

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE
ASSOCIATION held in the ICE RINK,
GLOVER STREET, PERTH, AT 2.00
p.m. on TUESDAY, 19th MARCH,
1996.

PRESENT: Messrs. A.P. Bayne, A.M. Beattie, B. Doig, D. Harley, J.B. Hollywood, D.H. Lindsay, V. Lumb, J.M. Marshall, J.R. McArthur, K.A. McKenzie, I. Melrose, A.B. Pullar, D.Y. Stewart. D.W. Veitch, along with Mr. R.D. Hunter, the Secretary.

CHAIRMAN: The Association President, Mr. D.Y. Stewart, occupied the Chair.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Messrs. J.P. Deuchar, J. MacFarlane, J.L. Milne, J.O. Robertson and J.M. Swinton.

(1) MINUTES: The Minute of Meeting of Council of 11th January, 1996 was taken as read, approved and signed. It was noted that although the Minute correctly reflected what had been reported to the meeting under Item (4) REVOCATION OF POTATO MARKETING SCHEME it was in fact proposed that the V.T.S.C. Growers Association should also be invited to nominate one member of a Seed Sectoral Group.

(2) MATTERS ARISING:

(a) Annual Dinner and Dance: The Secretary reported that the President had resolved that the proceeds of the Prize Draw and Auction held during the 1995 Dance should be donated as follows:- (a) to Tenovus-Scotland Tayside Branch (to be devoted to a Cancer Project) - £1,691.38 and (b) Macmillan Nurses Appeal for Stracathro Hospital, Brechin - £1,500.00.

(b) Members' Overseas Study Trip: The Secretary reported that only 3/4 members had expressed interest in participating in the proposed Study Trip to Cyprus in May, 1996. Council resolved that there was not sufficient support from members to justify progressing the arrangements for the trip any further. The Secretary was instructed to write to the Cyprus Potato Marketing Board informing them that the proposed trip would not be proceeding and thanking them for their assistance.

(c) Members' Outing to Knockhill Racing Circuit: The Secretary read to Council a fax which he had received earlier in the day from Mr. John Deuchar containing Proposals for an afternoon outing to Knockhill Racing Circuit on 28th May, 1996 at a cost of up to £120.00, plus V.A.T., per person and suggesting that details should be given to members in the next Association News Letter. Council instructed the Secretary to include these details in the next Association News Letter.

(d) Members Book: The Secretary reported further progress

- towards completion of the Members Book.
- (e) Annual Subscriptions for 1995/96: The Secretary reported that, as of that date, subscriptions had been received from 81 members, totalling £15,130.00, and that one membership had been cancelled, namely, that of Milne Laing (Potatoes) Ltd. who had joined forces with another Association member) leaving fifteen members' subscriptions still outstanding. It was agreed that various members of Council would speak to the members whose subscriptions were outstanding with a view to obtaining early settlement of these subscriptions.
 - (f) Arbitration Rules: The Secretary reported that a meeting of the Arbitration Rules Working Party had been held on 8th February, 1996 when further progress with regard to the drawing up of Common Arbitration Rules for SPTA and NASPM had been made. He added that a further meeting of the Working Party was scheduled to be held at the end of April, 1996 when, hopefully, the final draft of the Arbitration Rules will be approved for submission to the Councils of the respective Associations.
 - (g) Scottish Seed Potato Consultative Panel: The Secretary confirmed that the Minute of the meeting of the Consultative Panel held on 24th November, 1995 had now been received from The Scottish Office and circulated to Members of Council.
 - (h) Seed Potato Labels: The Chairman read to the meeting a letter, dated 5th March, 1996, received from The Scottish Office stating that the Department will continue to require an "End-User" Letter in 1996/97 in respect of bulk loads of potatoes (i.e. 22 tonne loose loads). The Secretary was instructed to write to The Scottish Office informing them that Council was unhappy with the decision to continue to require the End-Users Letters explaining that such a requirement often proved difficult in practice to implement and gave to the end user an excuse for delaying or even cancelling a purchase.
- (3) BROWN ROT: The Chairman reported that instead of writing to Members of Parliament he and the other Office-Bearers had decided to seek a meeting with Lord Lindsay, the Scottish Agriculture Minister, with a view to seeking to have re-introduced quarantine controls in respect of imported seed potatoes. He added that he, accompanied by Messrs. Pullar, Beattie and Hunter, had met Lord Lindsay on 15th March when a strong case for the re-introduction of these controls had been presented to the Minister. The Chairman stated that Lord Lindsay had replied by emphasising that it would not be legally possible for the U.K. to introduce such quarantine controls and for it to do so would only result in the U.K. being taken to the European Court where it would be successfully prosecuted. Lord Lindsay had added that this was particularly the case bearing in mind that the other "Protected Regions" in the Community were not supporting the U.K.'s wish have quarantine controls re-introduced. The Secretary read to the meeting a letter dated 13th March, 1996 issued by the Plant Health & Seeds Inspectorate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food to Potato Growers in England and Wales under the heading "Update on Potato Brown Rot".

