

REPORT OF COUNCIL
OF
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION
for the year to 31st October, 1992
TO
THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION
in the Ice Rink, Perth,
on Thursday, 7th January, 1993

Seven Meetings of Council were held during the year under review and full Reports on each prepared for all Members of the Association.

At the commencement of the year there were 93 Members on the Association's Membership Roll. One Member resigned, one Member ceased trading and the membership of one Member was suspended. Two new Members were enrolled part-way during the year so that overall, the total Association Membership Roll was reduced by 1 to 92 at 31st October, 1992.

Council's Report last year referred to the unusual amount of time that had been spent on matters involving the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council. It is a source of satisfaction that Council feels able to report that the principal matters of concern at that time have been resolved during the year under review and that future efforts can be directed to furthering meaningful relations with that organisation.

In continuation of remedial changes in Growing Crop Inspection Scheme matters, close liaison has been maintained with the Scottish Office Agriculture and Fisheries Department. The fact that despite the widespread publicity given to the alleged shortcomings of Scottish seed from the 1991 crop, the very successful results of the inspection of the bumper 1992 crop have fully vindicated the true reputation of Scotch seed potatoes. Regrettably the size of the crop, rather than its health record, is undermining its marketable value.

The Department's workload is currently closely involved in European Community matters. Arising from the establishment of the single market the potato industry is now faced with an excessively delayed last minute Potato regime, negotiations over the High Grade Seed Area, co-ordinating revision of Plant Health matters and the various problems arising in all these respects. The prospects at this time can perhaps best be described as particularly clouded/

clouded and no doubt your Council will be kept extremely busy throughout the year ahead.

In respect of the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee it must be apparent to everyone that the current trading scenario results from a too-high Target Area coupled with an unusually high-yielding growing season in 1992. Your Council's firm reservations on that target area have been fully justified and warranted caution in determining the Target Area for 1993. In the event, the Joint Consultative Committee decided to recommend an even higher Target Area for 1993. Your Association's representative on that Committee recorded your Association's dissent from that recommendation. In the light that once fixed, the Target Area cannot be reduced your Association has used its Press capability to call for a voluntary reduction of 6% in plantings in 1993. Time alone will determine whether this initiative succeeds.

Your Council also decided during the year to carry out an updating revision of the Association's copyright Conditions of Sale and Conditions of Purchase for Seed Potatoes. Following three meetings of the "Conditions" sub-Committee a number of amendments were agreed and adopted by Council. Principal among these is an extension of the time limit for the notification of complaints in respect of skin spot, gangrene and dry rot from ten days to fourteen days. With the intention of introducing these revised Conditions for use for the 1993-planted crop, the Conditions of Purchase were forwarded for the approval of the National Farmers Union of Scotland a number of weeks ago. Once written confirmation of verbally intimated approval is received the revised Conditions will be copied to all Association Members.

In conclusion, your Council again reminds all Members that in serving and furthering the interest of the Potato Trade, Council depends on active feed-back of views and information from every Association Member.