

MINUTES of a MEETING of COUNCIL of the  
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION in  
the Ice Rink, PERTH, at 2 p.m. on  
Thursday, 18th JUNE, 1992.

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PRESENT:

Messrs. G.S. Brass, R. Doig, J.G.H. Fenton, A.C. Galbraith, J.M. Marshall, I. Melrose, J.R. McArthur, K.A. McKenzie, 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. R. Doig, took the Chair and welcomed those present to the meeting.

APOLOGIES:

The Secretary intimated apologies for absence received from Messrs. J.E. Cook, J.P. Deuchar, J.B. Hollywood, D.H. Lindsay, D. Maxwell, A.B. Pullar and D. Smith.

MINUTES:

The Minutes of the meeting of Council in Perth on 30th April, 1992 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) Press Matters - The Chairman reported having contacted the Convenor of the Development Council's Press Committee and further discussion will take place.

(b) Potato Regime - No hard information was reported but Mr. Galbraith referred to "inspired" leakage of proposals of which other Council members were aware. Council agreed with the Chairman's view that these proposals could not be usefully discussed today but accepted Mr. Galbraith's view that a lightweight regime is inevitable. The matter was again left on the table to await developments.

(c) Minimum Residue Levels - The Secretary reported that investigation of this matter was still incomplete.

(d) Membership and Subscriptions - The Secretary read a letter from Scottish Farm Produce (Potatoes) Ltd. seeking to rejoin the Association. Following discussion, it was agreed to ask the Company to confirm that it operates a permanent trading office in Scotland and if so, to submit the requisite written proposals by two existing members of the Association to the Secretary for Council's consideration thereafter.

Mr. Hunter reported notification from the PMB of an application for a Ware Merchants Licence by Wm.J.J. Coull, Inverurie. Council deferred this matter until its next meeting. Mr. Hunter also reported the latest Scottish amendments to the Licensed Merchants List.

Mr. Blackmore reported that annual Membership Subscriptions totalling £11,537.00 had been received to date. This was £44.00 less than budget, due to one already reported resignation and eleven inter-tonnage brackets changes. He added that three Members' subscriptions are still unpaid. Council Members reported that the first of these Members (T. Anderson & Co. Ltd., Methil)/

Methil) had ceased trading and should be deleted from the Membership Roll, reducing it to 91 Members. Council also decided to retain both other unpaid Members in the mailing list meantime pending approaches by their respective liaison Members of Council.

(e) Classification Scheme Changes - Mr. Hunter confirmed that the draft letter discussed at the last meeting of Council had been amended and sent to SOAFD and he read out the reply received.

(f) Annual Golf Outing - Mr. Blackmore reported briefly on the Golf Outing at Ladybank Golf Club on 28th May, 1992. Only 18 golfers and 3 non-golfers had been present. Council expressed its concern over such meagre support and several suggestions were made for consideration by the Entertainments Committee in due course.

Mr. Hunter also reported receipt of a letter from the Salutation Hotel in Perth confirming completion of the refurbishment programme there and inviting Dinner-Dance bookings. Council remitted this matter also for the attention of the Entertainments Committee.

(g) Registration for ware packing - Mr. Hunter regretted that little progress had been made in this matter. Mr. Galbraith gave further information he had obtained and undertook to send the Secretary copies of his company's correspondence from Fife, Perthshire and Angus Regional Councils.

(h) Horberry & Baker Press Release and

(i) Inspections of Ware Crops - Mr. Hunter reported that no progress had been made in either of these two matters but that they would receive early attention.

JOINT MSD/SPTA  
CONFERENCE:

Mr. McArthur explained that the proposals for a Conference Event had arisen during a conversation at the VTSCGA meeting in Aviemore. In broad terms, MSD would make a substantial financial contribution, SPTA providing Scottish grower and merchant contacts and liaison. MSD will invite approximately 40 innovative large growers and users of their products. The envisaged timetable, starts in Edinburgh at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, 4th August, 1992 thereafter proceeding by bus to Dalmahoy for Lunch, followed by afternoon visits to East Craigs and possibly to Cygnet at Kinross.

