

MINUTES of a MEETING of COUNCIL of
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE
ASSOCIATION in the Ice Rink, PERTH
at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, 13th OCTOBER,
1992.

PRESENT: Messrs. G.S. Brass, R. Doig, D.H. Lindsay, J.M. Marshall, D. Maxwell, J.L. Milne, J.R. McArthur, K.A. McKenzie, A.B. Pullar, J.O. Robertson and D.Y. Stewart, 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 on behalf of Messrs. A.W. Bayne, J.G.H. Fenton, A.C. Galbraith, J.B. Hollywood, I. Melrose, D. Smith, J.M. Swinton and A.S. Whitehead.

MINUTES: The Minutes of the meeting of Council in Perth on 27th August, 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 - Following brief discussion it was agreed Press matters should be dealt with and recourse to be had to the Press Fund as and when required.

(b) Potato Regime - Council agreed that meagre information based on rumour and speculation prevented meaningful discussion.

(c) Minimum Residue Levels - In the absence of comment from the Office Bearers it was agreed the Secretary's Paper be forwarded for authoritative approval before circularisation to all Association members.

(d) Membership and Subscriptions - The Secretary reported receipt of part-year subscriptions from both new members. Mr. Pullar provided further background information on the deferred nomination of Scottish Farm Produce (Potatoes) Ltd. for Association membership. Following full re-discussion Council decided to ballot this nomination, which ballot duly recorded five black balls. In terms of the Association's Constitution and Rules this nomination could not be accepted.

The Secretary also reported receipt of notification from the PMB of an application by David Lindsay (Potato Merchants) Ltd. for a Merchants Licence and Mr. Lindsay explained the background to this application.

(e) Registration for ware packing - The Secretary explained his view that registration is only required if potatoes are packed for retail sale. In this light the prepared Paper required amendment before being submitted for authoritative approval.

(f) Inspections of Ware Crops - Council agreed that circularisation should await inclusion of further information and/or clarification that may be provided at the forthcoming meeting of the Seed Potato Consultative Panel.

(g) Farm Assured Ware - No developments were reported.

(h)/

(h) Association Year Book - Council noted that the first meeting of the appointed sub-Committee has still to be arranged.

ELECTIONS
TO COUNCIL:

Mr. Blackmore reported that of 92 Ballot Papers issued, 49 (53 1/4%) had been returned by the close of Ballot this morning. One Paper was spoiled and 247 valid votes were cast (44 3/4% of maximum possible). All six retiring members of Council were re-elected, Mr. J. Macfarlane being the unsuccessful candidate.

The Chairman reported that Mr. Deryk Smith had expressed his intention to resign from his Vice Presidency of the Association and from his membership of Council. It was decided to defer this matter for consultation to fill this Office Bearer vacancy at the next meeting of Council.

LAND RENT
PRICES:

Council discussed a suggestion to consider a maximum rent for potato growing land. In a very full discussion several affecting factors were agreed to be undergoing changes, the results of which were extremely difficult to foresee. It was also firmly argued that while local agreement might be possible, widespread agreement seemed unlikely since individual commercial judgements will inevitably determine market levels. It was agreed the matter could be usefully discussed again once impending changes have been clarified.

S.S.P.D.C.:

Council noted the pre-copied Minutes of a meeting of the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council on 15th July, 1992. The Secretary reported that no reply to his letter requiring a corrective insertion in SSPDC Minutes had been received.

Mr. Robertson reported on the next subsequent meeting held on 28th August, 1992 which had decided to consider a Five Year Plan at its next (over-night) meeting on 27th/28th October, 1992. He provided the topics to be addressed in the Plan and sought Council's views on these. Discussion included criticism of the over-emphasis on Eastern Europe/CIS at heavy cost in time, effort and money compared with under-emphasis on the main market in England. In reply to a question Mr. Robertson also explained that FEP had been hived off and written off.

"CONDITIONS"
sub-
COMMITTEE:

Mr. Hunter referred to the Report on a meeting of the "Conditions" sub-Committee in Perth on 23rd September, 1992 and explained the further extension added to the Conditions of Purchase. It was agreed to copy this to all absent Council members for their comments within seven days, after which their approval will be assumed to allow these Conditions to be submitted to NFUS for approval. Council re-affirmed its intention that the revised Conditions of Purchase and revised Conditions of Sale will come into operation for the 1993-planted crop.

Mr. Hunter also read out correspondence with NASPM in respect of a "Conditions" meeting in Edinburgh on 28th October, 1992. Council's discussion covered several concerns but agreed four Association delegates should attend. Messrs. G.S. Brass, R. Doig, D.H. Lindsay and D.Y. Stewart agreed to attend, with Mr. Blackmore in attendance. It was also agreed to copy the correspondence with NASPM to each member of Council inviting their comments.

S.S.P.E.:

Mr. Hunter reported briefly on a meeting of the Scotch Seed Potato Exhibitors in Perth on 2nd October, 1992 in connection with this year's Royal Smithfield Show in London from 29th November to 3rd December inclusive. With only 8 Member Firms participating in this year's Stand and with future SSPDC support in doubt, it appeared likely that this would be the last year of participation.

S.P.C.P.:

Mr. McArthur gave a comprehensive Report on a meeting of the Seed Potato Consultative Panel which he had attended with Mr. Blackmore in Edinburgh on 12th October, 1992. Crop reports indicated the new aphid controls had been effective, 88.5% of inspected crops held their grade in 1992 (60 odd% in 1991), 3% no grade. VTSC was the best ever, with 92% of VTSC2 holding grade. Of 63,923 VTSC plants released by SOAFD only 2 were subsequently found to be diseased. 100% tuber inspections had worked well and the issue of statistics and the Register had been discussed, an update on the High Grade region had been given along with information on seed potato labels and tuber tolerances in the Single Market. A report was also given on the 1992 Ware Survey (which will continue in 1993) and PCN matters were also discussed. In field identification of crops problems and producer numbers on Invoices will be tightened in 1993.

CHAIRMAN'S
COMMITTEE:

Mr. Hunter reported briefly on a meeting of the Chairman's Committee this morning. The draft annual Account had been approved for updating to 31st October, 1992 for submission to Audit thereafter, and a copy also being sent to each member of Council.

Mr. Hunter had also announced that he is to retire as a Partner in Messrs. McCash & Hunter, Solicitors, on 31st March, 1993 at which same date Mr. Blackmore also retires from business. Mr. Hunter had indicated his willingness to continue as Secretary and Treasurer of the Association and from the Chair, Mr. Doig added his recommendation to this course. Council unanimously approved this change.

A.O.C.B.:

(a) Arbitration Awards - Mr. Lindsay cited a recent Award believed to exceed the cost of the seed involved. Mr. Hunter explained the instance in full detail. He also reported that an Interim Award in another Arbitration altogether had fully supported the Association's Conditions of Sale. He felt that if suitably de-personalised, this Interim Award would provide invaluable future guidance for SPTA Arbiters. Council agreed this possibility should be pursued.

(b) Date of next meeting - Council confirmed its next meeting will take place in the Ice Rink, Perth at 2 p.m. on Thursday, 12th November, 1992 and the Secretariat was instructed to make the usual arrangements.

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