

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL
of the SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE
ASSOCIATION in the Wheel Inn
Motor Hotel, SCONE at 11 a.m.
on Friday, 15th JANUARY,
1988.

PRESENT:

Messrs. W.P. Balfour, J.H. Barr, A.P. Bayne, G.S. Brass, D.H. Lindsay, D. Maxwell, I. Melrose, J.R. McArthur, T. McClung, 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. G.S. Brass, took the Chair and welcomed those present to the meeting.

APOLOGIES:

Mr. Hunter intimated apologies for absence on behalf of Messrs. J.E. Cook, J.P. Deuchar, J.G.H. Fenton, P. Miller, J.L. Milne and P. Moffat.

MINUTE:

The Minute of Meeting of Council in Scone on 20th November, 1987 (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) Membership - The Secretary reported receipt of the necessary two formal Nominations each for Association Membership in respect of both Angus Produce Ltd., Montrose and Messrs. A.P.T. Potato Co., Perth. Following due consideration, Council accepted both Nominees into Membership with effect from 1st November, 1987 thereby increasing the total Membership Roll to 106 Members.

Mr. Hunter also reported receipt of notification of an application for a PMB Ware Merchant Licence by McFarlane Fruiterers, Grantown-on-Spey. This he had copied to each Office Bearer and in the absence of contra-instruction, the PMB had been advised that provided the Board's criteria were met, the Association would not oppose this application. Council ratified this position, Mr. Hunter adding that the application had since been deferred on 11th January, 1988.

In respect of licence applications unresolved at Council's last meeting, Mr. Hunter reported having learned by telephone that Colin Gray, Perth and Messrs. A. Gallacher & Sons, Girvan have now been granted Merchant Licences, the application by Messrs. Duthie & Fleming, Coupar Angus not being continued at present. Council instructed the first two named be invited to consider obtaining nomination for Association Membership.

Reporting on a further telephone call, Mr. Blackmore explained the PMB Licensing Section had confirmed its verbal use of the term "Special Authority". This referred to a category introduced about ten years ago, in effect a modified Direct Sales Authority granted for one year only, which provides for the Registered Producer to complete all paperwork (stock census returns, etc.) to leave the applicant free to develop his business. Council was not satisfied that such a "modified Direct Sales Authority" is appropriate for an applicant intending to "buy-in" from a number of sources and instructed the Secretariat to obtain complete clarification of this matter.

(b)/

(b) Entertainments (i) Curling - Mr. Hunter reported the results (provided by Mr. McClung) of the first leg of the annual Curling Match held in Edinburgh on 15th December, 1987 in which the North and South sides tied, with 36 shots each. Council confirmed details be included in the next News Letter.

(ii) Dinner-Dance - Mr. Hunter also reported that final numbers showed 98 people were booked to attend the Association's annual Dinner Dance Function later this evening.

S.S.P.D.C.:

It was reported that the first meeting of the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council since 20th November, 1987 was taking place today. It was regretted this had coincided with SPTA's own Annual General Meeting but accepted that it was the only date on which both the retiring and appointed Chairman of SSPDC (Messrs. John Fotheringham and James Stobo, O.B.E. respectively) could be present. It was also reported that arrangements for the Association to receive a copy of the Minutes of future SSPDC meetings has now been made.

SCOTTISH
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE:

Mr. McArthur tabled his Report on a meeting of the Scottish Advisory Committee which he had attended in London on 9th December, 1987. In enlarging comment during Council's discussion, he stated that about 1,000 ha. of the unlifted area at that time was regarded as written off and that as an extension of the 1,490 ha. of additional basic area already allocated under the French Fries scheme, a further 140 ha. is to be made available (mainly in Cornwall) for crisping purposes.

SPECIAL
MEETING:

Mr. Hunter reported briefly on the Special Meeting of Members held in Scone on 16th December, 1987. The 19 Members present had agreed the meeting had served a very useful purpose, particularly in respect of new chemical legislation and practice. Council agreed that when up-dated, a copy of the relative explanatory pamphlet be sent to each Association Member.

WARE
EXPORTS
TO N.I. &
EIRE:

Council considered a letter and enclosure received from DAFS stressing the need for proper compliance with the requirement to treat all exports of ware potatoes to Northern Ireland and to Eire with MSS CIPC 5G. It was agreed a copy of this letter and enclosure should be sent to each Association Member with a general warning to avoid any possible risk of contamination of stocks of seed potatoes, or of premises where such stocks may be housed at any time in the future.

PLANTING OF
UNCLASSIFIED
SEED:

Referring to a recent pre-copied letter from DAFS proposing the prohibition of the planting of unclassified seed within the High Grade Seed Area, the Chairman pointed out that SPTA had been advocating this for almost thirty years in the face of DAFS' persistent opposition to date. Council unanimously supported the proposal in principle. Ensuing discussion, however, identified problems arising from non-availability of ware of certain protected varieties from Scottish-grown sources. In summary, Council agreed the Association should support the proposal, provided DAFS can ensure that it does not create an unfair competition situation for Scottish Ware growers. It was further agreed this proviso be put to the holders of Breeders Rights for sympathetic consideration at a forthcoming meeting being convened by them.

In/

REVISION
OF SEED
STANDARDS:

In consideration of DAFS' proposed revision of seed standards, Mr. McKenzie explained that improved standards formed part of the Seed Support Scheme proposals but would depend on the Scheme being introduced for Season 1988/89 operation. Council's discussions agreed that Powdery Scab is now a pressing issue and should be resolved but, if the Scheme is not so introduced, negotiation should revert to DAFS' May 1987 proposals. In summary, the Chairman stated that as a result of the next Seed Potato Consultative Panel meeting, some imposed revision will probably be inevitable but, Council agreed, all changes should be resisted.

"Scheme" up-date - Mr. Hunter first read out a press report on the views of the NFUS, published today. The Chairman explained that "Government stumbling block" referred to therein consisted of a ministerial proposal to the Scottish Office that the Seed Support Scheme be deferred until the review of the PMB in 1990 has been completed. Council recognised that furtherance of the Scheme must now be pursued at the highest political levels and supported the general tenor of a draft Association Press Release, prepared by Mr. McKenzie, for immediate issue to the media.

A.O.C.B.: (a) P.C.N. Monitoring in 1988 - Mr. Hunter read a letter from DAFS explaining the terms of an exercise planned to assess the effectiveness of pre-crop soil sampling, which Council noted.

(b) Fresh Produce Fair - Mr. Hunter also reported receipt of a request for inclusion of a complimentary Visitor Invitation (to an event in Birmingham in May, 1988) along with an Association News Letter. Council approved this request.

(c) Date of next meeting - Council agreed to meet again in the Wheel Inn Motor Hotel, Scone at 11 a.m. on Friday, 4th March, 1988 (prior to the second leg of the annual Curling Match) and the Secretariat was instructed to make the usual arrangements.

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

JSD/asa