The second day (Wednesday) comprises a Conference chaired by this Association's President, covering Agronomic matters, the workings of the Scottish seed industry and the Scottish Merchant industry. All members of this Association will be invited to attend the Conference, more detailed information of which are to be circularised as soon as possible.

The following final day (Thursday) is to be devoted to a programme of visits in Perthshire and Angus which have still to be finalised.

Mr. McArthur proposed that the Association should sponsor Lunch for the MSD Guests on either the first or second day of the event. Council agreed the Organising sub-Committee should progress arrangements along these lines.

S.S.P.D.C.: Pre-circulated copies of the Minutes of meetings of the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council at East Craigs on 19th March, 1992 and in Perth on 28th April, 1992 were taken as read. During a brief resume of the next subsequent meeting (held on 4th June, 1992), Mr. Robertson reported that SSPDC is to finance a visit by the Ukrainian Minister of Agriculture and two of his staff to the Royal Highland Show and is to contribute £250.00 more to the Scottish Agriculture Colleges' News Letter. It had also been stated that at the recent Open Day at Sutton Bridge, no complaints of poor seed this year had been expressed. The Chairman thanked Mr. Robertson for his report.

J.C.C.: Council noted the content of pre-circulated copies of the Minutes and Report of a meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee in London on 19th May, 1992 and Mr. McArthur tabled copies of a PMB Paper he had received entitled "1993 Target Area Determination".

It was Council's unanimous view that the indicated target area (154,800 ha.) was too high. Mr. McArthur reported that while the Board's Chairman, Mr. David Sinclair, wants not more than 152,000 ha., his own view was for not more than 150,000 ha.

During full and comprehensive discussion Mr. Pullar pointed out that whereas England enjoyed an allocation of Quota to grow ware for export, there was no corresponding allocation for seed grown for export in Scotland. Mr. Galbraith also stated that out of 4,000 ha. allocated for processors in G.B., only 20 ha. are allocated for processors in Scotland. In conclusion, Council agreed unanimously that a Target Area in excess of 150,000 ha. for 1993 should be very strongly resisted.

LICENSING  
COMMITTEE  
LIAISON: The Chairman explained he had been unable to attend the Liaison meeting with the PMB's Licensing Committee in London on 15th June and that Mr. Deryk Smith had deputised for him. In Mr. Smith's absence Council agreed that the Report on this meeting would be copied to each Member of Council as soon as available.

S.P.A.C.: Mr. Stewart reported on the meeting of the Seed Potato Advisory Committee which he had attended in Edinburgh that morning. Provisional planting figures had not been available. In the buying programme 103,000 tonnes (including 4,000 tonnes from Scotland) had been offered, of which 60,000 tonnes had been taken up @ £40.00 per tonne. Early crop clearances were reported to be 60% in Cornwall (30% last year), 40% in Kent (20%) and 40% in Pembrokeshire (36%). Trigger prices had been considered, £62 per tonne for the 1st week in July being expected to be required. Comprehensive crop reports provided were varied and inconclusive.

"CONDITIONS"  
SUB-  
COMMITTEE: Mr. Hunter reported briefly on the first meeting of the Association's reconstituted "Conditions" sub-Committee held earlier in the day. Several points had been identified for further consideration, among which he had undertaken to try to draft provision for property in the goods to pass only after payment has been made. He explained this is a complex area of law.

A.O.C.B.: (a)/

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(a) Supplier Enquiry - Mr. Hunter reported receipt of a request to insert brief information on a source for stitching thread with the next News Letter. Council declined this request. Following discussion it was agreed to place the matter of an Association Year Book on the Agenda for Council's next meeting.

(b) Agra-Europe Group Subscription - Mr. Blackmore reported that three of the eight Group Subscribers had decided not to renew their participation and no new members had joined. He was advised of several members to contact who may be interested, before finalising payment of renewal of the Group Subscription.

(c) Farm Assured Ware Potatoes Scheme - Mr. Galbraith gave brief details of an initiative by NFUS which is to take account of a revision of the structure of other Farm Assured Schemes. He felt SPTA should support this initiative and Council asked to be kept informed of developments.

(d) Date of Next Meeting - Council agreed to hold its next meeting in the Ice Rink, Perth at 2 p.m. on Thursday, 27th August, 1992 and the Secretariat was instructed to make the necessary arrangements.

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

*Galbraith*