

MINUTES of a MEETING of COUNCIL of THE
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION in
the Wheel Inn Motor Hotel, SCONE at
2.30 p.m. on Thursday, 17th JANUARY,
1991.

PRESENT:

Messrs. A.W. Bayne, J.E. Cook, J.P. Deuchar, R. Doig, J.G.H. Fenton, J.B. Hollywood, D.H. Lindsay, J.M. Marshall, D. Maxwell, J.L. Milne, J.R. McArthur, K.A. McKenzie, W. Nicoll, J.O. Robertson, D. Smith, 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. He extended a warm welcome to Mr. Bill Nicoll, attending his first meeting since being co-opted to Council and he also welcomed all others present to the meeting.

APOLOGIES:

The Secretary intimated apologies for absence received from Messrs. G.S. Brass, A.C. Galbraith and I. Melrose.

MINUTES:

The Minutes of the Meeting of Council in Scone on 22nd November, 1990 (previously copied to each Member of Council) were taken as read. They were duly approved and signed to this effect by the Chairman.

MATTERS
ARISING:

(a) "Varieties" sub-Committee - Mr. Hunter reported that the further meeting of the sub-Committee had still not taken place but this matter will be given early attention.

(b) Higher Voluntary Standards Scheme - The Chairman explained that this matter would be reported later in today's meeting.

(c) Ingliston Event - The Secretary reported that the Exhibitors Committee had declined to undertake arrangements for the Association's Stand at the Ingliston Event. During Council's discussion various proposals were confirmed and Members provided their attendance intentions to facilitate support for Mr. Blackmore's full-time manning of the Stand during both days of the event. In these circumstances it was agreed to dispense with appointment of a separate organising sub-Committee.

The Secretary also reported a telephone call from NASPM regarding a possible further meeting of the Joint Liaison Committee during the Ingliston Event. Council agreed this suggestion was a convenient opportunity to maintain momentum and favoured a later afternoon or evening meeting on Wednesday, 6th February away from Ingliston. The Secretariat undertook to convey these views to NASPM.

(d) Date of Council Meetings - The Secretariat tabled a list of proposed dates to co-ordinate with a calendar of other meetings dates. Following discussion of each date in turn, Council agreed to hold its 1991 meetings as follows:-

11 a.m. on Friday, 8th March, 2 p.m. on Thursday, 25th April, 2 p.m. on Thursday, 4th July, 2 p.m. on Wednesday, 4th September, 2 p.m. on Wednesday, 9th October and 2 p.m. on Monday, 11th November.

It was also decided that the next Annual General Meeting of Members will take place at 2 p.m. on Thursday, 9th January, 1992.

(e)/

(e) Entertainments - The Secretary reported that the first leg of the Association's Annual Curling Match, played in Edinburgh on 11th December, resulted in a win for the North by 44 shots to 20 shots by the South. He also reported that the Association's Annual Dinner and Dance in Perth on 14th December had been attended by 120 people (including 2 Official Guests), producing a surplus of almost £75.00 and the Prize Draw had resulted in a Donation of £260 to the Cancer Research Campaign (compared with £220 the previous year). Council Members agreed this Event had been successful in all respects.

(f) Council/Membership Liaison - This matter was deferred for further consideration at Council's next meeting.

S.S.P.D.C.:

The pre-circulated copies of the Minutes of the meeting of the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council in Scone on 20th December, 1990 were taken as read. The Chairman drew attention to the disquiet regarding the multiple roles being undertaken by the Chief Executive and the difficulties this poses in fulfilling all of them equally effectively. In general discussion the effects of publicity of seed stocks was both criticised and countered. The Secretary also read out the list of ten Association Nominees for the six Association representatives to be Ministerially appointed to the new SSPD Council. It was reported that letters had been sent to those appointees, indicating that an official announcement of the composition of the new SSPD Council is imminent. After further discussion it was agreed the newly appointed SSPD Council had a right to require disclosure to its members, in confidence, of full details of the Contracts of Service (including "severance" arrangements) of all staff employed by the SSPD Council. It was further agreed the newly appointed SPTA representatives should seek such disclosure in early course.

EUROPEAN
MATTERS:

Following his report to Council's last meeting, Mr. Lindsay explained he had since ascertained that following a high-powered meeting in Brussels, the Potato Regime proposals had now gone back to the European Commission. Council agreed it was clear that the debate will continue and a careful watch on developments must be maintained.

SEED POTATO
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE:

Mr. Blackmore explained that a copy of the PMB's Report on the Seed Potato Advisory Committee meeting in London on 5th December, 1990, which had been promised for copies to be tabled today, had not been received. He undertook to copy this to Council Members as soon as possible. Meantime, Messrs. McArthur and Doig who had attended that meeting reported briefly on the proceedings, which had been predominantly of an historical nature. Mr. Edmonds of the Board's Edinburgh Office had indicated his intention to issue his seed movement statistics on a weekly basis in the near future. Council re-affirmed the Association's agreed policy that Association representatives should submit Reports on all meetings they attended.

SCOTTISH
WORKING
PARTY:

Messrs. McArthur and Doig also reported on a meeting of the Scottish Working Party with the Department which they had attended in Edinburgh on 10th December, 1990 in respect of arrangements for 100% tuber inspections. From more recent experience the Inspectorate were very conscious of practical problems revealed during the current "dummy run" period. Among these, it is clear that inspectors have discretion to require one-tonne boxes/

boxes to be tipped out and Council Members spoke to difficulties in meeting sequential label numbering of consignments. The Chairman also stated that a further "review" meeting with DAFS is to be held in April and he asked all Association Members to report their problems and difficulties in readiness for that meeting. In further reply the Chairman felt that as had been anticipated, implementation of 100% tuber inspections will lead to the Higher Voluntary Standards Scheme "dying a death".

NEW J.C.C.: Reminding Members of his Report to Council's last meeting on the last meeting of the new Joint Consultative Committee, the Chairman sought Council's views in readiness for the next meeting of that Committee in London on 26th February, 1991. Discussion of grading standards agreed the market place should decide these and that the size must accord with the buyers' demand and be correctly marked on the bag. PMB standards should only apply to stocks purchased by the Board. In respect of Earlies, Mr. Swinton urged fresh sales down to 25mm. should be allowed (as is already permitted for canning). Council agreed to support an upper limit of 85mm. for all stocks.

A.O.C.B.: (a) Membership - The Secretary reported receipt of two written nominations of Girvan Early Growers Ltd. for Association Membership. After due consideration Council accepted these Nominations and instructed the enrolment of this Member as from 1st November for subscription purposes. The Secretary explained this increased the total Roll to 95 Members.

(b) Press Fund - The Secretariat tabled a draft Summary Statement of Account of the Press Fund, disclosing a balance of £2,245.48 in hand. During discussion it was agreed to spend up to £500 on advertising to highlight the advantage of Scotch seed over home saved seed. It was agreed the Office Bearers compose a suitable announcement to be placed in "Farmers' Weekly", "Big Farm Weekly" and the new "Potato" Magazine as soon as possible. It was also agreed to consider reviving the former Press function and to enquire regarding T.V. and Press "interviews".

(c) "Agri-Europe" - In reply to Mr. Swinton, the Secretariat undertook to investigate discounted rates for Multi-Member subscriptions to the Agri-Europe service.

(d) Date of next meeting - Council confirmed its agreement to hold its next meeting in Perth Ice Rink at 11 a.m. on Friday, 8th March, 1991 and the Secretariat was instructed to make the necessary arrangements.

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

