

REPORT on MEETING between NFUS,  
SSPDC and SPTA held at the  
RURAL CENTRE, INGLISTON, at  
10 a.m. on THURSDAY, 15th  
AUGUST, 1996.

PRESENT: NFUS: Mr. W. Reid and Ms C. Lang; \_\_\_\_\_

SSPDC: Ms V. Magennis;

SPTA: Messrs. D. Stewart and D. Hunter.

- (1) SEED POTATO CLASSIFICATION SCHEME: The terms of the letter from The Scottish Office, dated 21st May, 1996 were considered. Mr. Stewart on behalf of SPTA reported the decisions which a Sub-Committee of his Association had made with regard to the response to The Scottish Office.

Mr. Stewart stated that it was agreed to suggest to The Scottish Office that the new computer programme should allow for the possibility of seed potato labels containing a "generation" number at a future date at the request of the Industry. Mr. Reid stated that he would have to consult his members regarding this suggestion. Mr. Stewart stated that SPTA had already requested The Scottish Office to consider altering the arrangements whereby labels were valid for two consecutive calendar months rather than the present system of stating the date on which a label is issued.

Mr. Stewart stated that SPTA were proposing to recommend to The Scottish Office that the tolerance for Ground Keepers, as opposed to Rogues and Variations, be made the same as that for Blackleg and that the Super Elite tolerance for Severe Mosaic at the second inspection should be the same as that for the first inspection.

Mr. Stewart stated that SPTA were proposing to suggest to The Scottish Office that they keep in mind the possibility of replacing the Blackleg Field Inspection with a Blackleg Tuber Test in the future when a suitable Tuber Test has been developed.

Mr. Stewart stated that SPTA believed that in the foreseeable future Potato Stores will require to be registered but that SPTA were not proposing to raise this matter at this time with The Scottish Office.

Mr. Stewart stated that SPTA would resist any increase in fees for growing crop and tuber inspections and would be informing The Scottish Office accordingly.

Mr. Stewart stated that SPTA were proposing to request The Scottish Office to make provision for individuals in the Potato Industry to access direct via their own PC's non-sensitive statistical information retained on the Department's computer (e.g. the Register and other

statistical information.

Mr. Reid stated that his Union were in agreement with most of the matters being proposed by SPTA but that he would have to consult his Potato Committee before they responded to The Scottish Office.

- (2) POTATO INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL FOR GREAT BRITAIN: Reference was made to the Consultative Paper issued by The Scottish Office regarding a proposal to establish a Potato Industry Development Council for Great Britain. It was agreed that most of the items in the Paper had already been agreed by SPTA and NFUS. Mr. Stewart stated that the Paper was to be considered at a meeting to be held during the following week of Council of SPTA. He added that he felt there was a possibility that some members of Council would be in favour of the GBPO being funded from the outset by a Tonnage Contribution at the first point of sale and that there should be no Area Contributions. Mr. Reid stated that his members were in favour of the dual system of Levy collection at least in the earlier years. He pointed out that the collection of an Area Levy would give to the GBPO statistical information which they would otherwise have to obtain and accordingly the savings which at first sight might result from there only being a Tonnage Levy may not in fact be realised.
- (3) EUROPEAN POTATO REGIME: Mr. Reid stated that it was a realistic possibility that a proposed EU Potato Regime may be issued within the next few months.
- (4) BROWN ROT: Mr. Brown took the meeting through the draft Brown Rot Control Directive which had recently been issued. Mr. Hunter observed that when considering the draft Directive it is necessary to weigh up the benefits of having strict controls to minimise the spread of Brown Rot from existing sources (e.g.Holland) against having to live with the provisions in Scotland should Brown Rot ever be imported into Scotland.
- (5) SEED POTATOES - PROTECTED REGIONS: Veronica Magennis reported that arrangements were being made for various seed producing countries in Europe to meet in France on 10th September, 1996. She stated that the countries involved were Holland, France, Belgium, Great Britain, Ireland, Sweden, Finland and possibly Germany. She stated that one of the reasons for the meeting was to consider the formation of a European Seed Potato Group. She confirmed that one of the items which would be discussed by the Group would be Protected Regions. She reported that the Nordic countries (Scotland, Sweden, Finland and Ireland) were generally in favour of re-introducing quarantine controls for the Protected Regions but that the other countries were less sympathetic. Mr. Reid warned of the dangers of raising the re-introduction of quarantine areas with these countries for the reason that the matter could backfire and could result in a renewed effort by these countries to have the Protected Regions abolished. It was agreed that at the first meeting

on 10th September the possible re-introduction of quarantine controls be mentioned but not pursued in order to sound out the general attitude of the more hostile countries so that a strategy can be developed for raising the matter more forcibly at a later meeting of the Group.

It was agreed that, as the meeting on 10th September was to be held in France, France should be invited to Chair that meeting. A suggested Agenda for the meeting was as follows:-

- (1) The formation of the European Seed Potato Group;
- (2) Plant Health Status including Brown Rot;
- (3) Plant Breeders' Rights and Small Ware.

There was discussion as to who should attend the meeting. It was agreed that the U.K. representatives would be nominated at the meeting of SSPDC to be held on 23rd August, 1996.

There was discussion regarding the administration and other costs which the Seed Potato Sector Group would incur. It was agreed that Caroline Lang in conjunction with Veronica Magennis would make enquiries with regard to the funding of the Group from European Union sources.

This terminated the business of the meeting.

