

REPORT on a MEETING between the
JOINT (NASPM/SPTA) LIAISON
COMMITTEE and the DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES FOR
SCOTLAND held in Chessor House,
EDINBURGH at 2.30 p.m. on
Wednesday, 26th OCTOBER, 1988.

PRESENT: D.A.F.S. - Messrs. I.V. McEwan, T.D. Hall (East Craigs) and
A. Robb (Inspectorate), with Mrs. M. Barnes in
attendance.

N.A.S.P.M. - Messrs. J. Stephenson, C. Baker and P. Smith.

S.P.T.A. - Messrs. G.S. Brass, J.E. Cook, D.H. Lindsay and T.
McClung with D. Blackmore in attendance.

Mr. I.V. McEwan chaired the meeting and extended a welcome
to those present.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were tendered on behalf of Messrs.
H.N. Aves and G. Shattock (N.A.S.P.M.) and Messrs. J.H. Barr,
J.R. McArthur and R. David Hunter (S.P.T.A.).

SCOTTISH
INSPECTORS'
VISIT: Opening discussion of the Inspectorate's 1988 visit to
England disclosed S.P.T.A. criticism that the Report had
omitted details of type of containers, type of storage and
dates of delivery for each sample. Other points arising from
the joint (NASPM/SPTA) consideration of the Report, including
S.P.T.A. representation on future visits, were also reported.

In reply Mr. Robb explained he had expected to be shown
problems and that to minimise effects of depleting staff for
inspections in Scotland, he preferred visits to be in late
February/early March. Mr. Smith felt the visit had been well-
timed and delivery times of samples seen had ranged between
five months and one week before the visit. Mr. Robb also
pointed out that the visit had strengthened links with official
English colleagues, Mr. Brass welcoming all means of improving
uniformity of interpretation of Regulations and standards.

Mr. Robb also stated that between 40%-50% of the Scottish
samples seen had been inspected before leaving Scotland and he
had been surprised to find more gangrene and dry rot than
expected. Experience had shown an average 30-day gap between
bagging-up and Plant Health call-out inspections.

In conclusion, Mr. Baker complimented the Inspectorate's
Report and it was agreed the visit should be repeated in 1989,
with N.A.S.P.M. and S.P.T.A. liaising beforehand on timing and
D.A.F.S. writing both Associations further in late December.

PLANTING
UNCLASS-
IFIED SEED: The Chairman explained there were no changes to report in
respect of E.C. negotiations on retention of the High Grade
Seed Area in the U.K. and the possibility of a prohibition on
the planting of uncertified seed within it to achieve this.
The next meeting of the relevant E.C. Committee, due to take
place in Brussels in November, is expected to progress a
community grade standard for seed from outside to inside the
H.G.S.A., to be forwarded in turn to two other Committees
considering nine points of principle remaining outstanding, a
Paper challenging some of which is being prepared.

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In further reply the Chairman also gave a prolonged and detailed explanation of the whole background of the complexity of these E.C. negotiations, including defining "new" potatoes and the possible difficulties of excluding first and second early varieties from any prohibition.

TOLERANCE
CHANGES:

Dealing first with Early Burning Down, the Chairman reported that Mr. Lyall's letter to the Scottish Working Party in July, 1988 is being expanded into a full paper which will be circulated to the industry on completion.

Mr. Brass outlined the joint NASPM/SPTA morning meeting discussion of changed tolerances. Mr. McEwan explained changes had been dealt with in two stages - some now, the monitoring experience of which will be used to tackle other points next year or the year after. Mr. Brass voiced concern that uniformity of interpretation and application of standards will be impeded by too-frequent changes in those standards. He remained unhappy with interpretation of the powdery scab standard in England and Mr. Smith spoke on advice given to buyers. In the ensuing discussions Mr. Lindsay agreed with Mr. Cook that irrigation in particular exacerbated powdery scab and Blackleg problems and he pointed out that the level of in-soil inoculum of these diseases in English ware-growing areas is unknown.

"SMALL
WARE":

Mr. Brass reported the morning discussion of the "small ware" problem. In his view this stemmed principally from the excessively restrictive practices of the Breeders Rights holders and he repeated his concern on the effect of those practices on Scottish potato growers.

A.O.C.B.:

(a) Crop Register - Mr. Cook congratulated the Department on the earlier date of publication of the Register of Basic Seed Potato Crops achieved in 1988.

(b) Crop Numbering - In reply to Mr. Baker, Mrs. Barnes explained that in the 10-digit numbering system now in operation, the first pair of digits identified the County where the seed was grown, the next two pairs were the personal identification of the grower, the fourth pair identified the actual farm where grown and the final pair defined which crop on that farm. This system ensures that every single crop has an individual crop number.

(c) TCNB Trials - Mr. Smith thanked the Department for its co-operation in the recent trials.

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