

REPORT on a MEETING between the JOINT
(NASPM/SPTA) LIAISON COMMITTEE and the
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES
FOR SCOTLAND in Chesser House, EDINBURGH
at 2.30p.m. on Wednesday, 15th OCTOBER,
1986

- PRESENT:
- D.A.F.S. - Messrs. D. Hall (Head of Potato Production, East Craiges),
Dr. P. Howell (Head of Plant Pathology, East Craigs),
I. McEwan and A. Robb (Head of Potato Inspectorate), with
Mrs. M. Barnes in attendance.
- N.A.S.P.M. - H.N. Aves, C.J. Baker, E.F. Sherriff and P.E. Smith
(President)
- S.P.T.A. - G.S. Brass, J.R. McArthur (vice J. Cook), K.A. McKenzie
(President) and T. McClung with R. David Hunter (Secretary)
and D. Blackmore (Assistant) in attendance.

Mr. I. McEwan chaired the meeting and regretted Mr. G.G. Lyall was
unable to be present.

SEED
POTATOES
REGULATIONS:

Mr. Baker reported on the Committee's discussion this morning of the
proposed introduction of a tolerance for Veinal Necrosis in virus
diseases in Elite crops in 1987 Season. He enquired what part of the
crop downgraded to "AA" Class in 1986 for VN would have been classified
"Elite" if the proposed tolerance had been available. He explained
that emotions were running high in the south, including the NFU
(representing seed grower interests), four large co-operatives (which he
listed) and the processors, engendering strong feelings among English
buyers. He repeated the points he had made opposing this change during
this morning's meeting.

Mr. McEwan explained that originally DAFS had considered the health
of the class as a whole and in their view the proposed change will not
increase the tolerance for VN and they believe the reverse may be true.
Recounting the history he recalled that the proposals were announced in
DAFS letter (with MAFF support) of 8th December, 1985. In late February,
1986 the Seed Potato Consultative Panel in Scotland agreed the VN
proposal but opposed the proposal for generation control. Feedback from
MAFF recorded NASPM but not NFU opposition. The legislative steps
proceeded slowly thereafter and only two letters had been received from
farmers in England. He was disconcerted at this late stage to become
aware of confused and conflicting feedback. Mr. Smith explained that
MAFF had been unable to meet NASPM and NFU following their internal
consultative processes until only a week ago.

In reply to Mr. Baker's point regarding continuation of
susceptibility to VN into maturity of plants, Dr. Howell stated this
principally referred to Record and King Edward varieties and scientific
views continued to differ. There is no specific evidence regarding
Record and he referred to a conflicting report from Holland, where
virus Yvn and Yo are not differentiated. He illustrated his point by
referring to Leaf Roll experience in 1977.

Mr. Hall explained that the bulk of Record is taken by the crispers
and in a meeting with them DAFS had been informed they were happy with
the proposals. He compared U.K. and Dutch tolerances and in his view,
the U.K. would be making a rod for its own back NOT to include a
tolerance for VN. He reminded the meeting that the 0.1% tolerance for
severe diseases will remain unchanged and is NOT being increased, but will
simply include three instead of two forms of the same virus. He undertook
to provide the figures NASPM had requested and he also explained that
the meeting referred to in Brussels next week is specifically in respect
of High Grade Seed Areas and is to consider the Commission's proposals to
formulate recommendations for the protection of Member States' own
internal markets.

In summing up Mr. McEwan stated NFU objections via MAFF would be noted and considered, but he warned that DAFS would find it difficult to withdraw from a position it believed is reasonable and advantageous without very persuasive counter arguments. Mr. Baker put forward two further points (powdery scab in VTSC and the roguing tolerance in VTSC) and reported NASPM's overall satisfaction with the operation of the 1984 Regulations - NASPM's objections refer to the proposed tolerance changes only, not to the Regulations themselves.

ILLEGAL
SEED:

Mr. Baker repeated his introduction to this Item at this morning's meeting, specifically in respect of the Scottish image and loss of royalty income. Mr. McEwan supported these views but, from DAFS point of view, he explained that countermeasures present enormous difficulties. He wondered if this indicates that the rights holders should be made aware of the un-met demand arising from too restrictive rights. DAFS believe this is the case and will move whenever it is possible to do so. Mr. Sherriff explained that NASPM asked that its concern be noted.

A.O.C.B.:

Mr. McKenzie sought clarification regarding proposed charges for export inspections, etc. Mr. McEwan explained that the Scottish Minister had reserved his position until the legislation was enacted in July, 1986. DAFS will be issuing a Paper before the end of October covering roughly the same areas as MAFF and in reply to Mr. McArthur, he stated the charges would probably be introduced in August, 1987.

(b) Crop Register - In a further reply Mr. McEwan stated the 1986 Crop Register is with HMSO for printing dated October and will probably be issued in early November.

The meeting was thereupon concluded and, seconded by Mr. Sherriff, Mr. McKenzie proposed a vote of thanks to the Chair.