

REPORT OF COUNCIL
of the
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION
to the
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS
for the year to
31st OCTOBER, 1987

With fully detailed Reports on each meeting of Council being circularised to all Association Members, Council's Annual Report of its activities during the year is, in essence, a summarisation of those circulated Reports. Compared with earlier years, therefore, a degree of brevity has become appropriate.

To deal first with the Membership Roll. The year under review commenced with 102 Members. Five new Members were enrolled, three Members resigned and two were suspended for non-payment of their Annual Membership Subscriptions. At the close of the year, therefore, the total Roll remained unchanged at 102 Members.

As you will know, a major part of Association business during the year concerned its Office Bearers being involved in extremely demanding negotiations on behalf of your Association in the joint formulation of proposals for Price Support for the Seed potato producer. While this has resulted in a large measure of support in all sectors, some reservations by the English N.F.U. and now the Government remain to be overcome. Further efforts for this purpose, of an even more demanding and time consuming nature, are now being undertaken.

Representations to the Potato Marketing Board continued on the subject of the purchase of Basic Area by non-landowning Merchant Growers but no resolution/

resolution of this problem has been achieved. In this same context, the granting of extra Quota for growing crops for production of French Fries has given rise to concern and this matter will continue to receive your Council's close attention. The P.M.B. was approached by your Association regarding the criteria being applied in the granting by the Board of Merchant Licences. However, your Association's views were not incorporated into the revisions adopted. Council successfully opposed Board proposals for the introduction of a three-tier grading system for Ware potatoes and for changes in arrangements for sales of Peeler Grade potatoes.

Council took a very serious view of the discovery of Rhizomania at a location in England. Representations were made, in support of others, to the Ministry of Agriculture in England and to the Department of Agriculture in Scotland to prevent any possible spread of this disease into Scotland.

The problem of "small ware" planting has also received considerable attention from your Association in several forums during the year. While a solution has not been achieved, efforts to this end are continuing and with a meeting involving the holders of Breeders' Rights now in prospect, some progress may be possible.

Following its survey of Ware crops during 1987, DAFS has very recently issued proposals to prohibit the planting of unclassified seed in the High Grade Seed Area. It is a matter of record that your Association has repeatedly advocated such a prohibition during the past almost thirty years but DAFS has consistently rejected it.

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As a service to Members, Guidelines on Health and Safety at Work legislation were prepared and circulated to all Members during the year and (although not held until after the year had closed) a Special evening Meeting of Members was arranged to include dissemination of information on the new Chemical Spraying Legislation and Practice.

Members' lack of response to Council's call, in last year's Report, for "feed back" from them has been disappointing. Once again your Council urges all members to increase their involvement in their own Association's affairs during the current year.