

MINUTES of a MEETING of the COUNCIL of
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION
in Glenhurst Hotel, SCONE at 2 p.m. on
Thursday, 11th JANUARY, 1990.

PRESENT: Messrs. G.S. Brass, J.E. Cook, R. Doig, J.G.H. Fenton, A.C. Galbraith, D.H. Lindsay, J.M. Marshall, D. Maxwell, P. Miller, J.L. Milne, J.R. McArthur, J.O. Robertson, D.Y. Stewart, Jnr., J.M. Swinton and A.S. Whitehead, with R.D. Hunter (Secretary) and D. Blackmore (Assistant) in attendance.

The President, Mr. J.R. McArthur, took the Chair.

APOLOGIES: The Secretary intimated apologies for absence received from Messrs. A.W. Bayne, J.P. Deuchar, J.B. Hollywood, K.A. McKenzie and I. Melrose.

MINUTES: The Minutes of the Meeting of Council in Scone on 23rd November, 1989 (previously copied to each Member of Council) were taken as read. They were formally approved and signed to this effect by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING: (a) Arbitration Expenses - The Secretary reported that following settlement of the Arbiters' Fees from Association Funds as instructed, and in response to Court Action by the Arbiters, reimbursement of these and the Clerk's Expenses in full was received from Messrs. Glenisla Potatoes on 11th December, 1989. Nevertheless the Annual General Meeting of Members of the Association earlier today had voted unanimously to expel that Firm from Membership of the Association.

(b) Joint Liaison Committee - The Chairman reported briefly on an informal meeting he had had with Mr. John Stephenson (President of N.A.S.P.M.) in London during Smithfield Show week. It had been agreed that (if necessary) a formal meeting could be arranged during the Royal Highland Show week. Council confirmed that maintenance of this contact has merit.

(c) Proposed Voluntary Higher Quality Scheme - It was agreed this matter be taken later in today's Agenda.

(d) Ware Potato Imports Advisory Committee - Mr. Lindsay regretted that his absence had deprived Council's previous meeting of his Report on the meeting of this Committee in London on 7th November, 1989. He undertook to provide this and/or relevant Papers on request.

B.P.T.C.: Council noted pre-copied correspondence between the British Potato Trades Consortium and N.A.S.P.M. regarding the former's tendered resignation from the European Union of the Wholesale Potato Trade and the Chairman read out the Union's letter in response to that resignation. The Consortium now sought its constituent Organisation's views on its own future and following discussion of several aspects of the matter, Council agreed the Consortium should now become dormant.

The/

S.S.P.D.C.:

The Chairman reported that there will be no Minutes of the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council's (Christmas Luncheon) meeting in Scone on 21st December, 1989. In reply to Mr. Cook he explained that as far as the proposed V.H.Q.S. Scheme is concerned there had been consensus only on the need for the statutory 100% tuber inspections to be achieved. Mr. Hunter next reported an approach for the Association to take advertising in the S.S.P.D.C.'s proposed new publication, but Council agreed this should remain an individual decision of any interested Association Members.

PROPOSED
V.H.Q.S.:

Council considered tabled copies of a letter received from D.A.F.S. yesterday commenting on the Open Meeting of Association Members with D.A.F.S.' representatives in Scone on 1st December, 1989 to discuss the proposed Voluntary Higher Quality Seed Scheme. In the ensuing prolonged discussion most of the differing viewpoints resurfaced but a measure of agreement was reached that the Association must be seen to be actually doing something. D.A.F.S.' modified views were felt to encourage attempted further discussion with them, to achieve a scheme with which Scottish producers can cope and which English buyers will find acceptable but not necessarily with excessive enthusiasm.

It was suggested that perhaps burning down and lifting requirements could be determined annually at D.A.F.S./Industry discretion, according to variable climatic and geographic criteria, within a scheme with as wide a calendar period as possible rather than between narrow, specifically fixed dates. It was also recognised that tuber standards merit further clarificatory discussion as would any additional costs of the proposed Scheme. The latter point being prompted by indications provided by D.A.F.S.' charges for inspections services for S.E. Growers Ltd., the Chairman explained that while the achievement of 100% tuber inspections under the Statutory Scheme would undoubtedly incur increased costs and raise the cost of labels, he had been assured by D.A.F.S. that further additional charges will not be made on producers taking part in the proposed Voluntary Scheme.

Support emerged for a further early meeting with D.A.F.S. to discuss these aspects, which the Chairman undertook to arrange. To represent as wide a spectrum of Council's views as possible it was agreed Messrs. R. Doig, J.E. Cook, D.H. Lindsay and J.M. Marshall should accompany the Chairman at that meeting. The Secretariat was instructed to acknowledge D.A.F.S.' letter by welcoming the now proposed earlier achievement of 100% tuber inspections under the statutory scheme, by explaining the approach for an early meeting and as wide as possible consultation within the Association Membership in preparation for a full written Association response within the 9th February deadline set within D.A.F.S.' letter. The Secretariat was further instructed to send a copy of D.A.F.S.' letter to every Association Member inviting immediate responses in readiness for the proposed early meeting with D.A.F.S.

The/

SCOTTISH
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE:

The Chairman regretted that neither he nor Mr. Doig had prepared a Report on the meeting of the Scottish Advisory Committee which they had both attended in London on 6th December, 1989. The Secretariat undertook to copy the P.M.B.'s own Report on this meeting to each Member of Council as soon as it comes to hand.

A.O.C.B.:

(a) Varieties Restrictions - ware growing - Mr. Galbraith reported that following his appointment to special responsibility for ware matters, he had received a letter from a Member (which he read out to Council) highlighting the difficulties arising from rights-holders' restrictions of seed supplies and seeking the Association's policy and assistance.

In reply the Chairman stated his clear understanding of the problem and his own sympathy for those Members in this position. He explained the matter will undoubtedly be discussed during a meeting of rights-holders already arranged for next week which he will be attending. He undertook to report back direct to Mr. Galbraith immediately thereafter. Meantime, it was agreed, the Secretariat would write a reply to the Member and ensure that this matter is included in the Agenda for the next meeting of Council.

(b) Licensed use of Conditions of Sale - Mr. Doig described an occurrence he had experienced. Council agreed this did not appear to constitute a breach of the Association's copyright but, rather, an indication of a possible need to license use of the Conditions. Council agreed this matter also be included in the Agenda for the next meeting of Council.

(c) Next Meeting of Council - It was agreed Council will meet again in the Glenhurst Hotel, Scone at 7 p.m. on Monday, 12th March, 1990 and the Secretariat was instructed to make the necessary arrangements.

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

