindsay, (2) & (7) Mr. Deuchar, (3) Mr. Robertson (4) Mr. Aitken, (5) & (9) Mr. McKenzie, (8) Mr. Blackmore and the Secretariat to write again to (6) & (10).

Mr. Blackmore further reported notification of applications for P.M.B. Merchants Licenses by Robert Watson Fruit (Glasgow) Ltd. (Ware), Ralph Couser, Esq., Perth (Seed & Ware) and Bond & Waddell Potatoes Ltd., Forfar (Seed & Ware) and a telephoned application for Association Membership from Border Potatoes Ltd., Melrose. Council deferred decisions until Merchant Licenses have been granted, but authorised admission of the last-named into Association Membership as soon as two nominations have been received.

(h) Merchant Licensing Criteria - It was explained that the P.M.B. was reviewing its Merchant Licensing procedures with a view to minimising the impact on growers of financial failures of Merchants and had indicated Trade views would be considered. Mr. McArthur suggested appointing a small Licensing sub-Committee to review the matter. During discussion it was felt the matter would also bear on membership of S.P.T.A. (possibly giving rise to different categories of membership), its strength, its future and costs involved. It was agreed the sub-Committee's remit should include these considerations. Council duly appointed the Association's Office Bearers (Messrs. K.A. McKenzie, G.S. Brass and P. Moffat) with Messrs. J.H. Barr, R.D. Hunter, J.R. McArthur, J.O. Robertson and J.M. Swinton to serve on the sub-Committee and urged all Council Members to pass their ideas and views to these Members in the first instance.

S.S.P.D.C.:

In the absence of reporting by the Association representatives on the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council, the meeting discussed at some length the Development Council's record, its various activities and use of the levies and the possibility of some form of seed support from P.M.B. levies.

SEED  
POTATO  
CONSULTATIVE  
PANEL:

Council noted a Report on a follow-up meeting with DAFS on 10th March, 1986 and DAFS' letter of 8th April, 1986 (both previously copied to each Member of Council). It was agreed that the soil tolerance for 1986 was an acceptable compromise and there was general disappointment that an amended veinal necrosis tolerance would not now apply until the 1987 Crop. DAFS intention that the necessary amendment of Regulations to achieve this would also include provision for the introduction (over a three year period) of generation control of 'Elite' class did not meet agreement, it being Council's intention to consult further in this matter.

(JOINT)  
SEED  
TRADE  
COMMITTEE:

Mr. Blackmore explained that in deference to NFUS' request for a degree of confidentiality at the outset, reports on two meetings of the Seed Trade Committee in Edinburgh on 10th March and 3rd April, 1986 had not been copied to Council Members. Called at the instance of NFUS to consider the possible 'scenario' and possible changes at the expiry of the current financial support arrangements in 1990, the meetings had been broad-ranging explorations of possibilities hampered by want of indicative costings of options. It was hoped these would be ready in time for a further meeting on 22nd May to provide some substance for Council's consideration thereafter.

Turning its attention to a letter from Mr. Christopher Baker on somewhat similar lines (which had been received indirectly by the Secretariat/



Secretariat and copied to each Member of Council), Council was unanimous in its strong exception to the total naivety of the proposals it contained. In the general view the letter was irrelevant unless and until the English buyers are prepared to contract at proper economically-costed prices. Council agreed the Secretariat liaise with the President to write an appropriate reply.

SUTTON  
BRIDGE:

Council noted Reports of a meeting with Messrs. Arthur Young, C.A. in Perth on 10th March, 1986 in readiness for a meeting between Association representatives and P.M.B. staff at Sutton Bridge on 13th March, 1986 (both previously copied to each Member of Council). Council felt these vindicated the Association's original misgivings but agreed the matter should not be pursued further.

WARE POTATO  
IMPORTS  
ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE:

Mr. Lindsay referred to the P.M.B.'s Report on the meeting of the Ware Potato Imports Advisory Committee (previously copied to each Member of Council) which he had attended in London on 18th March, 1986. He drew particular attention to Items 3-5 and 3-6 on page 3 of the Report. In the first of these average Dutch Wholesale prices were stated to be £16 per tonne (35 x 55mm) and £41-£42 per tonne over 55mm (compared with £69-£71 per tonne delivered in U.K.) and having taken 80,000 tonnes of surplus seed off the market, STOPA (funded by the Dutch Seed industry) was reportedly near bankrupt. In the second Item, West German forward sales of starch potatoes had severely affected the Dutch Market. Mr. McArthur enlarged on growing potatoes for starch production and its effect on German acreage.

SCOTTISH  
ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE

Council took note of the P.M.B.'s Report on the meeting of the Scottish Advisory Committee in Edinburgh on 20th March, 1986 (previously copied to each Member of Council). In brief discussion reference was made to the difference between English and Scottish ware prices and it was reported that a lot of 'Record' had gone to Ireland at £54 per tonne.

SEED POTATO  
ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE:

In the absence of Mr. Brass and without having received a Report from the P.M.B. for pre-circulation, Council was not made aware of the proceedings at the meeting of the Seed Potato Advisory Committee held in London on 25th March, 1986.

A.O.C.B.:

(a) Conditions of Purchase - Mr. Blackmore reported receipt of a letter from the North of Ireland Potato Marketing Association Ltd. explaining their decision to draw up Conditions of Purchase for use by their Members. The letter asks for sight of S.P.T.A. Conditions of Purchase with S.P.T.A. experience guidance and comment. In brief discussion Council agreed that to safeguard this Association's copyright requires a contribution to be made and it was decided to ask £500 for the use of S.P.T.A. Conditions of Purchase without alteration.

(b) Health and Safety at Work - Mr. Blackmore also reported an enquiry from a Member (Robt. Morris & Son Ltd.) who had been visited by the Factories Inspectorate, asking if the Association should issue guidance notes to Members. Council agreed such visits are normal routine and do not warrant the issue of guidance notes.

(c) Date of next meeting - Council agreed to hold its next meeting in the Fountain Plaza (formerly the Wheel Inn Motel), Scone at 12.30 p.m. on Thursday 26th June, 1986 and the Secretariat was instructed to make the necessary arrangements.

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

*W. J. [Signature]*