

REPORT OF COUNCIL

of

THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION

for the year to 31st October, 1996

TO

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

held in the Ice Rink, Perth

on Tuesday, 21st January, 1997

During the year under review seven meetings of Council of the Association were held and a Report on each of these meetings was issued to the Members of the Association.

The Membership of the Association as at 31st October, 1996 was eightyseven which represents a net loss of three Members during the year under review. Two new Memberships were granted but two Memberships were terminated as a result of cessations of business, one Membership was terminated as a result of a Member ceasing to trade in Scotland and a further Membership was lost due to resignation. Council is still anxious to increase the Membership Roll of the Association and therefore invites Members to suggest to the Association Secretary or to Members of Council the names of people or companies trading in the Scottish Potato Trade who they consider might be interested in taking out Membership.

In March 1996 representatives of this Association attended a meeting with Lord Lindsay, the Scottish Agriculture Minister, to press for the re-introduction of quarantine controls in respect of all seed potatoes being imported into Scotland. At that meeting there was also detailed discussion with regard to the setting up of a Potato Industry Development Council for Great Britain to be established under the Industrial Organisation and Development Act 1947. Your Association also submitted a detailed response to a consultative document issued by The Scottish Office with regard to the setting up of the new Development Council. The Order establishing the Development Council was laid before Parliament at the end of 1996. Your Association has been invited by The Scottish

Office to submit nominations for appointments to the new Body.

During the year under review your Association also had discussion with The Scottish Office regarding many other matters concerning potatoes and, in particular, regarding the Seed Potato Classification Scheme. At the end of 1996 Mr. Gordon Brown of The Scottish Office who was responsible for Plant Health and Potatoes was transferred to Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy. Council has recorded its appreciation of the work carried out by Mr. Brown during his six years of responsibility for Plant Health and Potatoes. Council looks forward to meeting his successor, Mr. Charlie Greenslade.

Your Association during the year was also represented at meetings of the Potato Marketing Board and with the National Farmers' Union of Scotland and the National Association of Seed Potato Merchants. This Association continued to provide a delegate to sit on the United Kingdom Plant Varieties & Seed Advisory Body.

Following a Poll of Producers and as a result of the decision to establish a Potato Industry Development Council, the Scottish Seed Potato Development Council is to cease to exist during 1997. In the meantime nominees of this Association continue as Members of S.S.P.D.C.

At the end of the year under review Mr. David Stewart's term of office as President terminated. Council records its appreciation of the excellent work carried out on behalf of the Association by Mr. Stewart during his two years in office as President and in particular his work in

connection with the new Potato Industry Development Council and the Potato Brown Rot outbreak in Holland. Mr. Stewart has been succeeded as Association President by Mr. Archie B. Pullar.

During the year The Scottish Office issued a Paper containing proposals detailing measures which might be introduced to eradicate or at least minimise the scale of the illegal marketing of Uncertified Seed Potatoes ("Small Ware").

The Working Party comprising representatives of this Association and of the National Association of Seed Potato Merchants continued to investigate the possibility of introducing common Arbitration Rules to be adopted by both Associations. The drafting of these Rules has now been completed and their adoption has been agreed in principle by Councils of both this Association and N.A.S.P.M. Further work however has to be carried out

before the new Arbitration Rules can be formally introduced.

Council is pleased to report that the Association Members Book has now been completed and issued to all Members of the Association. The contents of the Members Book will be kept up to date by revised replacement pages being issued to Members from time to time.

As in previous years, the Association organised a Dinner and Dance, Golf Outing and Curling Matches. This year's Golf Outing is to be held at Forfar Golf Course on Thursday, 22nd May. This year's Annual Dinner and Dance is provisionally booked to be held at Huntingtower Hotel, Perth, on Friday, 12th December. Unfortunately, there was not sufficient support from Members to justify the making of arrangements for an Association Study visit to Cyprus nor an Association Day Outing to Knockhill Racing Circuit during the year under review.