

REPORT on MEETING between THE  
SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE  
ASSOCIATION and THE NATIONAL  
FARMERS'S UNION OF SCOTLAND  
held at 25 SOUTH METHVEN  
STREET, PERTH at 2.00 p.m. on  
TUESDAY, 14th NOVEMBER, 1995.

PRESENT: S.P.T.A: Messrs. D.Y. Stewart, D.H. Lindsay and R.D. Hunter.

N.F.U.S: Messrs. W. Reid and J. Grant.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Messrs. J.B. Hollywood and R. McArthur.

CHAIRMAN: Mr. Stewart occupied the Chair.

- (1) REVOCATION OF POTATO MARKETING SCHEME: Mr. J. Grant gave a comprehensive report on the meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee held on 6th November, 1995 when there had been discussion regarding the revocation of the Potato Marketing Scheme and the proposals of the Potato Marketing Board to constitute a Great Britain Potato Organisation to replace the existing Board. Mr. Grant's report included:-
- (a) Sutton Bridge: Several offers had been received and a decision with regard to the sale would be made by the end of November. The Experimental Unit may continue to operate from Sutton Bridge with the consent of the ultimate buyers until such time as the Potato Marketing Scheme is revoked.
  - (b) The Way Forward: The proposal that there should be a Seed Sectoral Group was accepted without any opposition.
  - (c) G.B.P.O: The likely composition of the G.B.P.O. is nine Growers representatives (one from Wales, two from Scotland and six from England), and independent Chairman, and employee representative (hopefully from the Potato Industry) and four representatives of other sections of the Potato Industry. The two Scottish representatives are likely to be appointed by the Minister from a list of nominees supplied by the National Farmers' Union of Scotland. Mr. Reid confirmed that his Union would consult S.P.T.A. before drawing up the list of nominees. Mr. Stewart indicated that S.P.T.A. would be seeking a meeting with The Scottish Office with a view to ensuring that S.P.T.A. is consulted direct by The Scottish Office. The seven Growers' representatives from England and Wales will be appointed by the Minister from nominees put forward by the English Farmers' Union. Individual nominees will be considered by the Minister provided they are supported by the signatures of 30 Potato Growers. Mr.

Grant stated that the term of office of G.B.P.O. members would be three years with a third of the Council retiring by rotation each year.

The G.B.P.O. would be funded by an Area Levy on Growers, together with a top-up Tonnage Levy on other sections of the Industry. The Tonnage Levy during the first three years is likely not to exceed 20p per tonne paid by the first purchaser. This will involve a Register of Buyers being compiled. The collection of the Tonnage Levy will facilitate the collection of Potato Statistics by the new Body. It is likely that Seed Potato Growers may be exempt from the Tonnage Levy.

- (d) Institute of Agronomy: Consideration with regard to the formation of an Institute of Agronomy had been discussed whereby the Sutton Bridge Unit could move to Cambridge.
  - (e) Seed Sectoral Group: Mr. Grant pointed out that 89% of the U.K. Seed Potato Growers are from Scotland and 11% from England and Wales. Accordingly he stated that the proposed Seed Sectoral Group must be predominately Scottish. Mr. Reid stated that the formation of the Seed Sectoral Group would be discussed further at the next meeting of the Seed Potato Advisory Council.
- (2) SEED POTATO DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL: It was confirmed that the composition of S.S.P.D.C. for 1996 and 1997 would be the same as at present. The names of the new Council Members was awaited.

Surprise was expressed that there had been no comment whatsoever from S.S.P.D.C. regarding the Brown Rot problem.

- (3) BROWN ROT: Mr. Stewart stated that he had received a 'phone call from The Scottish Office reporting on the meeting of the E.C. Plant Health Standing Committee held on 13th November, 1995. At that meeting the proposals of the Dutch had not been acceptable to other Member States. The Dutch are to re-draft their proposals which will be discussed at the next meeting of the Committee. Mr. Stewart added that no country was seeking a ban and the consensus was that the Dutch seed would be classified provided that it came from a Brown Rot free area. It is likely that The Scottish Office will keep in being the Regulation requiring notification of Dutch Seed Potatoes.
- (4) ARBITRATION RULES: Mr. Hunter reported that there had been a meeting earlier in the week with representatives of the N.A.S.P.M. when good progress had been made with regard to the drawing up of Common Arbitration Rules for S.P.T.A. and N.A.S.P.M. Mr. Hunter added that a further meeting was to take place in February when, hopefully, proposed draft Arbitration Rules would be drawn up for consideration by the respective Associations.

- (5) DATE OF NEXT MEETING: It was agreed that the next meeting between the Union and S.P.T.A. would be held in the Rural Centre at Ingliston at 2.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 10th January, 1996.

This terminated the business of the meeting.