- (4) REVOCATION OF POTATO MARKETING SCHEME: The Secretary read to the meeting a letter, dated 5th March, 1996, from the Chief Executive of the Potato Marketing Board which implied that the Board's Residual Funds will either be transferred to a Successor Body or, returned to Registered Producers depending upon the responses of Registered Producers to the forthcoming PMB Poll. The Chairman pointed out that the Residual Funds were considerably more than had been anticipated when Council, at its previous meeting, had agreed to recommend that the Residual Funds be made over to the new GBPO on the basis that the total Funds would be devoted exclusively to subsidising Levies during the first three years of the GBPO. After a detailed debate Council resolved to advocate that the Residual Funds should not be paid over to the Successor Body. Council considered that it would be important that the GBPO's income and expenditure is shown to be properly costed and the Organisation to be totally self supporting from the beginning of its existence. It was agreed that the Chairman would make arrangements for the early issue of a Press Release reporting this decision.

The Chairman reported that at the meeting with Lord Lindsay he had sought to obtain clarification regarding various matters affecting the current debate on the subject of whether, after the termination of the Potato Marketing Scheme, the interests of Scottish Seed Potato Producers would be best served by the continuation of SSPDC or by a Seed Sectoral Group under the proposed GBPO. He added that during discussion Lord Lindsay had stated that The Scottish Office did not at that time have any preference for either of the alternatives but would await the decision of the Industry. There was a very full debate within Council regarding which of the two alternatives Council favoured. Council concluded that although it was unhappy in many ways with the past performance of SSPDC, in balance it supported the continuation of an independently funded SSPDC in preference to the formation of a Seed Potato Sectoral Group funded at the discretion of a GBPO controlled by English ware growers. Council had arrived at its decision in the belief that the future performance of SSPDC will require to be greatly improved. It was agreed that the Chairman's Press Release would also report this decision.

- (5) SSPDC: The Chairman reported that most of the meeting of SSPDC on 15th February, 1996 had been devoted to discussion regarding the future of SSPDC after 31st December, 1997.
- (6) P.M.B./MERCHANTS'S WORKING PARTY: The Secretary read to the meeting the text of a letter to be signed by Mr. Godfrey, the Chairman of the Potato Industry Working Group on Information, which it had been agreed at a meeting of the Working Party on 5th March, 1996 would be issued to members of Federations, Councils and Co-operatives, including SPTA. The letter reported the formation of a computer based independent system for providing daily access to the latest potato prices and movements and offering access to the system to everyone in the Potato Industry in the U.K. The Secretary was instructed to send out copies of the letter to members of this Association under cover of the next members' News Letter.

(7) FAST TRACTORS: The Secretary reported that he had now received from the Department of Transport a copy of their Consultative Papers regarding the review of exemptions from plating and testing and the operator licensing regimes for heavy goods vehicles. The Secretary read to the meeting the relevant sections of the Consultative Documents referring to Fast Tractors. The Secretary pointed out that the Consultative Documents had been issued on 28th July, 1995 with a closing date for responses of 31st October, 1995 but that S.P.T.A. had not been included in the Department of Transport's Mailing List. After discussion Council resolved to take no further action but to keep a "watching brief" regarding further developments.

(8) CORRESPONDENCE: The Secretary reported that since the previous meeting of Council letters had been received under the following headings:-

From The Scottish Office -

The Plastic Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (Amendments) Regulations 1996;

Consolidation and Review of the Food Labelling Regulations 1984 and De-Regulation of Food Compositional Legislation - Food Labelling Regulations;

European Commission Proposal for a Regulation to set limits for Nitrate in Lettuce and Spinach;

E.C. Regulation 2081/92 on the Protection of Geographical Indications and Designations of Origin for Agricultural Products and Foodstuffs;

From the Patent Office -

Legal Protection of Biotechnological Inventions: Commission Proposal COM95(661)Final.

From the Pesticides Safety Directorate -

Updating of Notices of Approval for Products holding Full Approval by Virtue of PSPS Commercial Clearance and ACAS Approval and never considered under CORP 1986;

Maximum Residue Levels of Pesticides in Food (MRLs) Directives - Recent Developments;

U.K. System for Approvals: New Inter-Departmental Secretariat;

Label Advice relating to the Rinsing and Disposal of Containers;

Consultation concerning Pesticide Approvals and Minimum Effective Dose;

Payment of Application Fees;

Extension of Use (Off-Label) "Use-Up" Period.

(9) DATE OF NEXT MEETING: It was agreed that the next meeting of Council would be held at Perth Ice Rink at 2.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 16th April, 1996.

(10) ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS:

(a) The Secretary was instructed to place on the Agenda for the next meeting of Council discussion regarding amending the terms of Rule 9 of the Association's Constitution and

Rules to take account of the change of description in connection with the audit of the Association's annual Accounts.

- (b) Curling: The Secretary reported that the result of the season's Curling Tournaments was North 83 shots and South 55 shots

A vote of thanks to the Chairman terminated the meeting.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Secretary of the Association", written in a cursive style.

