

CONFIDENTIAL

REPORT on MEETING between
Representatives of S.P.T.A. and
N.A.S.P.M. held at STAKIS
AIRPORT HOTEL, EDINBURGH, at
10.00 a.m. on FRIDAY, 11th
SEPTEMBER, 1998.

PRESENT: S.P.T.A.: Messrs. A.B. Pullar, A.M. Beattie, D.J. Harley and R.D. Hunter.

N.A.S.P.M.: Messrs. R. Reiss, I. Stirling and C.D. Fradd.

CHAIRMAN: Mr. A.B. Pullar occupied the Chair.

It was confirmed that the purpose of the meeting was to have an informal discussion between S.P.T.A. and N.A.S.P.M. regarding the possible setting up of a new U.K. Wide Potato Trade Organisation. The representatives of both Associations confirmed that they had been authorised by their respective Councils to enter into these informal discussions but emphasised that they had no instructions which would enable them in any way to commit their respective Association to implement any agreement arrived at informally. Mr. Reiss reported that the next meeting of Council of his Association was scheduled to be held during the following week. Mr. Reiss confirmed that he would be reporting to that meeting on the outcome of the informal discussions and that the N.A.S.P.M. Secretary would write to the S.P.T.A. Secretary reporting the reaction of the N.A.S.P.M. Council. Mr. Hunter reported that the next meeting of Council of S.P.T.A. was scheduled to be held on Thursday, 22nd October, 1998.

Mr. Reiss confirmed that the informal discussions were taking place following remarks made by him at his Association's Annual Luncheon earlier in the year when he floated the possibility of the two Associations coming together. He explained that he believed that this was a worthwhile matter to consider from his Association's point of view as a result of pressure from his Membership, declining N.A.S.P.M. Membership and the loss of experienced members of N.A.S.P.M. Council. He added that his Association's Council now comprise much younger members with a result that the nature of N.A.S.P.M. was gradually altering. Mr. Reiss reported that twelve companies were members of both S.P.T.A. and N.A.S.P.M.

Mr. Reiss indicated a belief that as a result of that changing attitude and as a result of general apathy within the N.A.S.P.M. Membership it was quite possible that there would be little opposition from N.A.S.P.M. members to a merging of the two Associations. Mr. Stirling was less confident that there would be little opposition. The N.A.S.P.M. representatives stated that they believed that there could be quite considerable opposition in S.P.T.A. for such a merger and that if the matter were to be

pursued further it would need to be very delicately and tactfully "sold" to the S.P.T.A. Membership.

It was accepted by N.A.S.P.M. that seed production in the U.K. was largely centred in Scotland and it was unlikely that significant quantities of seed potatoes would ever be produced in England. That being so, it was generally accepted (with Mr. Stirling expressing some reservations) that a new joint Association should have a "northern" emphasis. Mr. Hunter reminded the meeting that while S.P.T.A. represented the interests of both Seed and Ware Potato Merchants N.A.S.P.M. only represented Seed Merchants.

During discussion it was accepted that three options appeared to be available, namely:-

- (1) The status quo remain as at present.
- (2) The N.A.S.P.M. members join S.P.T.A./S.P.T.A. members join N.A.S.P.M.
- (3) A complete new Body be set up to represent Potato Merchants throughout the U.K.

The meeting agreed in principle that option number (1) was undesirable; option number (2) was probably unacceptable and that, therefore, option number (3) was the only one which may be acceptable to the members of both Associations.

It was agreed that the matter would be discussed by the Councils of the respective Associations with a view to a further informal meeting taking place between the respective Associations. It was provisionally agreed that the next meeting between representatives of the two Associations would be held at Edinburgh Airport Hotel on Wednesday, 11th November, 1998.

The meeting terminated with the respective Presidents expressing their thanks to the representatives who attended the informal discussions.